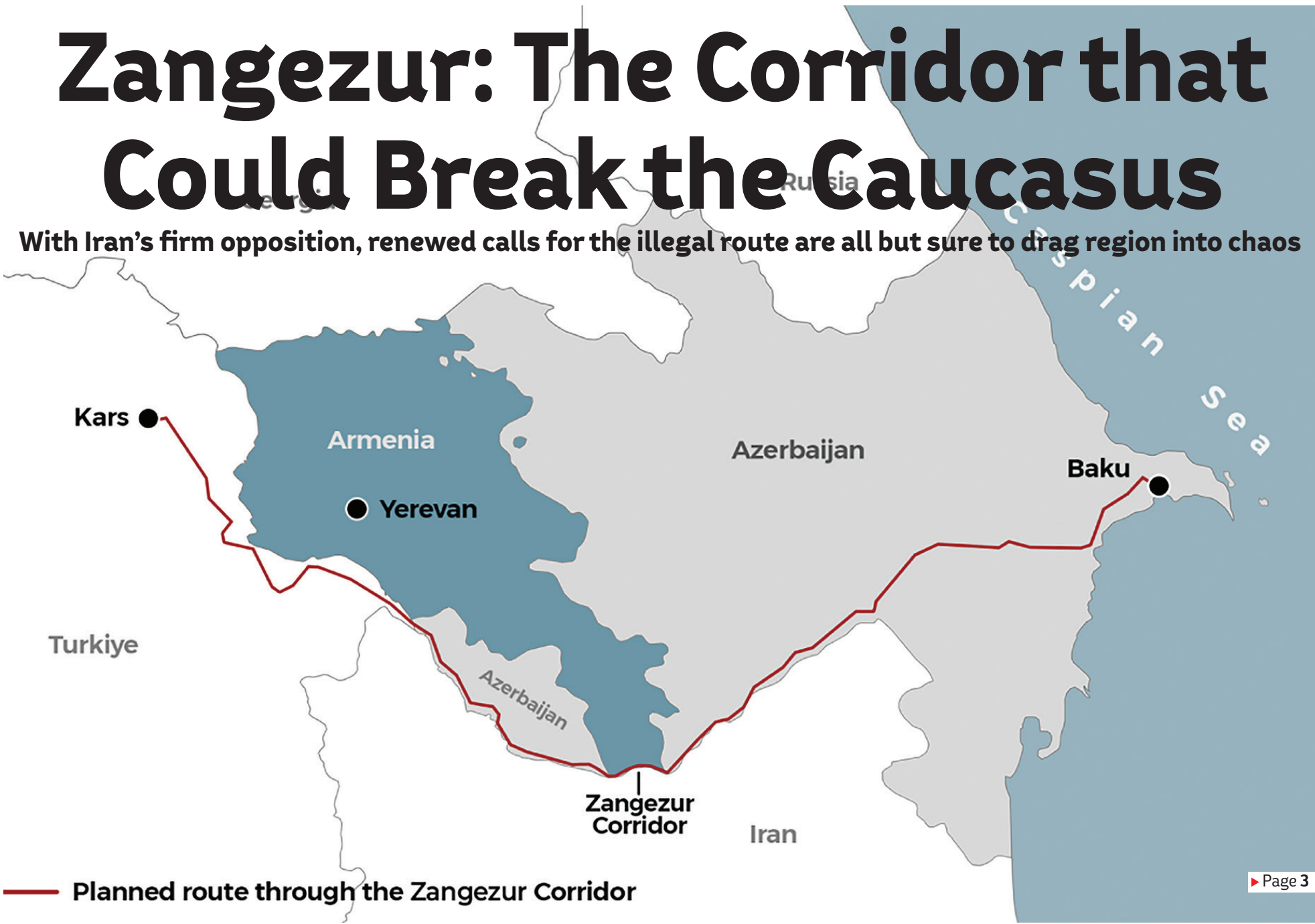


Zangezur: The Corridor that Could Break the Caucasus

With Iran's firm opposition, renewed calls for the illegal route are all but sure to drag region into chaos



Iran details intelligence fight against Western-Israeli alliance during 12-day war

TEHRAN – Iran's Ministry of Intelligence published a statement on Monday detailing some of its operations launched to counter U.S.-Israeli plots during the 12-day war that broke out in June.

The Ministry announced the neutralization of a complex hybrid warfare operation between June 13 and June 24, thwarting efforts aimed at destabilizing the Iranian government and promoting national disintegration. Intelligence operations remain ongoing, targeting suspected Israeli and American plots. ▶ Page 2

Iran says no talks with US until Iranian interests met

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei rejected renewed nuclear negotiations with the United States during a press briefing on Monday, declaring Tehran has “no plans” for diplomacy until Washington fundamentally changes its behavior and provides ironclad guarantees against aggression.

The statement came amid escalating European threats to trigger sanctions “snapback” and ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Baqaei addressed the prospect of reviving nuclear diplomacy with Washington: “We have no plans for negotiations at this time. We will decide and announce when Iran's interests and expediencies require it.” ▶ Page 3

Iran successfully tests key subsystems on Nahid-2 satellite

TEHRAN – Iran has successfully tested the rotational stabilization subsystem of its Nahid-2 satellite, marking another milestone in the satellite's ongoing in-orbit testing and evaluation process, according to the Iranian Space Agency (ISA).

The test, part of a comprehensive operational assessment program, confirmed the proper functioning of the rotational detumbling mechanism—a critical component that helps stabilize the satellite's orientation in space. The ISA said the result reflects solid performance across Nahid-2's subsystems and steady progress in its post-launch verification campaign. ▶ Page 2

Washington intensifying pressure on Lebanon ahead of parliamentary polls

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — While Lebanon was awaiting Washington's position on the latest response to Thomas Barrack's approach to the arms monopoly, the U.S. envoy warned the Lebanese government to “act immediately.”

On X, Barrack's wrote: “The credibility of Lebanon's government rests on its ability to match principle with practice. As its leaders have said repeatedly, it is critical that ‘the state has a monopoly on arms.’”

The envoy added, “As long as Hezbollah retains arms, words will not suffice. The government and Hezbollah need to fully commit and act now in order to not consign the Lebanese people to the stumbling status quo.” ▶ Page 5

The ICJ Gaza case and a race against time

By staff writer

TEHRAN- On July 27, The Guardian reported that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has postponed its final ruling on the Gaza genocide case until at least 2027. The delay follows a six-month extension granted to Israel to prepare its defense, with the court accepting Israel's claim that “evidential issues” related to South Africa's genocide case necessitated more time.

While the postponement has been widely noted against the backdrop of heightened humanitarian distress, a broader analytical lens reveals nuanced institutional and systemic considerations underlying this development.

Structural limitations on international justice

The ICJ decision to postpone the Gaza genocide ruling until 2027 embodies its steadfast commitment to rigorous legal standards. Central to the court's process is the requirement to prove “genocidal intent” beyond reasonable doubt, a high evidentiary threshold designed to ensure due process and avoid premature or politically driven judgments.

Gaza war draining Israeli army

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – A rapid increase in injury of Israeli occupation soldiers is taking a high toll on the regime's economy and society.

The Hebrew newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth has revealed that since October 7, 2023, more than 18,500 Israeli soldiers have been injured, with thousands suffering from severe psychological trauma.

It estimates that the number of the wounded could reach 100,000 by 2028.

According to information and data cited by the paper from the regime's “Ministry of Defense”, many of these soldiers have not only left military service but have also exited the labor market.

This means their impact goes beyond the military, affecting the broader Israeli economy and society.

The report indicates that nearly half of the soldiers expected to be injured in the coming years will suffer from mental health issues, particularly post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Israel-based human rights groups: Gaza crisis is genocide, Western allies enable it

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN — The starvation crisis in Gaza, largely driven by Israeli actions, continues unabated as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's administration makes a symbolic gesture by allowing only a limited trickle of humanitarian aid into the besieged Palestinian territory.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry on Monday, approximately 150 Palestinians—most of them children—have died of hunger since the start of Israel's intensified military campaign in October 2023. Fourteen of those deaths occurred within just the past 24 hours. The Government Media Office has issued a dire warning, revealing that over 40,000 infants under one year old are at risk of dying slowly due to the critical shortage of baby formula.

▶ Page 5

1,000 water, power projects to be launched by March 2026: energy minister

TEHRAN – Iran will inaugurate 1,000 water and electricity projects nationwide by the end of the current Iranian calendar year in March 2026, Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi said on Monday.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of water and electricity projects in southwest Tehran, Aliabadi said the new initiatives will add 4,000 megawatts of electricity generation capacity to the national grid.

He added that solar power projects will also come online, contributing an additional 7,000 megawatts to the country's electricity network.

“We will witness the inauguration of new water and power projects every week until the end of the year,” the minister said, stressing that equitable distribution of water and electricity remains a key government goal. ▶ Page 4



Tehran artistic event honors martyrs of Israeli aggression

TEHRAN – On Sunday, Tehran's Vahdat Hall held a literary and artistic event to honor the martyrs of the Israeli regime's 12-day war against Iranian soil.

Titled “Recite about Iran,” the event aimed to celebrate Iran's rich cultural and artistic heritage through poetry and music.

Renowned Iranian poets and musicians took part, sharing their works and performing alongside the IIRB symphonic orchestra.

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Saudi Arabia's meaningful decision

In its analysis, Shargh explored Saudi Arabia's refusal to supply THAAD missile interceptors to Israel, following a U.S. request during the Iran-Israel war in June. The United States, a traditional ally of Israel and Saudi Arabia, had asked Riyadh to provide Israel with part of its THAAD stockpile amid escalating Iranian missile attacks. Saudi Arabia, however, declined the request. This refusal marks a calculated shift in Riyadh's foreign policy—one that favors strategic restraint over direct military involvement. Having recently restored diplomatic ties with Iran, Saudi Arabia seems committed to maintaining regional balance rather than fueling confrontation. From this standpoint, withholding military aid to Israel appears to be a deliberate effort to preserve neutrality and cool tensions. Saudi Arabia increasingly seeks to portray itself as a stabilizing and mediating force in the region. With Defense Minister Khalid bin Salman's visit to Tehran and ongoing trust-building efforts, Riyadh is positioning itself not as a party to conflict but as a potential crisis manager and peace broker.

Ham Mihan: We must continue to follow the right path

In an analysis, Ham Mihan dealt with possible activation of the snapback mechanism by the European trio (Britain, France and Germany) which will return UN sanctions against Iran that had been lifted with the conclusion of the JCPOA in 2015. It wrote: Snapback is the hot topic these days. It is especially favorable for the domestic hardliners these days because they are busy saying why diplomacy is not good and that other paths should be taken. They do not shun diplomacy, but rather believe that if the same previous, costly path had continued, Iran would have been in a better position now. We wish there were no snapback mechanism. But before that, we should think that if correct policies had been adopted there would have been no Security Council resolutions that forced Iran to pull itself out of this pit. Without (UN Security Council) resolutions, there would have been no snapback. Even today, diplomacy is underway despite all problems and obstacles. The key to answering the question why Iran is pursuing the path of dialogue with the European side right now, or why the narrow window of dialogue with the United States has not been closed lies in this point. The country cannot be left in conditions like those of the

2000s and early 2010s, under pressure from the Security Council. We must continue to follow the right path.

Arman-e-Melli: Iran must be prudent

Mostafa Hashemitaba, a former vice president and presidential candidate, told Arman-e-Melli that Iran must be vigilant about the plots of the Zionist regime and the United States. He said: There is a possibility of another military attack on Iran by the United States and Israel, which could affect the country's future. The point is that the risk of activation of snapback mechanism is less than the risk of war. The important point in this regard is whether Iran is going to fight Israel or the United States in the future. If the war with Israel is going to continue, we can think in short term. But if a war between Iran and the United States occurs, negotiation and diplomacy will not be effective. This is the playing field that has been designed for us, and we should not enter this game because we do not know what its fate will be. Iran must be vigilant and refrain from entering a predetermined game. For this reason, Iran should not act emotionally and passionately in these circumstances and should approach the issue with more tact.

