

# How Israel's War Dealt the Final Blow to Iran's Opposition



► Page 3

A man bows before Reza Pahlavi (son of the deposed Shah) at a July gathering in Munich, a gesture that drew criticism and ridicule even from some within the Iranian opposition

## Global voices unite against Israel's war and starvation campaign in Gaza

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Protests condemning Israel's devastating war and deliberate starvation campaign in Gaza continue to sweep across the globe, as activists, politicians, and ordinary citizens demand an end to the violence and immediate humanitarian aid.

On Sunday, demonstrators gathered outside the US consulate in Istanbul. They held Palestinian flags and shouted slogans denouncing the Israeli blockade of Gaza, which has caused mass starvation. Their message was clear: the international community must hold Israel accountable for the ongoing atrocities.

Meanwhile, in Sydney, Australia, tens of thousands braved heavy winds and rain to march across the iconic Harbour Bridge in a massive "March for Humanity." Protesters carried pots and pans, symbolic of the forced starvation endured by Gaza's population, and called out for a ceasefire and unrestricted delivery of aid.

## Yemen strikes three sites inside Israel with drones

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Yemen's drone unit has conducted three targeted military operations against Israeli sites.

According to Yemeni military spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Saree, support for Gaza will continue unabated until Israel ends its military campaign in the enclave and lifts the siege.

Saree said two of the strikes targeted Israeli military installations in Tel Aviv and Ashkelon. The third operation struck the port of Haifa in the occupied territories.

The military spokesman emphasized that these actions were carried out in solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people and resistance fighters.

He described them as a response to the Israeli occupation regime's ongoing genocide and starvation tactics in Gaza, as well as the repeated storming and desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli settlers.

## Tuesday cabinet meeting: Where is Lebanon headed?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — According to the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Anbaa, intensive political negotiations have paved the way for a favorable outcome in Tuesday's Lebanese cabinet session. The efforts were led by the Amal Movement–Hezbollah alliance, under the effective leadership of Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri

Amid American and Saudi pressure on the presidency and the government to expedite the disarmament of the Hezbollah resistance movement, the ministerial session is expected to discuss the issue of "extending the state's sovereignty over all its territories exclusively through its own forces."

Meanwhile, Justice Minister Adel Nassar, figure affiliated with the Lebanese Kataeb Party, warned via X that "if Hezbollah chooses to commit suicide by refusing to surrender its weapons, it will not be allowed to drag Lebanon and the Lebanese people with it."

► Page 5

## China rebuffs Washington's demands to halt Iran oil trade

TEHRAN – China appears resolute in maintaining its oil imports from Iran, with the country's foreign ministry announcing in a statement that U.S. pressure would not influence its actions or decisions.

"China will always ensure its energy supply in ways that serve our national interests," declared China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs via social media platform X on Wednesday, directly responding to U.S. threats of punitive 100% tariffs.

The statement emphasized, "Tariff wars have no winners. Coercion and pressuring will not achieve anything. China will firmly defend its sovereignty, security, and development interests." ► Page 2

## 7 things to know about Iran's new Defense Council

TEHRAN – In a move to enhance strategic coordination and readiness, Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) has approved the establishment of a new Defense Council.

Below are 7 key facts about the newly-established body.

**What prompted the formation of the Defense Council?**

The council was formed after Israel and the U.S. launched an unprecedented war against Iran that targeted the country's nuclear, military and civilian infrastructure, lasting from June 13 to June 24. Analysts believe this council is a direct response to these escalations. ► Page 2

## Iran and Pakistan are bridging borders and defying pressure

By Muhammad Akmal

ISLAMABAD – The visit of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian to Islamabad over the weekend was much more than a routine diplomatic engagement.

It sent a timely message to the region and the world. He arrived following Iran's open confrontation with Israel, and just as two top Pakistani officials—Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir—had visited Washington and held discreet meetings with policymakers across the political spectrum. In this geopolitical context, Pakistan's warm embrace of Iran signals a rebalancing of diplomacy that deserves attention. ► Page 3

## The ripple effects of a potential Iranian war crisis on Russia and China

By Mohammad Hossein Masoumzadeh, Senior Researcher at GPTT

TEHRAN – The strategic cooperation between Russia, China, and Iran, often labeled by Western powers as the "Axis of Upheaval," has emerged as a critical counterweight to Western influence, particularly that of the United States. This informal yet pivotal partnership is rooted in shared objectives: opposing American unipolarity, safeguarding national sovereignty, and expanding influence across strategic regions.

With its strategic location and vast energy resources, Iran serves as a linchpin within this axis, acting as a vital ally for Russia and a key energy and transit hub for China. Both Russia and China have championed Iran's integration into frameworks like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS, viewing it as a bulwark against Western sanctions. Thus, if Iran becomes embroiled in a war crisis or faces intensified external threats, particularly from Western pressures or regional conflicts, it could significantly disrupt the global and regional balance of power, with profound consequences for both Russia and China. ► Page 3

## From Metropolis to Gaza: Superman vs Israel

By Ali Hamedin

TEHRAN—A land of stark imbalance — where a heavily armed military, backed by a global superpower, storms the borders of a poor, besieged nation. Its people, trapped behind border fences, stand their ground with nothing but stones and flags against tanks and soldiers. The world's media wavers between terms like "legitimate defense" and "right to life," unsure of how to frame the suffering. Leading the assault is a commander long shielded from accountability by diplomatic alliances and military support. And then suddenly, a hero descends from the sky — uninvited, unaffiliated, moved only by the will to save lives.

What you just read is not a report on the Middle East or an analysis of current global politics — it is the plot of a fictional film that audiences around the world have lined up to see: "Superman" (2025). ► Page 8



© ISNA/ Majid Khali

## 'Baseless and absurd,' foreign ministry slams EU's Iranophobic statement

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei has dismissed a joint statement by four European countries accusing Iran of threatening international security, calling the allegations "ridiculous and unfounded."

Speaking at his weekly press conference on Monday, Baghaei said, "The true aim of these baseless accusations is to distract global public opinion from the atrocities being committed in Gaza, where more than 230 journalists have been martyred."

He opened the session by honoring fallen journalists across the region and welcomed the family of IRIB reporter Nima Rajabpour, killed in a recent Israeli strike. Baghaei strongly condemned recent attacks on journalists. ► Page 2



## TEHRAN PAPERS

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

## Possible consequences of snapback mechanism activation

In an analysis, Shargh discussed the consequences of the possible activation of the snapback mechanism by the European trio of Britain, France and Germany. It said: If the mechanism is activated, the extensive UN sanctions against Iran will be reimposed, which could have severe economic and political effects on the country. This measure is likely to escalate tensions in the West Asia region and severely affect the process of negotiations and diplomatic interactions. In the current situation, the positions of both sides have grown increasingly polarized and stricter than before, and the possibility of a quick agreement has decreased. European countries have adopted a policy of pressure, focusing on restoring sanctions, while Iran considers an activation of the snapback mechanism a threat to its sovereignty and national interests and is ready to respond decisively. Ultimately, the activation of the snapback mechanism could be challenging for Iran in the short term, but in the medium term, it also carries the risk of further isolating Europe in regional and global equations. Therefore, a sustainable solution can only come through constructive dialogue and respect for the rights of both parties.

### Hamshahri: Importance of Pezeshkian trip to Pakistan

Hamshahri examined the importance of President Pezeshkian's trip to Pakistan and said: Pezeshkian's trip took place in a situation that analysts believe the two important regional players are taking special steps towards fostering closer cooperation in political, economic and security fields, and that common goals have pushed Tehran and Islamabad to deepen "strategic cooperation". This trip is of particular importance given the sensitive regional condition, developments in Gaza, the key role of the two countries in regional stability, and increase in economic and trade relations. It is clear that security, especially along the 900-kilometer common border, featured high in the trip. The two countries intend to counter common threats such as smuggling, terrorism, and border insecurity. Also, after the 12-day war imposed by the Zionist regime against Iran, Islamabad played a kind of mediating role; an issue that seems was discussed during the trip.