Etemad: China's mediation may reconcile views in Iran to resume talks with US

Etemad discussed the ambiguities surrounding possible resumption of talks between Tehran and Washington in an interview with Rahman Ghahramanpour, a foreign policy analyst. He said: Regarding resumption of talks between Tehran and Washington, the main issue seems to be the atmosphere of distrust that prevailed after the Israeli and U.S. aggressions against Iran. The U.S. attack on the Fordow nuclear plant has led to the formation of two different views on the talks in Iran's political atmosphere. One group believes that the talks were a deception from the beginning, while another group, which supports diplomacy, has concluded that it should confront the U.S. by resorting to more stringent levers. Some believe that the pause in the start of the Iran-U.S. talks may be due to Iran's consultation with China on how to start the talks. If it is so, it can be said that the two views inside the country will probably come closer together and will somehow agree to Beijing's mediation. They believe that China is capable of ending the current deadlock in the talks.

Tehran, Kabul commit to facilitating return of undocumented Afghan nationals residing in Iran



TEHRAN – Iran and Afghanistan are continuing high-level talks on facilitating the voluntary return of Afghan nationals residing in Iran, as part of broader efforts to enhance bilateral cooperation in border management and consular affairs.

The issue featured prominently in a phone conversation between Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan's caretaker government on Sunday. The two officials discussed the need to coordinate on consular services, secure borders, and support Afghan citizens wishing to return to their homeland voluntarily and with dignity.

Iran is host to one of the largest and most protracted refugee populations in the world,

the majority of whom are Afghan refugees.

From March 21 to June 27, a total of 717,658 Afghans have returned to Afghanistan; more than 80 percent of them have left the country voluntarily.

According to the head of the National Organization for Migration, Nader Yar-Ahmadi, there has been no change in the residency and the kind of services provided to documented Afghans residing in the country. On the contrary, they will benefit from more services as illegal nationals leave the country, IRNA reported.

Global experience has shown that migrants at most can account for three percent of the population of any country.

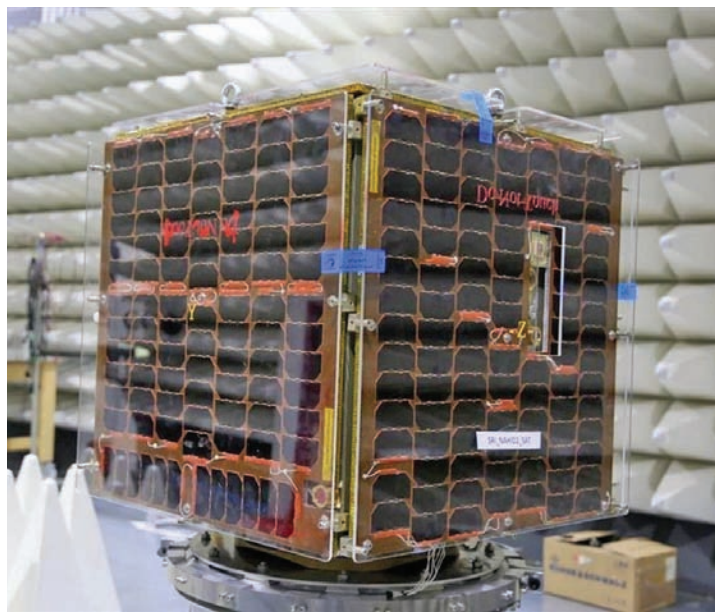
(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran successfully tests key subsystems on Nahid-2 satellite

From page 1 ► Nahid-2, launched on Friday, July 25, is Iran's first Ku-band telecommunications satellite and is currently undergoing detailed evaluation of its onboard systems. Thus far, several major subsystems have been successfully tested, including the power generation, distribution, and management unit; thermal control and temperature regulation systems; telemetry and telecommand communications in the S and U/V frequency bands; and the attitude stabilization and control systems, including relevant sensors and actuators.

The ISA noted that functional testing of additional subsystems will continue in the coming days, and results will be progressively shared with specialists and space enthusiasts.

Commissioned by the Iranian Space Agency and developed in collaboration with the Iranian Space Research Center, Nahid-2 was launched aboard a Russian Soyuz rocket as part of an international multi-payload mission



that included Russia's Ionosfera-M3 and M4 satellites and 18 others from various countries.

In a symbolic moment, the Iranian Space Agency's logo appeared on the Soyuz launch vehicle, signifying Iran's formal participation in the international space mission.

The Nahid-2 is designed for

a five-year mission in low Earth orbit at an altitude of approximately 500 kilometers. One of the key engineering challenges for satellites in this range is gradual orbital decay caused by Earth's gravity, which can degrade performance over time. To counteract this, Nahid-2 is equipped with an indigenously built propulsion system capable

of adjusting its altitude by up to 50 kilometers.

Developed entirely by Iranian engineers, the propulsion system uses home-grown hot gas thrusters and features advanced components such as a composite fuel tank, high-pressure valves, and precision control nozzles. Due to their technical complexity, such components are rarely available on the global market, further underscoring the significance of domestic production.

In addition to its propulsion system, Nahid-2 incorporates several other Iranian-made technologies, including lithium-ion batteries capable of tens of thousands of charge-discharge cycles, space-grade adhesives, and polymer-based coatings for thermal insulation and conductivity regulation.

With successful subsystem tests underway, the Nahid-2 mission marks another step forward in Iran's push to expand its independent space capabilities and satellite technology expertise.

Joint parliamentary session with president focuses on enhancing Iran's defense budget

TEHRAN – The spokesperson for the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee in Iran's Parliament, Ebrahim Rezaei, announces that in a joint meeting with President Masoud Pezeshkian, members of the committee emphasized the imperative of prioritizing the armed forces and enhancing the country's defensive capabilities in the upcoming year's budget.

According to Rezaei, the meeting focused on several critical issues related to safeguarding Iran's national security and advancing its foreign policy objectives, especially in light of recent developments following the 12-day confrontation with the Zionist regime.

At the session, the heads of the committee's five specialized subcommittees—including security, defense, foreign relations, nuclear affairs, and human rights—along with several members, presented comprehensive reports and shared their assessments with the President. The committee underscored the

necessity of allocating sufficient resources to strengthen the military and border defense units, while also attending to the welfare of underprivileged segments of society.

Members highlighted the importance of adopting a community-based approach to public security and addressed concerns regarding the security situation in the country's northeastern and southeastern regions. They also stressed the strategic role of media in raising public awareness and reinforcing national resilience.

On the diplomatic front, the committee stressed the need to deepen relations with neighboring states and to carefully navigate the emerging geopolitical blocs. The importance of diplomatic solidarity with the oppressed people of Gaza was also reaffirmed, alongside calls for robust support through all available international channels.

On June 13, the Zionist regime launched a military offensive against Iran, targeting its mil-



itary installations, nuclear facilities, and civilian areas over a span of 12 days. The United States later escalated the conflict by carrying out airstrikes on three of Iran's nuclear sites—Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan—on June 22.

In swift retaliation, Iranian armed forces launched a series of powerful counterstrikes. The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force executed 22 rounds of missile attacks

against targets in the occupied territories under Operation True Promise III, causing significant damage and casualties.

In response to the U.S. strikes, Iran also fired a barrage of missiles at al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest U.S. military installation in West Asia. The extent of Iran's retaliatory moves forced the Israeli regime to request a pause in hostilities which was announced by the U.S. on June 24.

Iran details intelligence fight against Western-Israeli alliance during 12-day war

Citizens helped thwart terrorism, infiltration, separatism, and espionage

From page 1 ► The statement provided specific examples of intelligence operations across multiple domains:

- Espionage dominance: Iran conducted extensive offensive intelligence operations within the occupied Palestinian territories, recruiting agents even within the Israeli security apparatus. Crucially, they exploited top-secret documents from Israel's nuclear information. "Precise coordinates" of critical infrastructure, including sensitive security sites, weapons facilities, and research labs, were relayed to Iran's armed forces before, during, and after the recent war. Domestically, 20 Mossad spies were arrested. Cooperation with regional intelligence services, facilitated through covert diplomacy, was also emphasized.

- Terrorism and separatism crushed: Security forces arrested three ISIS "emirs" and 50 Takfiri terrorists, seizing their weapons. They preempted infiltration plots by 300 foreign terrorists near the southeast border and 150 in Syria, both targeting Iran. Weapons caches for separatist groups were destroyed, and cells of the Mojahedin-e-Khalq terror organization (MEK), active during the war, were neutralized. A plan for territorial capture in the northwest/southeast was also thwarted.

- "Regime change" plots foiled: A significant U.S.-Israeli plot to install a puppet government, involving the remnants of the deposed Pahlavi family and "fanatical Iranian-origin Zionist elements," was uncovered. A Mossad-directed plan for terrorist attacks in Tehran, coinciding with the Evin prison strike, was also foiled. Networks receiving digital currency (Tether) for disruptive activities were dismantled, leading to 65 arrests. A Mossad "Zionist Christianity" cell was neutralized, and their weapons seized (53 arrests). The recruitment of Iranian celebrities and athletes in the diaspora was also disrupted.

- Cyber and arms interdiction: Dozens of administrators of espionage and "street warfare" channels were apprehended. Attempts by Mossad to contact citizens via foreign numbers, offering intimidation or asylum, were thwarted. Six major arms shipments to terrorist separatists on the western border were seized, as were large stockpiles in Sistan and Baluchistan and Kerman provinces. Two international arms smugglers were disrupted.

- Social unrest prevented: "Necessary neutralizing measures" were implemented to counter enemy attempts to incite unrest.



Vigilance around critical infrastructure was heightened. Efforts to create goods shortages via hoarding and rumors were also countered.

The statement credited Iran's "steel-like" faith, national will, the Armed Forces, and the "steadfast leadership" of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, for the immense success.

The report also highlighted the "epic" role of citizens reporting suspicious activities, calling them the "primary actors" in the "sacred security defense."

Last but not least, the ministry honored six martyred personnel in the 12-Day war.

Zangezur: The corridor that could break the Caucasus

With Iran’s firm opposition, renewed calls for the illegal route are all but sure to drag region into chaos

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – The Republic of Azerbaijan is once again making a splash with its infamous corridor proposal, this time dragging the United States and NATO into the saga after it was forced to scrap its plans last year when Iranian forces amassed the border with Armenia.

Azerbaijan’s proposed “Zangezur corridor” is more than just a transit route. The plan aims to link the country’s mainland to the Nakhchivan exclave – a connection already secured via Iran – with a new route slicing through Armenia. However, unlike the existing route through Iran, Baku seeks control over this new corridor, which means that it would ultimately shatter Armenia’s sovereignty in its southern Syunik province and alter the country’s historical borders with Iran, if the Zangezur project is realized.

Azeri President Elham Aliyev and his Turkish patron Recep Tayyip Erdogan began to float the idea after a 2020 war that saw Baku regain control of significant portions of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, as well as the surrounding territories that had been held by Armenian forces as a buffer zone since the 1990s. The peace agreement signed at the conclusion of the war included a provision for new transport routes connecting mainland Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan, but it did not grant Azerbaijan control over internationally-recognized Armenian territory.

The two presidents frequently spoke about the corridor during



2023 and 2024, even getting Russia to announce an apparent lack of opposition at one point. But they decided they could not make the Zangezur happen after Iranian forces and equipment began to gather at the border with Armenia, according to information obtained by the Tehran Times.

It appears, however, that Baku and Ankara are testing new ways to materialize their plans. Last month, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Tom Barrack announced Washington’s offer to build and manage the Zangezur in an attempt to “advance” negotiations in the South Caucasus. Aliyev seemed to gain new boldness after that, declaring at a media forum earlier this month that he will accept “no reciprocal arrangement” on the matter.

Aliyev, who has been the president since 2003 after replacing his father, is looking to leverage shifting regional and global dynamics to advance the Zangezur project,

stated Hossein Salar Seyfodini, a researcher and expert on the South Caucasus region. “Baku recognizes Iran’s firm opposition and aims to avoid direct conflict with Tehran,” he stated. “Therefore, it is trying to involve various international players including Israel, Britain, the U.S. and NATO to raise the stakes and deter Iran’s potential political and military intervention in the matter.”