### Sobh-e-No: New regional position and role of Iran's active diplomacy

Sobh-e-No wrote about the expansion of Iran's relations with neighboring Pakistan following President Pezeshkian's visit to the country. It said: In the light of accelerating global and regional developments, this trip has taken on a deeper meaning than an official visit and carries

strategic messages for neighbors, international actors, and public opinion in the Muslim nations of Iran and Pakistan. The geopolitical order of South Asia and Central Asia has witnessed significant changes in recent months. Moreover, the growing influence of China and India in areas of energy and trade, and the aggressive role of the Zionist regime in West Asia, have fundamentally changed the security environment in the region. In such circumstances, Iran, relying on its domestic power components, is seeking to redefine its position as a connecting link between East and West Asia. In this context, the expansion of relations with Pakistan not only has bilateral dimensions but is also considered a key element in realizing the grand strategy of connecting a territory from the Sea of Oman to Central Asia and Europe. This connection, via Sistan-Baluchestan and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), could be one of the alternative economic routes to evade Western sanctions and pressures.

### Jam-e-Jam: A big step in defense

In a recent article, Jam-e-Jam examined Iran's evolving defense doctrine following the establishment of the Defense Council. The article stated: After the 12-day war with Israel and the emergence of indicators pointing to a new phase of regional confrontations, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken a significant step to reassess its defense strategy. This decision is rooted not only in the constitutional framework but also reflects the complex and shifting security dynamics of the region and the world. This move is expected to enhance Iran's agility and improve decision-making in defense-related matters. The new structure is built around three core objectives:

Strengthening the country's defense capabilities in a comprehensive and coordinated manner

Accelerating response times to crises and threats

Ensuring the consistent and effective involvement of operational commanders in national decision-making

The formation of the Defense Council signals Iran's readiness for a new phase of strategic developments—one that extends beyond conventional territorial defense to encompass the protection of strategic assets, the geography of resistance, and long-term national interests. In an era defined by 'security as active deterrence,' the imperative for swift, coordinated, and coherent decision-making has become a strategic necessity."

## Araghchi pays tribute to fallen journalist killed in Israeli strike on IRIB



TEHRAN - Speaking during an unannounced appearance at the Foreign Ministry's weekly press conference on Monday, Araghchi paid tribute to the family of Martyr Nima Rajabpour, a media professional killed in the Israeli regime's airstrike on the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) headquarters.

"The recent 12-day war will go down as a historic moment for Iran," Araghchi said. "The Zionist regime, backed by major powers and other actors, launched a calculated act of aggression against us, believing they could bend Iran to their will. But the Iranian people showed they are deeply rooted in this soil — winds, or even major storms, cannot uproot them. These roots stretch back thousands of years."

"They thought silencing IRIB would silence

Iran's voice. But the opposite happened," he noted.

He praised the work of journalists during the conflict, calling them "narrators of the battlefield," and stressed that shaping the public narrative is now a frontline in itself.

"Journalism is no easy task," he said. "What matters today is whose version of events prevails. The one who delivers the first account often sets the tone. Journalists bear this responsibility, and we fully acknowledge the importance of their role."

He concluded by marking Journalists' Day, named in honor of Martyr Mahmoud Saremi — a journalist killed alongside Iranian diplomats — saying the battlefield, diplomacy, and the media are all interconnected.

# 7 things to know about Iran's new Defense Council

From page 1 ► designed to establish unified command for future conflicts, moving beyond coordination to decisive command in war-time.

### What is the core mission of the Defense Council?

The primary mandate of the Defense Council is the centralized examination and development of defense strategies and plans, alongside enhancing the combat capabilities of Iran's Armed Forces. Its foundational purpose, as stated in the SNSC announcement, is to command any potential war and defend the nation's sovereignty against attack, operating under the umbrella of the SNSC.

### Who founded the Defense Council and who presides over it?

The Defense Council was established by a decision of the SNSC, chaired by President Masoud Pezeshkian. The decision received the crucial approval of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, as required by constitutional protocols. President Pezeshkian will serve as the head of the newly formed Defense Council.

### Who are its members?

Although the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) has not released an official roster, reports from Iranian media outlets indicate that its membership comprises the heads of the three branches of government, senior military



The newly formed Defense Council reportedly includes President Pezeshkian (R), Parliament Speaker (center), and Judiciary Chief Mohseni-Eje'i.

commanders, and ministers responsible for national defense. The council reportedly includes the President, the Speaker of the Parliament, and the Head of the Judiciary. It also features two representatives appointed by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, as well as the Minister of Intelligence and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

Military leadership is represented by the commanders of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Army (Artesh). In addition, the commander of the Central Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters is said to be a member.

### What is its relationship to the existing Supreme National Security Council (SNSC)?

The Defense Council is a spe-

cialized sub-council formed by the SNSC, utilizing its constitutional authority under Article 176 to create subsidiary bodies like a Defense Council and a National Security Council. While the SNSC retains responsibility for overarching national security, political, and strategic matters, the Defense Council will focus specifically on military affairs and wartime command.

### How does this new council differ from the historical Supreme Defense Council?

While some media outlets have drawn parallels to the Supreme Defense Council active during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, analysts emphasize crucial distinctions. The previous council, formed before the SNSC existed, acted as a

wartime command center and was dissolved after the 1989 constitutional revision. In contrast, the new Defense Council is explicitly established as a subsidiary body of the SNSC under Article 176.

Its role is specialized and operational within the broader strategic framework set by the SNSC and the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

### Does this council undermine the role of Parliament?

Some critics, like MP Hamid Rezaee, expressed concern that such councils might marginalize the legislature.

However, proponents counter this argument decisively. Foreign policy analyst Ali Bigdeli clarified: "The issue of forming a Defense Council is neither strange nor new. When the country is in danger of a ceasefire violation and the start of a new war, institutions outside the subject of war usually do not have any special interference anywhere in the world. All countries in situations similar to ours stop all ancillary activities and focus on the situation."

He emphasized that such critical defense decisions are made under the Leader of the Islamic Revolution's supervision, and Parliament's role in these specific operational military matters is inherently limited, especially during imminent threats requiring rapid, classified, and expert decisions.

## China rebuffs Washington's demands to halt Iran oil trade



The Iranian flag displayed above a refinery in Bandar Abbas

From page 1 ► The rejection followed high-stakes Stockholm trade talks where U.S. officials reportedly demanded China cease purchasing oil from Iran and Russia.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent grudgingly acknowledged China's uncompromising

position, noting that the Chinese "take their sovereignty very seriously" and would rather pay tariffs than comply. Despite characterizing negotiations as "tough," Bessent claimed progress on broader trade issues—a framing that was challenged by Beijing's public defiance.

Mirroring China's resistance, India rejected U.S. demands to halt Russian oil imports. Senior officials confirmed "no change in policy," a move that further exposes the waning influence of Washington in an increasingly multipolar world.

China's estimated 90% share of Iran's oil exports anchors a relationship formalized in the 25-Year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Furthermore, Iran's 2023 accession to BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, championed by China and Russia, provides institutional shields against Western pressure. Tehran now participates in developing non-dollar payment systems and trade channels.

U.S. sanctions have failed catastrophically to "cripple" Iran's oil exports. Energy analysts Vortexa

and Kpler claim Iran consistently ships over 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd), with June exports hitting 1.7 million bpd, generating an estimated \$3.7 billion monthly revenue.

These figures remain estimations, as Tehran rarely releases detailed or official disclosures regarding its oil export volumes.

Many believe that Washington's "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran has backfired strategically.

The sanctions spurred Iran's "resistance economy," leading to advancements in domestic industries from defense to agriculture.

By forging trade partnerships with countries like China, Russia, and other SCO members, as well as its neighbors, Iran has tried to diversify its markets and reduce its reliance on the West.