The statements by American and Azeri figures in recent weeks have already alarmed Iranians. During a Monday presser, Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman reiterated Iran’s position that any transport routes connecting mainland Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan must respect regional countries’ “national sovereignty” and “territorial integrity”. “Tehran is closely monitoring this issue as it relates to the country’s national interests,” the spokesman added.

A day earlier, Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior advisor to the Leader of

the Islamic Revolution, delivered the strongest condemnation of the Zangezur proposal to date. He said the corridor, rather than fostering connections and advancing economic projects, aims to weaken Iran’s position in the South Caucasus, impose a land blockade on Iran and Russia, and ultimately incite separatism within Iran.

It appears that a military confrontation would be unavoidable should Azerbaijan, Turkey, and the U.S. persist in pursuing these plans. In his statement, Velayati indicated that Tehran has redeployed forces to the border and intends to pursue a policy of “active prevention” rather than reactive measures.

In the event of a military confrontation, Tehran may also retaliate for Azerbaijan’s reported involvement in Israel’s 12-day war against Iran, which occurred between June 13 and June 24. Citizens living near the Iran-Azerbaijan border have reported witnessing drones entering Iran from Azerbaijan. While Baku has denied these reports, Iran has stated it is investigating the matter.

Furthermore, an encroachment on Armenian territory would add another legal challenge to Aliyev’s existing list of concerns, Seyfodini stated. Azerbaijan already faces accusations of war crimes committed during the conflicts over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, with at least two complaints filed at the International Criminal Court (ICC) by rights groups representing Armenian victims.

Judiciary chief vows swift justice after deadly terror attack in SE Iran

TEHRAN – Iran’s Judiciary Chief, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje’i, has called for the immediate identification, prosecution, and punishment of all individuals involved in the recent terrorist attack on the Zahedan courthouse, which left several civilians dead, including a child.

Speaking during a meeting of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary on Monday, Eje’i offered his condolences to the victims’ families and directed relevant judicial bodies—including the Office of the Prosecutor General and the Justice Department of Sistan and Baluchestan Province—to act with full force and determination in pursuing those responsible.

“In line with issued directives, judicial authorities must exhaust all means to bring to justice the perpetrators and backers of this heinous act,” he said. “There is no doubt that the roots of such terrorist crimes lie in global arrogance, led by the criminal United States, which serves as the chief supporter of the Zionist regime’s horrific atrocities in Gaza and orchestrator of many other crimes worldwide.”



Eje’i also instructed the Judiciary’s Deputy for Financial and Support Affairs to ensure the necessary support is provided to the families of those killed and injured in the attack.

The terrorist attack on the Zahedan courthouse on Saturday claimed the lives of at least six people and injured twenty-two others. Iranian security forces responded swiftly, killing three of the attackers during armed clashes at

the scene.

Following the attack, the Iranian Judiciary released a statement, condemning the heinous act and promising to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice.

Sistan and Baluchestan, a southeastern province bordering Pakistan, has long been a hotspot for terrorist activity, with numerous attacks targeting civilians and security personnel. Iranian officials say many of these operations are orchestrated by groups linked to foreign intelligence services.

Last October, ten members of Iran’s law enforcement forces were killed in a deadly assault in the Gohar Kuh district of Taftan County. The attack was claimed by the so-called Jaish al-Adl terrorist group, one of the most active armed organizations operating in the region.

In April, Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces delivered a blow to the Jaish al-Adl terrorist group during an anti-terrorism military operation in Sistan and Baluchestan, killing a ringleader of the group.

Tehran says no talks with US until Iranian interests met

TEHRAN – Iran’s Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei rejected renewed nuclear negotiations with the United States during a press briefing on Monday, declaring Tehran has “no plans” for diplomacy until Washington fundamentally changes its behavior and provides ironclad guarantees against aggression.

The statement came amid escalating European threats to trigger sanctions “snapback” and ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Baqaei addressed the prospect of reviving nuclear diplomacy with Washington: “We have no plans for negotiations at this time. We will decide and announce when Iran’s interests and expediciencies require it.”

He condemned the U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran’s civilian nuclear facilities as an “unprecedented” violation of international law that destroyed trust: “While arranging the next round of talks, one party encouraged its proxy to militarily aggress against a country targeting peaceful nuclear facilities under 24/7 IAEA supervision.”

The spokesman emphasized that any future talks require Washington to abandon coercion: “Negotiations must not become tools for intimidation. We will only use diplomacy when convinced it secures our interests.”

Baqaei’s stance reflects Tehran’s fury over the U.S.-backed Israeli war on Iran during active U.S.-Iran talks mediated by Oman.

Europe’s snapback threats lack legitimacy

On last week’s Istanbul talks with the E3 (UK, France, Germany), Baqaei warned that European invocation of UNSC Resolution 2231’s snapback mechanism would backfire: “European parties lack the competence and legal right to use this tool after endorsing the June aggression.”

He said Iran had delivered a stark message during the discussions: “Any sanctions snapback will provoke a proportionate Iranian response that complicates the nuclear impasse and harms the non-proliferation regime.”

In response to recent remarks by



Iran’s Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei during his weekly press conference in Tehran on July 28, 2025.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot, the Iranian spokesman rejected France’s call to broaden negotiations to encompass missile programs and regional activities, dismissing the demand as “blackmail rooted in European confusion.” He emphasized, “Our defensive capabilities—developed by our scientists—are not up for negotiation.”

Enrichment rights “non-negotiable”

Responding to Trump’s renewed

threats against Iran’s nuclear program, Baqaei affirmed: “Our enrichment path is clear. We await damage assessments from the June attacks, but will continue exercising our inalienable rights.”

He noted technical discussions with an IAEA delegation would begin within two weeks under a new framework respecting Iran’s parliamentary mandate.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Jahanbakhsh a candidate to join Sparta Rotterdam

TEHRAN – Alireza Jahanbakhsh, the 31-year-old Iranian winger, who left sc Heerenveen after his contract expired, is a candidate to join Sparta Rotterdam.

Following Mitchell van Bergen’s departure, the Eredivisie side is searching for a replacement.

Jahanbakhsh lost his starting position following the appointment of coach Robin Veldman, suffered an injury, and missed the end of the season.

Although Jahanbakhsh initially considered moving abroad last year, his application for a Dutch passport at the time convinced him to stay in the Eredivisie.

At present, there is little concrete interest from foreign clubs, partly due to his injury. This may result in him signing with a new club at the last moment or deciding to remain in the Netherlands.

A return to sc Heerenveen remains an option despite limited playing time toward the end of the season, given Jahanbakhsh’s experience and skills.

The Keuken Kampioen Divisie (second division) also presents opportunities. RKC Waalwijk, which was relegated and aims to strengthen their squad, could benefit from an experienced winger like Jahanbakhsh following the departure of star player Richonell Margaret. At RKC, he would almost certainly secure a regular place in the starting lineup, giving him the chance to play a key role weekly, although a move to a lower division might seem less appealing, voetbal.headliner.nl reported.

In summary, Jahanbakhsh is in an uncertain phase with options in both the Eredivisie and Keuken Kampioen Divisie, while opportunities abroad are currently limited.

His next step will depend on offers he receives and his desire for regular playing time.

Iran’s handball girls meet expectations in Asia

TEHRAN – In a dramatic finish at the 2025 Asian Women’s Youth Handball Championship, Iran’s youth team clinched fifth place after defeating Chinese Taipei 34-33 in a tense penalty shootout. The regular time had ended in a thrilling 30-30 draw, making the final moments a test of nerve and precision.

The tournament, held from July 18 to 26 in Jingtangshan, China, marked its 11th edition and served as a qualifier for the 2026 Women’s Youth World Championship.

This year’s competition featured strong contenders, including defending champions Japan and South Korea. Iran, placed in the so-called “group of death,” faced both these Asian giants, suffering defeats but managing solid wins against Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei.

One of the standout players of the tournament, Parisan Ahmad-Khosravi, who was named the best player in the match against Chinese Taipei, expressed pride in the team’s performance:

“Fortunately, we managed to show our full potential in this tournament. The games were intense, and we gave it our all in every match, especially against Chinese Taipei. I’m very happy to have been chosen as the best player, thanks to the support of my teammates and coaches. I’d also like to thank the handball federation and Mr. Alireza Pakdel for all their efforts in sending the team to this important tournament. A special thanks as well to Sardar Azmoun for his support—it really meant a lot to us.”

Iranian football star Azmoun, currently playing for Shabab Al Ahli in the UAE, publicly expressed his support and encouragement for the Iranian women’s youth handball team through social media.

The road to 5th place was anything but easy. Despite a last-minute arrival in China just hours before their first match, the Iranian squad performed admirably even against top-tier teams. A significant setback came during their final

game when star player Diana Rezaei suffered a serious hand injury early in the second half. Yet, the team pushed through with resilience and focus.

Pakdel, President of the Handball Federation of Iran, emphasized the long-term vision behind this participation:

“Our main goal wasn’t results. We’re building the future of women’s handball in Iran. Despite being in a tough group, we played strong games. If we had been in a different group, we might have reached the semifinals. This 5th place is meaningful because of the circumstances and the determination these girls showed.”

With a new generation of talent emerging and visible support from both officials and fans, Iran’s women’s handball has laid down a strong foundation for future success. This team, brimming with promise and character, may well be among Asia’s elite in the years to come.

Iran beat Egypt in 2025 FIVB Boys’ U19 World Championship

TEHRAN – Iran eased past Egypt 3-0 (25-16, 25-22, 25-20) in the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Boys’ U19 World Championship on Monday.

Mohammadamin Rahimi scored 11 points for Iran, while Ahmed Amer collected 12 points for Egypt.

The young Persians, who had lost to Spain and defeated Poland and Tunisia in their previous matches, will play Italy on Tuesday in Pool C.

Uzbekistan hosts the Championship from 24 July to 3 August in Tashkent, with preparations supported by the FIVB Volleyball Empowerment program through 12 months of coaching support, event equipment, and three knowledge transfer programs.

The 24 participating teams compete in four round-robin pools, with the top four teams from each group advancing to the knockout stage. All teams play through to the end of the tournament, with final rankings determined across three additional rounds to decide positions from first to 24th.

The World Championship marks an important moment for Uzbekistan volleyball. The Empowerment program provides the foundation for the country’s efforts to develop talent and strengthen its presence in international competition.

Iran in Pot 4 of AFC Women’s Asian Cup Australia 2026

TEHRAN – Iran are placed in Pot 4 of the AFC Women’s Asian Cup Australia 2026.

With Sydney set to crown the champion on March 21, 2026, the Harbour City serves as a fitting backdrop for the Final Draw on July 29 (Tuesday), as Australia gears up to stage the Continental showpiece from March 1.

Bangladesh, Chinese Taipei, DPR Korea, India, Iran, Philippines, Uzbekistan and Vietnam joined hosts Australia, alongside the top three finishers from the AFC Women’s Asian Cup India 2022 – defending champions China, runners-up Korea Republic, and third-placed Japan, who all earned automatic qualification.

With the hosts guaranteed the top seed, the rest of the seedings—based on the latest FIFA Women’s World Ranking (as of June 12)—and the corresponding pot allocations for the Final Draw are as follows:

Pot 1: Australia (15), Japan (7), DPR Korea (9)

Pot 2: China PR (17), Korea Republic (21), Vietnam (37)

Pot 3: Philippines (41), Chinese Taipei (42), Uzbekistan (51)

Pot 4: Iran (68), India (70), Bangladesh (128)

Australia will feature in the opening match at the Perth Stadium on March 1, while the ultimate showdown for the coveted trophy will take place at Sydney’s Stadium Australia on March 21.

1,000 water, power projects to be launched by March 2026: energy minister



From Page 1 ► “In the future, these problems will be resolved,” Aliabadi added.

The government has been ramping up investment in renewable energy as part of its broader strategy to diversify energy sources and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

According to earlier statements by officials, the Energy Ministry aims to install 10,000 megawatts of renewable capacity over the next few years, with a significant portion coming from solar and wind farms in arid and semi-arid provinces.

Aliabadi had earlier emphasized that equitable distribution of water and electricity remains a top priority.

“We are determined to eliminate disparities in access, especially in rural and underdeveloped regions,” he said, adding that several of the new projects are focused on strengthening infrastructure in provinces with limited access to clean water and stable electricity.

In addition to power generation, the minister said the projects include the expansion of water treatment facilities, development of wastewater networks, and modernization of irrigation systems to support agriculture in drought-prone areas.

The Energy Ministry recently announced the implementation of public-private partnership models to speed up project delivery.

Under this scheme, local and foreign investors are invited to co-finance energy and water infrastructure initiatives, especially in renewable energy and desalination technologies.

With peak summer consumption pushing demand across the country, Iran has been working to avoid blackouts and water shortages by accelerating infrastructure development and encouraging more efficient energy use through smart metering and tariff reforms.

Quarterly non-oil export from Yazd province stands at over \$89m

TEHRAN – Non-oil products worth \$89.894 million were exported from Yazd province, in the center of Iran, during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21–June 21), according to a provincial official.

Mohammad Qasempour, the director-general of Yazd province's Customs Department, put the value of non-oil import to the province at \$69.084 million in the mentioned three-month period.

The major non-oil export items during this period were tiles and ceramics, molybdenum compounds, hydrocarbons, various types of construction glass and containers, plastic products, and steel sections, which have been exported to Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, and Turkey, the official announced.

Qasempour also mentioned that the province's major imported goods were raw materials for production units, spare parts, and production line machinery originating from Turkey, Germany, China, Italy, and the United Arab Emirates.

As previously announced by Faroud Asgari, deputy economy minister and head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported \$11.655 billion worth of non-oil goods in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year.

The volume of non-oil exports stood at 34.476 million tons, representing a 9.3 percent decrease in weight and a 14.4 percent drop in value compared to the same period last year.

The average customs value of exported goods was \$338 per ton, down 5.6 percent year-on-year.

Petrochemical exports during the quarter totaled 11,133 million tons, valued at \$4.684 billion, which marks a 28.7 percent decline in weight and a 24.5 percent decrease in value from the year before.

The top non-oil export items were liquefied



propane at \$874 million, liquefied butane at \$611 million, methanol at \$576 million, petroleum bitumen at \$574 million, and natural gas at \$456 million.

China was Iran's largest export destination with purchases totaling \$3.511 billion. It was followed by Iraq at \$1.905 billion, the United Arab Emirates at \$1.592 billion, Turkey at \$937 million, Afghanistan at \$510 million, Oman at \$437 million, and Pakistan at \$420 million.

Iran's total non-oil trade during the quarter reached 43.489 million tons, valued at \$24.684 billion.

Imports accounted for 9.013 million tons of that volume, worth \$13.029 billion—down 4.35 percent in weight and 11.73 percent in value year-on-year.

The average value of imported goods was \$1,446 per ton, reflecting a 7.7 percent decline.

Key import items included unrefined gold at \$965 million, animal feed corn at \$883 million, rice at \$500 million, sunflower seed oil at \$493 million, and mobile phones at \$372 million.

The UAE was Iran's leading import partner with \$3.886 billion in shipments, followed by China at \$3.428 billion, Turkey at \$1.986 billion, India at \$514 million, Germany at \$454 million, Russia at \$354 million, and the Netherlands at \$340 million.

and transparency in the capital market in the current Iranian calendar year, which began on March 21.

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

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

NDF to provide \$3.2b of investment in renewables

TEHRAN – Iran's Supreme Economic Council has approved a \$3.2 billion investment from the National Development Fund (NDF) to support the construction of 7,000 megawatts of solar power capacity, with a focus on rooftop units, officials said on Monday.

The decision, based on a directive issued by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution allowing the NDF to invest in the energy sector, was announced by Vice President Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi, who also heads the Planning and Budget Organization. The authorization has been formally communicated to the Energy Ministry and the NDF.

The investment will prioritize solar systems that feed electricity directly into local distribution networks, particularly small-scale rooftop units installed by households or private entities.



These decentralized systems are expected to enhance grid stability and reduce pressure on traditional power plants.

The financing structure allocates 80 percent of the required capital to the NDF and 20 percent to private-sector participants.

Each investor can apply for up

to 1,000 megawatts of capacity, with returns for the sovereign wealth fund set at an annual rate of eight percent in hard currency.

The NDF will disburse the funds through an intermediary financial institution tasked with managing cash flow, credit oversight, and market operations.

Capital market enters a phase of stabilizing equilibrium: SEO head

TEHRAN- The head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) said that the capital market has entered a phase of stabilizing equilibrium.

“We were able to manage the market after the imposed 12-day war, Hojatollah Seyed noted, adding: “Now the stage of balancing the capital market has ended and we have entered the stage of stabilizing the balance.”

“When the imposed war began, we were surprised at the stock market, but we didn't say what to do now, and we finalized our plan at the same day when the first attacks occurred”, the official highlighted.

He recalled that in certain circumstances, the most important concern of stock exchanges in the world is to preserve shareholder assets, and stated: “During the days of war, shareholders were concerned about preserving their capital, and for this reason, stock trading was suspended; the next stage was liquidity because companies wanted to pay their employees.”

The SEO head further emphasized that there is no place for the market to be 100 percent green, and that a market with 50 percent green and red is balanced, adding: “In the post-war situation, publishers helped, the Central Bank intervened, and investment funds contributed greatly to the market balance.”

Now, the fourth stage, which is stabilization, is underway, and we will soon enter the fifth stage of the market, which is the boom stage.”

On July 7, the TSE head said that Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization is rolling out a revamped stabilization package aimed at improving liquidity and investor confidence following recent market volatility.

Mahamoud Goudarzi said a series of coordination meetings between regulators, stakeholders, and capital market institutions have paved the way for a gradual market recovery. The updated plan includes continued direct support for listed stocks, enhanced fund and portfolio management, the use of derivatives

such as put options and futures, and regulatory reforms.

“This package is part of our efforts to shift the market from volatility toward a phase of equilibrium and ultimately growth,” Goudarzi told IRNA, adding that in recent sessions, the market showed signs of stabilization after a turbulent 12-day period marked by geopolitical tensions.

Goudarzi explained that the market's priorities have evolved from asset protection during the crisis to enhancing liquidity last week, and now to reinforcing price stability.

“Over the past four days, consistent engagement among regulators, market operators, and experts has laid the groundwork for restoring balance and improving tradability,” he said. “If this trend continues, the market will soon be positioned to enter a phase of sustainable recovery.”

Meanwhile, Hamid Mirmoayeni, a capital markets analyst, said that while government agencies and large listed firms have fulfilled their support roles effectively, long-term investor sentiment hinges on broader political developments.

“The flow of capital back into the stock market depends less on technical factors and more on easing political tensions,” he told the Securities and Exchange News Agency (SENA). “Recent interventions by the Central Bank, the Securities and Exchange Organization, and major state-owned companies have stabilized concerns around liquidity, particularly for large-cap stocks.”

Mirmoayeni said there is no need for a new round of measures at this stage, as the existing support framework has been well received by investors.

“The authorities have done what's needed. Now, with reduced geopolitical uncertainty, we could see a revival in investment flows,” he added.

Market observers noted a more optimistic tone in recent trading sessions, reflecting renewed institutional confidence.



The TSE's stabilization strategy, combined with derivatives tools and liquidity support, is expected to boost risk management and cushion the market against future shocks.

Iran's stock exchange had come under pressure amid regional unrest and sharp outflows, but authorities are now banking on policy continuity and improved transparency to chart a path toward recovery.

Previously, the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) for monetary policy had said the banking network supports the capital market and shareholders through the stock market management, and the use of monetary and credit policy tools.

Regarding the Central Bank and banking network's program to support the capital market, Mohammad Shirijian said: “The Central Bank and the Stock Exchange Organization (SEO) have made important decisions to support the capital market during continuous meetings over the past two weeks at the expert and management levels, as well as joint meetings between the Governor of the Central Bank, the Minister of Economic and Financial Affairs, and the Head of the Stock Exchange Organization.”

Regarding the banking system's methods of supporting the capital market, he said: “Part of this support is provided in the form of direct support for the capital market and in the form of market management of the shares of banks and banking network subsidiaries, especially banks under Article 44 of the Constitution.”

Shirijian added: “Part of this support is also provided indirectly.”

Iran boosts South Pars gas output with new well commissioning

TEHRAN – Iran has increased daily gas production from the giant South Pars field by 1.6 million cubic meters following the launch of a new infield well, a senior official said on Monday.

Touraj Dehghani, managing director of Pars Oil and Gas Company, said the third well of the South Pars infield drilling program has come online at platform SPD19A

in Phase 19 of the shared offshore field.

“With this well, three infield wells have now been fully commissioned, raising total output from the field by 5.1 million cubic meters per day,” Dehghani said, according to a statement from the company.

He added that more wells will

be added in the coming months as drilling operations progress across additional platforms.

The infield drilling program involves the development of 35 new wells across 17 existing offshore platforms in South Pars. Upon full completion, the project is expected to boost the field's production capacity by 36 million cubic meters per day.

South Pars, which Iran shares with Qatar, is the world's largest gas field and a critical component of the country's energy strategy.

Iranian officials have prioritized optimizing output from the field to meet rising domestic demand and support downstream industries such as petrochemicals and power generation.

TEDPIX drops 42,778 points on Monday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 42,778 points to 2,768 million on Monday, which is the third day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one.

The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

In late March, the head of the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) outlined the five major plans for enhancing efficiency

Iran resumes domestic, intl. trade exhibitions as conditions normalize

TEHRAN – Iran will resume the regular schedule of domestic and international exhibitions now that conditions in the country have returned to normal, a senior official at the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said.

Amir Roshanbakhsh Ghanbari, TPO's Deputy for the Promotion of International Business-

es, told state media that exhibition sites have been instructed to operate based on their original calendars, following the restoration of flight services and normalization of national conditions.

“Exhibitions that were postponed due to the 12-day war will also be held at a later, appropriate time after a rescheduling review and

necessary coordination,” he said, referring to the recent conflict that disrupted trade events.

Roshanbakhsh Ghanbari added that incentives and support measures for organizing international exhibitions and trade events remain in place, and business actors can continue to benefit from these programs.

Israel-based human rights groups: Gaza crisis is genocide, Western allies enable it

From page 1 ▶ “We urgently demand the immediate and unconditional opening of all crossings and the swift entry of baby formula and humanitarian aid,” the office said in a statement.

Israel’s near-total blockade of aid, in place for months, has drawn condemnation from international observers who accuse it of deliberately weaponizing hunger. Under mounting global pressure, Israel announced over the weekend that it would implement brief humanitarian pauses and conducted limited air drops and truck deliveries. However, these measures have been widely dismissed as insufficient.

Tom Fletcher, the UN’s Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, described the Israeli aid efforts as “a drop in the ocean,” warning that mass starvation is no longer a looming threat—it is a present reality. Similarly, Sam Rose, acting director of UNRWA affairs in Gaza, accused Israel of “manufactured starvation,” suggesting the crisis has been deliberately cultivated over months.

The impact is devastating.



Since the start of the war, nearly 60,000 Palestinians have been killed, with countless others injured, displaced, or left to starve.

International legal and human rights organizations have intensified their scrutiny. Israel now faces genocide accusations at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). On Monday, two of Israel’s own leading human rights organizations—B’Tselem and Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)—joined the global condemnation. In a joint report, they stated that Israel is targeting civilians “solely because of their identity as Palestinians,” describing the result as irreparable harm to Palestinian society.

Yuli Novak, director of B’Tselem, emphasized, “Genocide is not just a legal term. It’s a social and political phenomenon—and it is happening now.” Guy Shalev, head of Physicians for Human Rights, added that Israel’s destruction of Gaza’s health-care infrastructure alone qualifies as genocidal under Article 2(c) of the Genocide Convention.

Crucially, the report also places blame on Israel’s Western allies, arguing they are not mere bystanders but active enablers of this humanitarian disaster.

What is unfolding in Gaza is not a natural disaster, nor a re-

grettable byproduct of war. It is a systematically engineered crisis, rooted in policies of collective punishment and sustained by indifference from much of the international community.

The use of starvation as a method of warfare is a grave violation of international law. Yet in Gaza, it has become an everyday reality—infants dying, families scavenging for food under the shadow of drones, and hospitals crippled beyond repair.

The world must not turn away. As legal experts, humanitarian agencies, and even Israeli organizations now affirm, the actions taken—or willfully ignored—by Israel in Gaza may well constitute genocide. The responsibility does not lie with Tel Aviv alone. It extends to all governments and institutions that continue to supply arms, shield war crimes from accountability, or treat Palestinian lives as collateral.

Until meaningful pressure is applied and unconditional humanitarian access is restored, Gaza’s children will continue to die—not just from bombs, but from empty stomachs.

The ICJ Gaza case and a race against time

From page 1 ▶ While this meticulous approach may slow judicial proceedings during urgent humanitarian crises, it aims to protect the integrity and legitimacy of international law by balancing the rights of the accused state against broader legal responsibilities.

Simultaneously, the delay highlights the complex intersection of law and politics in international adjudication. The ICJ operates within a global system marked by divergent national interests, strategic alliances, and diplomatic sensitivities. Granting Israel extra time to prepare its defense reflects a pragmatic effort to ensure fairness and secure the cooperation needed for enforcement, as rulings depend not only on legal correctness but also on political realities.

Furthermore, the postponement reveals structural limitations inherent to international justice. Unlike domestic courts, the ICJ lacks independent enforcement power and must rely on the political will of states and bodies like the UN Security Council. Political dynamics, including vetoes and conflicting interests, can hinder implementation, demonstrating

the entanglement of legal processes with geopolitical constraints.

Balancing justice and urgency in crisis

This situation also foregrounds a critical discourse about the role and expectations of international legal institutions in times of crisis. While the urgency of humanitarian suffering intensifies calls for swift responses, the principles of justice and rule of law caution against sacrificing procedural fairness for expediency.

International justice seeks not only to address immediate violations but also to set lasting precedents that reinforce global accountability and deter future crimes. Achieving this balance requires deliberate and sometimes painstaking processes.

Looking forward, the ICJ’s delayed ruling invites reflection on how international judicial mechanisms can evolve to better reconcile the demands of urgency and thoroughness. Innovations in evidence-gathering technologies, enhanced international cooperation, and reforms in procedural protocols may help ac-

celerate proceedings without compromising standards.

Additionally, strengthening parallel diplomatic and humanitarian efforts is vital to mitigate suffering during judicial deliberations.

This delay of the ICJ in the Gaza genocide verdict speaks to the arduous act of balancing justice, law, and geopolitics. It is an expression of the considered approach, founded on principle, that insists on fairness and rigor. Yet every day of delay further deepens the tragedy in Gaza, and one must keep on asking: Can justice afford to wait? Are these humanitarian crises unfolding in real time so fleeting that the legal deliberation systems have to beat fast? This delay is not just a procedural issue—it asks the international community to pause and reflect: How do we juggle offering justice with the highest standards against the ability to act swiftly enough to save lives? The challenge is clear before us—justice should not only uphold humanity with the highest standards of integrity but should be swift enough; otherwise, justice delayed is rightly deemed justice denied.

Gaza war draining Israeli army

From page 1 ▶ Yedieth Ahronoth also noted that the projected number of wounded, which was initially expected to be reached by 2030, is now anticipated by 2028 due to a sharp rise in mental health cases. This has forced Israeli regime authorities to reassess their systems, budgets, and treatment plans.

It comes as the Israel occupation force (IOF) confirmed the death of another soldier and

injuries to at least nine others during clashes in southern Gaza, including several in critical condition.

Israeli media reported that casualties occurred in two incidents in the southern Gaza Strip.

Among the wounded, three were reported to be in extremely critical condition, and four others sustained serious injuries during what was described as a “security incident” in Khan Younis.

This follows the IOF acknowledging that an officer and a soldier from a reconnaissance unit were seriously wounded in a separate incident during fighting in Rafah.

The regime’s public broadcaster reported that the commander of the Desert Reconnaissance Battalion was injured, along with an officer and a soldier, due to the explosion of an improvised explosive device (IED) inside a

tunnel opening in the buffer zone near Rafah.

A day earlier, the IOF announced the deaths of a technology and maintenance officer and a soldier from the Golani Brigade during fighting in southern Gaza.

According to Hebrew reports, Hamas had attached an explosive device to a Namer armored personnel carrier in Khan Younis, causing it to catch fire and resulting in fatalities.

WSJ instrumentalizing discourse to justify genocide

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The recent editorial published by the Wall Street Journal, attributed to Yasser Abu Shabab—a local leader in Gaza linked to a militia associated with ISIS and, according to various critical reports, armed by Israel to fight Hamas—does not represent an autonomous analysis or a genuine voice of the Palestinian reality. Rather, it is a statement constructed under the influence of colonial forces seeking to justify systematic violence and the ongoing genocide in Gaza, while simultaneously facilitating internal fragmentation and control through tactical alliances with local actors.

Far from reflecting a legitimate perspective or an authentic voice of the Palestinian people, the editorial is a political communiqué built within a framework of colonial instrumentalization—one that aims to normalize violence and deepen internal division. By giving a platform in a major media outlet to a figure of this nature—a “leader” of an armed group tied to foreign interests—the article engages in a media whitewashing strategy meant to legitimize Gaza’s silent genocide and displace unified resistance narratives with portrayals of division and functional complicity with the occupier.

Yasser Abu Shabab: Local actor, regional pawn

The figure of Abu Shabab illustrates both Gaza’s internal complexity and the instrumentalization of fragmented groups for social control and fragmentation. According to reports, Abu Shabab—born in Rafah in 1993 and a member of the Tarabin Bedouin tribe—transitioned from petty crime, including drug trafficking allegations, to leading a militia that dominates certain areas of Gaza as part of a broader armed network directly supported by Israel.

This support includes the provision of weapons and tactical privileges designed explicitly to weaken Hamas and control the civilian population in a context of war. Rather than representing an organic or legitimate expression of Palestinian resistance, his role is clearly subordinated to colonial interests that utilize marginal actors to entrench disintegration and justify massive military operations.

By publishing editorials of this nature, outlets like the Wall Street Journal contribute to amplifying a functional narrative that replaces the complex nature of the conflict with oversimplified portrayals that justify occupation and social cleansing.



Barbarism begins with language: Necropolitics and dehumanization

The extreme violence unleashed on Gaza does not occur in a vacuum. Before bombs fall and civilian lives are erased, the discursive ground is laid by a politics of language that strips the other of their status as a political and human subject. In this context, the text attributed to Abu Shabab functions as a discursive prelude to barbarism—portraying certain local armed actors, controlled by or functional to Israel, as a “pragmatic alternative” while erasing and minimizing the ongoing context of occupation, blockade, and apartheid imposed on Gaza.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

ICRC calls for urgent collective action to end abhorrent suffering in Gaza

NEW YORK (ICRC)— The scale of human suffering and the stripping of human dignity in Gaza have long exceeded every acceptable standard – both legal and moral, ICRC president Mirjana Spoljaric said in a statement on the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

The following in the text of the statement:

Every minute without a ceasefire risks civilian lives. The level of suffering inflicted on civilians because of warfare conducted indiscriminately and the extreme deprivation of the essentials for survival is abhorrent,

People are being relentlessly killed in hostilities and while attempting to get food. Children are dying because they do not have enough to eat. Families are being forced to flee again and again in search of safety that does not exist. The ICRC has more than 350 staff on the ground in Gaza, many of whom are also struggling to find enough food and clean water.

This tragedy must end now – immediately and decisively. Every political hesitation,

every attempt at justification of the horrors being committed under international watch will forever be judged as a collective failure to preserve humanity in war.

States must uphold their obligation under the Geneva Conventions to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law (IHL), including by ensuring that the arms they transfer do not contribute to violations of IHL.

States must do more to ensure that the parties to the conflict fulfil their obligations under IHL. This means resuming the rapid, unimpeded and impartial delivery of humanitarian relief across Gaza. This means releasing all remaining hostages immediately and unconditionally. This means allowing the ICRC to resume visits to Palestinian detainees in Israeli places of detention.

Lives must be saved in Gaza – and this is possible with political courage to ensure respect for the rules of war and the protections they afford civilians.

Washington intensifying pressure on Lebanon ahead of parliamentary polls

From page 1 ▶ During his recent visit, the American presidential envoy deliberately ignored any talk of any guarantees that Israel will not launch attacks on Lebanon.

Analysts therefore interpreted his tweet as pessimistic about the course of events, as it became clear that Hezbollah would not surrender its weapons and was merely seeking to buy time, betting on the repercussions of events in southern Syria, where Israel is seeking to further divide the country quickly.

However, some analysts believe Washington should be cautious, as the current phase requires preserving the HTS–led government to achieve several goals, most notably the complete elimination of what it calls “Iranian influence,” in addition to cutting off military supplies to Hezbollah, as well as building a solid barrier separating Syria from Iraq.

According to these analysts, division and chaos are not feasible because they will give Tehran (and Hezbollah) an opportunity to regain its presence in Syria. Over the past decades, Iran has demonstrated its ability to harness adversity to its advantage.

Experts expect the coming weeks to witness an escalation of financial and economic pressure on Lebanon, in parallel with assassinations and attacks, especially ahead of the launch of campaigns for the May 2026 parliamentary elections, which Washington wants to produce a parliament aligned with Israeli interests.

The presidential office announced that President Joseph Aoun “personally contacted Hezbollah to resolve the arms issue,” indicating a positive response to the ideas proposed in this regard.

Regarding the electoral process, Aoun stressed the importance of holding parliamentary elections on their constitutional date, noting that “the representation of Lebanese diaspora is a matter for Parliament.”

Meanwhile, the conflict is escalating over the implementation of Article 112 of Law 44/2017, which allocates six seats to non-residents of Lebanon, provided that they may not vote for candidates for the 128 seats in Lebanon unless they decide to vote inside Lebanese territory.

Maronite Patriarch Bechara al-Rahi’s recent stance has fueled conflict among Christian factions, while supporting the Lebanese Forces’ position by stating that “limiting expatriates to six parliamentary seats contradicts the principle of connecting them to their homeland, their land, and their families, and their participation in Lebanese political life.”

Patriarch al-Rahi claimed that this issue “is a process of exclusion that negates the natural right of expatriates to vote in all electoral districts... Diaspora residents aspire to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections with complete freedom in their electoral districts wherever they are registered in



Lebanon. To protect internal unity, this article must be repealed from the current electoral law.”

Quickly, the Lebanese Forces exploited al-Rahi’s stance, with its MP George Okais implicitly threatening to disrupt the elections if Article 112 is adhered to.

It is worth noting that the largest number of expatriate voters were Christians, due to the pro-Resistance diaspora’s (especially Lebanese Shiites) fear of prosecution and intimidation.

According to a study prepared by International Information researcher Muhammad Shams al-Din, France topped the list of countries with the highest voter turnout, with approximately 20,000 registered voters in the 2022 elections.

The UAE came in second place (18,119), followed by Canada (18,023), the United States (15,740), Australia (11,744), Germany (8,811), Saudi Arabia (6,564).

This comes amidst Nawaf Salam’s government’s abdication of its electoral responsibilities as he returned from Paris with a proposal he conveyed to Speaker Nabih Berri, calling for a special cabinet session to announce Lebanon’s commitment to implementing the decision to monopolize arms control in the hands of the state.

Salam justifies his position by claiming that this will help obstruct the withdrawal of UNIFIL from the south and prevent Washington from declaring escalatory positions that could serve as cover for a new Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

UNIFIL’s mandate is scheduled to be renewed at the end of next month as part of a campaign to blackmail Lebanon into amending its role, giving it absolute freedom to search any location without Lebanese army escort, a demand primarily from Israel.

Barrack’s threats are accompanied by an anti-Resistance media campaign at the request of the American embassy in Beirut, which emphasized to those whom Barrack met that they must exert the harshest pressure on Hezbollah.

This prompted Druze leader Walid Jumblatt to say, “Hezbollah must be convinced that retaining heavy weapons will bring disaster to Lebanon.”

1000-year-old carved tombstone discovered in UNESCO-listed Yazd



TEHRAN – A historic tombstone dating back almost 1,000 years has been uncovered during restoration work at Dowlatshahi Mosque in the UNESCO-listed city of Yazd, central Iran.

Majid Oloumi, director of Yazd’s World Heritage base, announced the discovery on Monday, stating that the tombstone was found in the small mihrab (prayer niche) of the Dowlatshahi Mosque, located in the Charsouq Shahi section of a historical bazaar within the ancient city.

Oloumi said the tombstone bears an inscription in Kufic script dated 493 AH (approximately 1099 CE). “It was uncovered beneath layers of construction materials during ongoing maintenance at the mosque.”

The object measures approximately 80 by 40 centimeters and was embedded one meter deep in the mihrab.

Following its discovery, the stone was carefully removed under the supervision of archaeological experts and heritage protection officials from the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Yazd province.

The inscription on the tombstone includes Quranic verses on its two margins.

The central frame of the stone mentions titles referring to the tomb’s occupant, while the lower margin indicates the date of death as 493 AH.

Oloumi noted that Dowlatshahi Mosque and the Charsouq Shahi complex date back to the period of the Muzaffarid dynasty’s rule in Yazd.

He added that the tombstone’s dating to the era of the Kakuyid dynasty could provide new historical insights into the city’s past. (Kakuyids were a Shia Muslim dynasty of Daylamite origin).

“Historical, architectural, and archaeological studies on the tombstone and the mosque site may reveal important information about Yazd’s history and architecture,” he said.

Oloumi emphasized the need for all restoration and protection efforts in Yazd’s historic areas to be carried out under expert supervision, given the city’s rich layers of concealed historical heritage.

Dowlatshahi Mosque remains a significant monument reflecting Yazd’s medieval Islamic architecture and heritage.

In July 2017, the historical core of Yazd, the provincial capital, was named a UNESCO World Heritage site. Yazd is regularly referred to as a delightful place to stay, or a “don’t miss” destination by almost all of its visitors.

The city is full of mudbrick houses that are equipped with innovative badgirs (wind catchers), atmospheric alleyways, and many Islamic and Iranian monuments that shape its eye-catching city landscape.

Nine historical artifacts seized near Tehran

TEHRAN – On Saturday evening, authorities discovered and confiscated nine earthen vessels dating back to the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods in the old neighborhood of Jilard, Damavand, near Tehran.

Ali Afzali, head of Damavand’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Office, announced the seizure and said one illegal excavator was arrested during the operation.

The seizure was conducted in cooperation with the Gilavand police station and the protec-

tion unit of the cultural heritage department.

Afzali said officers obtained a judicial warrant and carried out a surprise operation that led to the arrest and recovery of the historical items.

He added that Damavand, due to its long and valuable historical background, contains many sites, mounds, and buildings spanning from prehistoric to Islamic periods, underscoring the importance of safeguarding these cultural assets.

Circular city of Darabgard seeks UNESCO registration

TEHRAN – Caretaker of Fars Cultural Heritage Department Sadeq Zare’ gave news of the start of possible registration of the ancient city of Darabgard as the first city with a circular structure on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

He told IRNA that the antiquity of Darabgard dates back to the Sassanid era, adding that it enjoys a rich history and culture.

The monument should have been built simultaneously with Sassanid-era sites Bishapour, Firouzabad, and Sarvestan on the global heritage list, but it didn’t happen due to a shortage of the required studies, he added.

He pointed out that completion of registration documents in UNESCO is in need of archaeological studies, preparing protective plans and management programs.

Zare’ said currently 30 billion rials (\$33,333) has been secured by Oil Ministry for completing the dossier of Darabgard site.

He said pursuing to attract more fund was on the priority, adding that in case of supplying the budget, the completion of possible registration of the site is possible within a year in provincial level. But proposing the site as a global candidate is subject to the ministry’s prioritization based on the country’s annual quota, he added.

Zare’ also suggested that Darabgard can be



added to Fars’ Sassanid landscape file.

Darabgard is located six kilometers south of Darab city in Fars province. This city is located in a wide and flat plain and is bounded by mountains on three sides and plains on one side.

Darabgard, with its unique architecture, is known as the first circular city in Iran and the world. This city had long and thick walls with a diameter of three meters, magnificent gates, and regular streets. In the center of the city there is a salt mountain with a height of 400 meters, which is said to have been the place of the palace of the ruler of the city.

Darabgard was inspiring for the other Sassanid cities. It became a model for the next cities such as Firouzabad and Bishapour.

Expert calls for four-year plan to restore historic bazaar in Lar

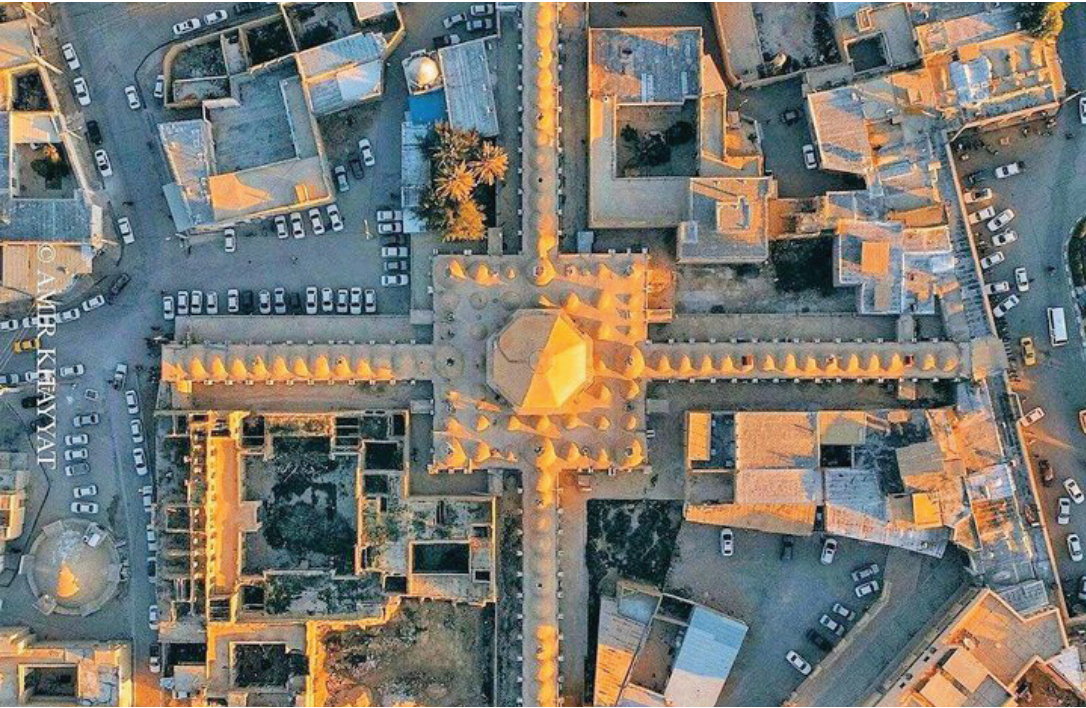
TEHRAN – A senior regional development planning expert has proposed the development of a four-year restoration plan for the Qeysarieh Bazaar in Lar, southern Iran, involving private sector participation and non-governmental organizations.

Mohammad-Ali Jamshidi, who is also a tourism advisor to the Lar City Council, outlined the proposal in a note submitted to Tehran Times. He described the Qeysarieh Bazaar as a “thousand-year-old jewel” and one of the oldest continuously operating markets in West Asia.

According to Jamshidi, historical, archaeological, and epigraphic evidence dates the bazaar back to the 4th to 6th centuries AH (approximately 1000 years ago). While some sources date the current structure to the Safavid era (early 17th century), he said this period only involved restoration and expansion, with the bazaar’s origins predating that time.

He noted the bazaar’s strategic location on caravan routes linking central Iran to the Persian Gulf made it a key economic hub from the 8th to 12th centuries AH.

Its trade network extended to ports such as Bandar Abbas, Siraf, Bushehr, and islands like Qeshm and Kish, as well as regions across the Gulf including Oman and the northern UAE. Jamshidi identified several threats to the bazaar’s preservation, including unprofessional restorations using inappropriate materials like cement and iron beams, incompatible modern businesses disrupting the tradi-



An aerial view of the ancient Bazaar of Qeysarieh in Lar, Fars province, southern Iran.

tional social fabric, inconsistent urban development causing visual and structural damage, and water damage leading to structural cracks and subsidence.

He also highlighted the absence of tourism infrastructure such as lighting, signage, visitor services, and cultural tours, which limits the site’s potential as a national and international tourist destination.

Drawing on comparisons with other historic Iranian bazaars in Tabriz, Kerman, Yazd, and Qazvin, Jamshidi said a properly restored Qeysarieh Bazaar could attract 150,000 to 250,000 domestic and international visitors

annually. He estimated the economic turnover could reach 1.5 to 2 trillion rials (\$16 million to \$22 million) per year, generating around 500 sustainable jobs in traditional restoration, tourism services, handicrafts sales, accommodation, and education.

He underscored the bazaar’s uniqueness, given its approximately 1,000-year history, making it older than other famous bazaars in Iran, and its status as one of the few living, active traditional bazaars in the country.

Jamshidi recommended initiating the process for UNESCO World Heritage registration with the cooper-

ation of architecture universities, the Cultural Heritage Department of Fars province, and relevant local authorities. He also called for the preparation of a comprehensive four-year revival plan with the active involvement of the private sector and civil society organizations.

“The Qeysarieh Bazaar is a living cultural heritage reflecting the history, architecture, trade, and culture of southern Iran,” he wrote.

“With proper attention, planning, and restoration, it can become not only a major tourist attraction but also a driver of economic development in Lar.”

TACI and foreign ministry explore ways to ease foreign arrivals by personal vehicles



TEHRAN – Implementation of a plan to allow foreign passenger cars to enter Iran through a customs clearance issued by the Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran (TACI) (Carnet de Passage) will lead to the development of tourism, said TACI Head Mohammad-Hossein Soufi.

Speaking at a joint gathering of TACI and the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran on Sunday, Soufi introduced the history and remarkable activities of TACI and explained the club’s pivotal role in developing land tourism and countering the Iranophobia phenomenon, IRNA reported.

On importance of skilled presence of Iran in international tourism fairs, he pointed to the challenges such as obtaining visas for activists and executive groups and asked Foreign Ministry to accelerate the process.

Soufi also mentioned the recent achievements of TACI in holding the international events, including the Camper and Caravan Family Rally during Nowruz holidays, hosting the International Silk Road Rallies, and holding the Polish Motorcycle Rally, as successful examples with international outcomes.

Also, Deputy Foreign Minister Seyyed Rasoul Heydari appreciated TACI influential activities and emphasized the role of this international

body in boosting tourism with private vehicles.

He declared Foreign Ministry’s readiness for any support and cooperation in boosting this field.

Heydari stated: “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while confirming and emphasizing the need to implement the plan proposed by TACI to facilitate the temporary entry and movement of personal vehicles of foreign passengers and tourists into the country through the Carnet du Passage or customs clearance issued by the club, announced its firm support for this plan; a plan that was mentioned as one of the key requirements for the prosperity of inbound tourism.”

He continued that the synergy and strategic interaction between TACI and Ministry of Foreign Affairs will promise new horizons in the development of international tourism and the wider introduction of Iran’s unique capacities to the world.

Fariman to launch industrial tourism tours in northeast Iran

TEHRAN—Mehdi Naseri, Governor of Fariman county in Khorasan Razavi province, has welcomed the Governor-General’s proposal on launching industrial tourism tours in Fariman and called it an important opportunity for improving the entrepreneurship and economic development of the region.

He told ISNA that Fariman is known as a city with high industrial capacities. The presence of exemplary industrial units in this region shows its high potential for drawing tourists and entrepreneurs.

There are exemplary industrial units in Fariman which have continued to work in the current situation and even during the 12-day Israeli war against Iran, he said.

Transferring the knowhow of these units can inspire the investors, the university graduates and the youth interested in industry and entrepreneurship, he added.

Stating that Fariman county, with its favorable geographical and climatic coordinates, has attracted the attention of domestic and foreign investors, especially with the development of the large Kavian Industrial Park, he said currently, this city has turned into one of the important industri-

al centers of the province in lights of the presence of non-indigenous entrepreneurs and the knowledge-based companies.

He said about 210 industrial units, located in three industrial townships of Kavian, Farima, Mahtab, operate in Fariman. One of the unique characteristics of Fariman is that it is located en route to two Western-Eastern Asian Corridors and cargo transit to Central Asian countries and Afghanistan, he pointed out.

The existence of industrial townships has introduced Fariman as the third industrial hub in Khorasan Razavi province, he said, adding that these industrial capacities and infrastructures have created a proper ground for holding industrial tourism tours.

Naseri continued that industrial tourism tours can be a good opportunity for young people and people interested in the industry to know the production activities and industrial processes. He noted: “These tours not only help introduce industrial units and their capabilities, but also can lead to attracting new investors and sustainable development of Fariman county.”

The Governor of Fariman emphasized that with



cooperation of all institutions and organizations, it is possible to achieve the successful launch of industrial tourism tours in Fariman, adding: “We hope that with the immediate implementation and launch of industrial tourism tours in this county, Fariman will emerge not only as an industrial center, but also as an industrial tourism destination that will attract young people and investors and contribute to the sustainable development of the province.”

Fariman, a county with a population of 104,000, consists of two districts: the central district and Qalandarabad, four cities, and 150 villages. It is located 77 kilometers southeast of Mashhad.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Vézère Valley

Located in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region in the Department of the Dordogne, the Vézère Valley is a privileged prehistoric territory that contains more than 150 deposits dating back to Paleolithic times and about thirty decorated caves.

This vast territory of roughly 30km by 40km is of outstanding interest from the ethnological, anthropological and aesthetic point of view with its cave paintings, in particular those of the Lascaux Cave, discovered in 1940. It also enabled the establishment of a chronological cadre for the prehistoric civilizations of the European

quaternary period.

The property comprises 15 prehistoric sites that bear witness to a strong Paleolithic occupation: decorated caves, funerary places, workshops, exploitation areas for raw materials, habitats, hunting scenes. Furthermore, its potential as an archaeological reserve is considerable, as demonstrated by the discoveries carried out as preventive excavations since inscription on the World Heritage List.

Despite threats concerning the conservation of the Lascaux paintings that had already led, in 1963, to the closure of the cave to the public, its acquisition by the State and the adoption of strict management measures – threats renewed during a biological proliferation, in 2000 – the authenticity of the paintings and the deposits is ensured. The surface of the Lascaux paintings, modified by “brown marks”, is minimal.

(Source: UNESCO)

Take swift action to end human crisis in Gaza: IRCS urges WHO, red crescent societies

TEHRAN – The head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), Pirhossin Kolivand, has asked the World Health Organization (WHO) and red crescent societies to reaffirm their commitment by taking immediate actions to help address the catastrophic human crisis in Gaza.

In a letter to the WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Kolivand urgently requested ‘facilitating the delivery of medicines and humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip’, the IRCS website reported.

“With the world witnessing one of the most catastrophic humanitarian crises in the Gaza Strip, it is the moral and humanitarian duty of international institutions to act swiftly to save the lives of defenceless civilians, particularly children, pregnant women, and the sick,” the letter reads.

“According to well-documented and official reports by reputable international organizations such as the World Food Program (WFP), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the humanitarian situation in Gaza is on the brink of total collapse. The ongoing blockade, destruction of medical infrastructure, and acute shortages of medicine, food, and fuel as well as blocked aid corridors have placed millions of innocent lives at serious risk.

Under these dire circumstances, the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while expressing its full readiness to contribute to relief efforts, respectfully urges you and the World Health Organization to prioritize the following urgent actions:

1. Support the immediate opening of humanitarian corridors for the delivery of medicines, medical equipment, and health personnel;
2. Coordinate with relevant international bodies to ensure the safe and secure delivery of humanitarian aid through protected



corridors; and

3. Strengthen logistical and medical support for the few remaining operational health centers and hospitals in Gaza.

Undoubtedly, the active, impartial, and effective role of your organization in this critical situation can save thousands of innocent lives and rekindle hope in the hearts of countless suffering families.”

In another letter, Kolivand addressed his counterparts in red crescent societies. His letter titled ‘Urgent Call to Action: Advocate for Immediate Governmental Intervention to Address the Humanitarian Catastrophe in Gaza’ called on red crescent societies to take immediate steps to advocate for the affected people in Gaza.

“On behalf of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), I am writing to draw your urgent attention to the devastating humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Gaza,” the letter reads.

“According to recent reports and statements from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), WHO, the UNRWA, and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the situation on the ground is dire and demands immediate and coordinated humanitarian intervention. The people of Gaza are enduring unimaginable suffering: widespread malnutrition, starvation, and a severe lack of access to food and clean water have left countless children and civilians in critical condition.

The destruction of hospitals and healthcare infrastructure severely compromises the delivery of essential medical services, further exacerbating the crisis. Over 50,000 children have been killed or injured, with thousands more suffering from severe malnutrition.

Since October 2023, WHO has reported over 725 attacks on healthcare facilities. Hospitals such as Kamal Adwan, Indonesia Hospital, Hamad Hospital for Rehabilitation and Prosthetics, and the European Gaza Hospital have suspended medical services due to their proximity to conflict zones, deepening the humanitarian emergency.

The health of women—particularly pregnant and breastfeeding women—is gravely at risk. UNICEF reports that since April 2025, 80 children have died from malnutrition, a tragic 54 percent increase in less than three months, with thousands of children under 5 facing life-threatening malnutrition.

The IRCS kindly encourages your National Society to reaffirm its critical mandate and take immediate steps to advocate for those affected. In accordance with common Article 2 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, States Parties bear the responsibility to ensure respect for IHL and to protect the dignity of civilians caught in armed conflict. The IRCS calls upon your National Society to urgently issue public statements, actively engage its government, and exert

strong diplomatic pressure to:

Halt all hostilities and violence impacting civilians and humanitarian operations in Gaza; facilitate unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid and medical services; and hold perpetrators accountable and end impunity for International Humanitarian Law.

The ongoing crisis in Gaza is a stark reminder of our shared commitment to humanity. We must collectively advocate for peace, protection of human life, and the alleviation of suffering. Together, through principled humanitarian action and effective governmental engagement, we can uphold the fundamental values that define our Movement.

We reaffirm our solidarity with all affected communities and with your colleagues across the Movement during these challenging times.”

Also, a week ago, Kolivand, in a letter to the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), called for urgent actions to be taken to stop the humanitarian crisis escalated by starvation in Gaza, and end the torture of civilians.

Referring to the reports of the WFP and UNRWA, Kolivand said that about a quarter of the Gaza population is facing famine, and thousands of women and children have died because of malnutrition.

Also, there have been reports of Zionist military forces targeting civilians waiting in line for food, he noted.

The letter highlights Israeli actions as a clear example of war crimes and a clear violation of the principles of humanitarian law. The actions of the Israeli regime could fall under the definition of genocide in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the 1948 Convention.

The official went on to call on the ICRC to utilize all its capacities to expand humanitarian diplomacy with responsible institutions to pave the way for humanitarian aid to the region.

Zimbabwe interested in boosting environmental ties with Iran

TEHRAN – Evelyn Ndlovu, Minister of Environment, Climate and Wildlife of Zimbabwe, in a meeting with Ahmad-Reza Lahijan-zadeh, deputy for Marine and Wetlands at the Department of Environment, has called for the promotion of joint efforts between the two countries.

The officials met on the sidelines of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15), which is taking place from July 23 to 31 July in Victoria Falls City, Zimbabwe, the doe. ir reported.

Highlighting Zimbabwe’s extensive experiences in wildlife conservation, Ndlovu, who is also COP15 President, proposed to develop collaborative efforts on water management and the preservation of the Asiatic cheetah through sharing scientific and practical expertise.

For his part, Lahijan-zadeh welcomed the proposal on behalf of the DOE, while elaborating on the country’s environmental measures.

The two officials agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and put it on the top agenda of the two organizations, subsequently.

COP15

The meeting of COP15 is being held under the theme “Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future.” The new Standing Committee of the Convention on Wetlands has elected Iran as the Vice-Chair for the 15th meeting.

This COP aims to adopt a new strategic plan for 2025-2034, the Convention’s fifth action plan.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was signed in the city of Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. This intergovernmental treaty provides the framework for international cooperation on wetland conservation. The convention officially came into force in 1975.

Since then, many countries have become Contracting Parties to the convention. Saudi Arabia is the 173rd one, ISNA reported.

Moreover, the three Iranian cities, including Babol in northern Mazandaran province, Kiashahr in northern Gilan province, and Gandoman in southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, received wetland city accreditation certificates on the first day of COP15 of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Environmental diplomacy

Being transboundary, many complicated environmental challenges can be addressed through environmental diplomacy, which means negotia-



tions among two or more countries.

Environmental diplomacy is used globally to settle problems such as conflicts over sources of energy, water, and climate change, IRNA reported.

The fact that all the countries share the same environment necessitates fostering environmental diplomacy to settle disputes over water resources, environmental pollution, and climate change impacts.

Environmental diplomacy is an effective and required tool to mitigate and eliminate the severe consequences by fair distribution of responsibilities among involved countries as they present their national interests and solutions.

Sand and dust storms (DSDs) are a typical example of meteorological hazards in West Asia, where many countries are involved, as some generate them and some others are affected by them.

SDSs hit countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Iran, and sometimes parts of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and even Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Removing pollution from the Aras River and securing the Hirmand River water rights, as well as some wetlands, are other examples where environmental policies have been used to resolve the conflicts.

Therefore, to mitigate climate change impacts and achieve sustainable development goals, environmental policy is required to be strengthened to help Iran, as well as its neighboring countries, benefit from available resources and secure our rights at the international level.

These dust particles have devastating impacts on respiratory health and ecosystems; they result in the closure of airports, schools, and offices, affect electricity transmission infrastructures, and bring about economic losses.

Power cuts, water shortage amid scorching summer

By Salman Parviz

TEHRAN -- With an unprecedented decline in rainfall, severe drops in dam levels, and diminished underground water, Iran entered its fifth consecutive year of drought. Some areas in Tehran are experiencing water cuts of up to 12 hours. The situation is exacerbated by climate change, which is caused by global warming.

July 23 was declared a public holiday in Tehran to save electricity and water. Iran is experiencing the hottest week of the year, with temperatures exceeding 50 °C in some regions.

One of the few places to cool down was the swimming pools. The Water and Wastewater Company of Tehran announced on Wednesday (July 24) that the provision of water to public and private swimming pools in the city will be halted until further notice. As a result, the city’s swimming pools will remain closed.

During a cabinet meeting on July 20, President Masoud Pezeshkian issued a stark warning: “The water crisis is more serious than what is being discussed today, and if we do not take urgent action now, we will face a situation in the future for which no remedy can be found.” He added that “in the water sector, beyond management and planning, we also need to address excessive consumption.”

Last year, Pezeshkian called for the relocation of Iran’s political and economic center away from Tehran, citing the capital’s mounting environmental and infrastructural challenges.

For water resources, Iran primarily relies on a combination of surface water from rivers

and streams, groundwater from aquifers, and, increasingly, desalinated water from coastal regions. Traditional methods like qantas (underground water channels) also play a role, particularly in rural areas. Uneven precipitation adds to the challenge.

According to some estimates, the ground beneath Tehran sinks by up to 22 centimeters every year due to acute water shortage. The main reason is water subsidence is over-extraction of groundwater.

Looking ahead, there are no easy solutions. A good place to start is increasing awareness among the general public to reduce wastage and excessive consumption of the precious resource. Patterns of water usage can be changed if the general public’s awareness is increased. Tehran’s per capita water consumption exceeds national standards, with most usage concentrated in drinking and hygiene.

Population growth

Unchecked population growth in Iran is another factor. Iran’s population more than doubled in forty years, from 37 million to 80 million.

Although water shortage is a general problem in Iran but the situation is acute in Tehran. With a population of two million in 1979, today the larger Tehran metropolitan area has 16.8 million residents. Tehran is the most populous city in Iran and Western Asia.

Tehran’s five main water reservoirs are Lar, Latyan, Mamlou, Taleghan, and Amir Kabir (Karaj) dams. These reservoirs play a crucial role in supplying water to Tehran.

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

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

‘Water transfer from Sea of Oman has no environmental risk’

Transferring water from Sea of Oman to central drought-ridden provinces of the country, provided that the environmental requirements are met, will not poses threats to the environment, Issa Kalantari, the Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

To provide the amount of water needed for the country, agriculture and industries, there is no choice but to use seawater, the incredible and abundant resources, now and in the future, Kalantari stated, IRNA reported on Monday.

He went on to say that Iran located in an arid and semi-arid area, is facing environmental problems including water shortage, sand and dust storms due to low precipitation amounts coupled with climate change.

شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان مشکل زیست محیطی ندارد

رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست کشور گفت: شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان به استان های مختلف به شرط رعایت الزامات محیط زیستی، جانمایی مناسب در ساخت آب شیرین کن و رهاسازی پساب آن مشکل و مانع زیست محیطی ندارد و از نظر این سازمان بلامانع است. عیسی کلانتری دوشنبه شب در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: برای تامین آب کشاورزی، آشامیدنی و صنایع کشور چاره ای جز استفاده از آب دریا نداریم و باید چه اکنون و چه آینده به این منابع بیکران و بسیار فراوان رجوع کنیم. وی افزود: ایران کشور پر آبی نیست و سالیهای سال با بحران بی آبی، خشکسالی و مسائل زیست محیطی، گرد و غبار و ریزگردها مواجه است.



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

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



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

JULY 29, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

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

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:11 Evening: 19:31 Dawn: 3:33 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:11 (tomorrow)

IAF to show Kurosawa's "Kagemusha"

TEHRAN – The restored version of the 1980 Japanese epic film "Kagemusha" directed by Akira Kurosawa will be screened at the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) in Tehran on Thursday.

Set for screening at 6 p.m., the 162-minute movie will be shown at the Nasser Hall of the IAF with Persian subtitles, ILNA reported.

The film is set in the Sengoku period of Japanese history and tells the story of a lower-class petty thief who is taught to impersonate the dying daimyō Takeda Shingen to dissuade opposing lords from attacking the newly vulnerable clan.

Kagemusha is the Japanese term for a political decoy, literally meaning "shadow warrior". The film ends with the climactic 1575 Battle of Nagashino.

It was released to critical acclaim. The film won the Palme d'Or at the 1980 Cannes Film Festival (tied with "All That Jazz"). It was also nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and received other honors.

In 2009 the film was voted at No. 59 on the list of The Greatest Japanese Films of All Time by Japanese film magazine Kinema Junpo.

In 2016, The Hollywood Reporter ranked the film 10th among 69 counted winners of the Palme d'Or to date, concluding "Set against the wars of 16th-century Japan, Kurosawa's majestic samurai epic is still awe-inspiring, not only in its historical pageantry, but for imagery that communicates complex ideas about reality, belief and meaning."

Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998) was a Japanese filmmaker who directed 30 feature films in a career spanning six decades. With a bold and

dynamic style strongly influenced by Western cinema yet distinct from it, he is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential filmmakers in the history of cinema. Known as a hands-on filmmaker, he was heavily involved with all aspects of production as a director, writer, producer, and editor.

One of his most famous films was "Rashomon" (1950) that became the surprise winner of the Golden Lion at the 1951 Venice Film Festival. The commercial and critical success of the film opened up Western film markets to Japanese films for the first time, which in turn led to international recognition for other Japanese filmmakers.

Kurosawa directed approximately one film per year throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, including a number of highly regarded and often adapted films, including "Ikiru" (1952), "Seven Samurai" (1954), "Throne of Blood" (1957), "The Hidden Fortress" (1958), "Yojimbo" (1961), "High and Low" (1963), and "Red Beard" (1965). He became much less prolific after the 1960s, though his later work—including two of his final films, "Kagemusha" (1980) and "Ran" (1985)—continued to receive critical acclaim.

In 1990, Kurosawa accepted the Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement. He was posthumously named "Asian of the Century" in the "Arts, Literature, and Culture" category by AsianWeek magazine and CNN, who cited him as one of the five people who most prominently contributed to the improvement of Asia in the 20th century.

The Iranian Artists Forum is located at Artists Park on North Mousavi Street, Taleqani Street.

Exhibition of martyr artist Mansoureh Alikhani's artworks showcased in Sarajevo

TEHRAN – An exhibition featuring the paintings of martyr artist Mansoureh Alikhani, one of the victims of the Israeli regime's atrocities against Iranian soil, was held at Iran's Cultural Attaché office in Sarajevo, Bosnia on Sunday.

The event aimed to depict the crimes committed by the Israeli regime during its military assault against the Islamic Republic of Iran, IRNA reported on Monday.

Organized by Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), the exhibition displayed 20 artworks by the late artist, along with her biography in Bosnian and English.

The artworks have been provided to the Iranian embassies around the world for public display.

Previously, an exhibition displaying images of Iranian children who were killed during the 12-day war was also held at the Iranian Embassy in Sarajevo.

Martyr Mansoureh Alikhani was born in 1967 in Nowshahr. She completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in Painting at Al-Zahra University and Sooreh University, respectively. She later taught at Kashan Art University, Sooreh Art School, and various artistic educational institutions.

Her contributions include conducting art workshops, managing the Creative Skills Center at Sooreh University, participating



in solo and group exhibitions, illustrating books, and judging art festivals. Alikhani received numerous awards and commendations.

Her expertise encompassed painting, book illustration, and art research.

Following the Zionist regime's aggressive assault on Iran, Mansoureh Alikhani lost her life during Israeli attacks on residential areas in Tehran.

Alikhani was a student of master Kazem Chalipa and a promi-

nent figure in the field of painting who was involved in training and research as well.

She was creating a painting about Ashura, the day Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions were martyred in the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE, which remained unfinished due to her martyrdom.

Early Friday morning, June 13, a series of terrorist attacks perpetrated by the Zionist regime targeted Tehran and several other Iranian cities, resulting in the martyrdom of numerous military

commanders, scientists, and innocent civilians.

In response to the savage Zionist attack, the Islamic Republic of Iran launched Operation True Promise 3 on Friday night, unleashing a barrage of missiles against the occupied territories.

The Israeli attacks targeted areas within Iran that were not military installations, resulting in the tragic loss of innocent civilian lives including women and children. The incident has sparked outrage not only within Iran but also among international observers.

Toronto International Film Festival to screen Iranian film in 10th Platform program

TEHRAN – Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) has announced its 2025 Platform program lineup, with a film from Iran on the list.

"Between Dreams and Hope" directed by Farnoosh Samadi will have its world premiere at the event, which is set to take place from September 4 to 14 in Toronto, Canada, ISNA reported.

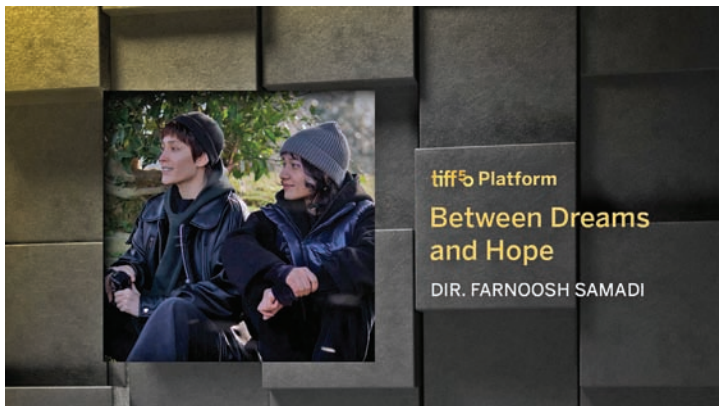
Marking the 10th anniversary of the festival's auteur competitive section, which champions bold directorial vision and distinctive storytelling, Platform offers audiences a first glimpse at some of the most compelling cinematic voices on the rise.

This year's edition features 10 exceptional films representing 19 countries.

Farnoosh Samadi, whose feature film "180° Rule" (TIFF '20) and short film "Disappearance" (TIFF '17) both premiered at the festival, returns with "Between Dreams and Hope".

In this bold love story, Azad, a trans man, and Nora are two young lovers toggling between tradition and modernity in their society and family.

Together, they travel to a remote Iranian village to face Azad's estranged father and obtain documents that would permit the



pair to live authentically.

The cast includes Fereshteh Hosseini, Sadaf Asgari, Hooman Rahmehoon, Amirreza Ranjbaran, and Amirreza Jokar among others.

TIFF is a not-for-profit charitable cultural organization with a mission to transform the way people see the world through film.

It is one of the most prestigious and largest publicly attended film festivals in the world.

Founded in 1976, the festival takes place every year in early September.

The organization behind the film festival is also a permanent destination for film culture operating out of the TIFF Lightbox cultural center, located in downtown

Toronto.

The festival ranks among the most prestigious international film festivals in the world. For 11 days, film lovers, filmmakers, industry professionals, and media watch the best in new cinema, from established auteurs to new talent.

As one of the world's most important cultural events, the Toronto International Film Festival consistently strives to set the standard for excellence in film programming. Films are selected on the basis of quality and originality. Preference is given to premieres.

The festival also promotes contact between industry professionals to assist in the development of the Canadian motion-picture industry.

The level of engagement the festival sustains from year to year is unique. Enthusiastic audiences and filmmakers have unprecedented levels of access to one another as they exchange ideas about the art and business of filmmaking.

Film buyers and other industry professionals can choose from screenings and specialized industry programming that empowers them to make informed business decisions.

The festival also provides excellent resources and networking opportunities for film industry professionals.

Audacious in its selection and supported by the intelligence and enthusiasm of its audiences, the Toronto International Film Festival has become the landmark destination for the moving image and is always seeking new ways to engineer creative and cultural discovery through film.

From the expertise and dedication of the Toronto International Film Festival's staff and volunteers, to its vast contribution to the culture and economy of the City of Toronto, the Toronto International Film Festival has earned its long-standing reputation as a leader in the international film community.

Cartoon of Day



Trump Aid
Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

Gaza in crisis: journalist sells camera for food, artist burns paintings to survive famine

In a place once known for poetry, color, and culture, war and famine have left a grim new canvas — where artists burn their life's work for warmth and journalists sell their cameras just to eat.

This is Gaza in 2025, a land choking under siege, where even the symbols of truth and beauty — a press shield or a painting — are no longer sacred, but traded for survival.

Two stories have captured the internet's attention, not for their artistic merit, but for their quiet desperation. Together, they paint a haunting picture of a people on the edge.

Gaza-based photojournalist Mohammed Abu Aoun, known for his work featured by The New York Times, Sky News, and ABC, shared a social media post that stopped hearts: he was selling his camera and press shield to buy food

for his children.

"We are dying of hunger," his post read. "I offer my equipment and my press shield for sale so I can feed my family."

Aoun has covered some of Gaza's most dangerous flare-ups, risking his life to document suffering and resilience. Today, he is living that very suffering. He says there's no fuel, no electricity, no flour — only the gnawing pain of hunger, and the silence of a world that once relied on his images to understand Gaza.

Another voice broke through the digital noise just days later. Taha Hussein Abu Ghali, a 43-year-old visual artist, art therapist, and father of five, was filmed burning his own paintings — works he carried with him for decades — to make fire and bake bread.

"These were my most beautiful paintings,"

he says, his voice trembling.

"But if I lose a child, I can't bring them back. Art can be recreated. A child cannot."

The footage, shared on Instagram, shows him snapping wooden frames, stacking the splinters, and feeding them into the fire his wife would later use to cook lentils.

"One kilo of wood costs 8 shekels," he explains according to TRT Global. "We need at least three kilos a day just to make bread. After burning the doors, cabinets, even the kids' desks — my paintings were all we had left."

Displaced for the 11th time, now sheltering in a tent in Asda City, Hussein says he's watched his children's faces change under hunger and sun. His studio is gone. His canvases, once sanctuaries of memory, now serve as fuel.