## 'Baseless and absurd', foreign ministry slams

### EU's Iranophobic statement

From page 1 ► including those in Gaza, Lebanon, and the IRIB building. "Under international law, attacks on journalists are strictly prohibited and constitute war crimes. We have documented all such incidents and are pursuing legal action," he said.

### 'Iran-IAEA cooperation bound by law'

Baghaei reiterated Iran's frustration with what it sees as politicization within the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"We have repeatedly objected to the Agency's politically influenced conduct. The IAEA must act independently of external pressures," he said. He confirmed that there are currently no inspections being conducted in Iran and stated that future cooperation with the Agency would follow the framework established by the Iranian Parliament.

"The three European signatories of the JCPOA have no legal standing to abuse the snapback mechanism to reinstate sanctions," he added, warning that such misuse would carry consequences.

He also confirmed that Massimo Aparo, IAEA Deputy Director General, would visit Tehran within 10 days for further consultations.

### 'President Pezeshkian's visit to Pakistan opens new chapter'

Baghaei described President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent trip to Pakistan as a turning point in bilateral ties. "Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan's independence.

This visit reinforced our historic bond," he said. During the trip, 12 bilateral agreements were signed in trade, customs, and cultural cooperation. A renewed cultural agreement and discussions on a possible Free Trade Agreement also took place.

He praised Islamabad's firm stance during recent Israeli military aggression against Iran, calling it a sign of Pakistan's commitment to international law and awareness of the threats posed by Israeli expansionism.

### 'U.S. sanctions on shipping firms unlawful'

Commenting on new U.S. sanctions targeting Iranian shipping companies and individuals, Baghaei declared them a clear violation of international law.

"There's no ambiguity. These measures are unlawful. Despite decades of pressure, Iran has re-



sisted unilateral coercion and will continue to do so," he said. He added that such actions affect the global economy and other nations, not just Iran.

### 'Compensation from U.S. a condition for future talks'

Responding to questions about Araghchi's recent remarks on possible future nuclear negotiations, Baghaei said Iran will demand compensation from the United States for its violations of the JCPOA. "Any future talks will be fundamentally different from pre-June 13 discussions. Holding the U.S. accountable and demanding reparations will be part of the agenda," he stated.

He criticized dismissive reactions from some Western media

outlets, calling them uninformed. "The real absurdity lies in U.S. policies: supporting the Zionist regime's crimes while pretending to uphold international law." He referenced the ICJ ruling in the oil platform case as proof of America's past misconduct.

### 'U.S. role in Gaza genocide cannot be denied'

Baghaei responded firmly to the U.S. President Donald Trump's recent claim that no genocide was occurring in Gaza. "These statements are aimed at whitewashing crimes. The facts are clear — a horrific genocide is underway, and the U.S. is complicit," he said.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))



# How Israel’s war dealt the final blow to Iran’s opposition

By Sheida Sabzehvari

TEHRAN – The Iran-Israel war concluded over 40 days ago, but you wouldn’t know it walking through Tehran. The capital’s packed subways and buses are filled with people going about their daily lives, and hardly anyone seems to be talking about the 12 days they spent hearing active air defenses constantly.

But outside Iran’s borders, the topic is as current as it was during the war. On podcasts and independent YouTube channels, a common question is how history will remember the Western-based Iranian opposition after the conflict with Israel. “History is very straight-forward and brutal,” one podcaster commented to a historian guest. “Do you think anyone will speak of the Iranian opposition in a good light in the future?” he asked. The guest simply shook his head and replied, “No.”

For much of the past four decades, the Iranian opposition in the West – consisting primarily of aging loyalists of the deposed Shah and younger journalists and activists who began their careers in Iran before aligning with foreign governments – has been fragmented and mired in challenges to unite. It appears, however, that during the recent war a consensus emerged among many within this opposition: that aggression against Iran and the killing of Iranians by Israeli airstrikes, which claimed at least 1026 lives, was OK as long as it meant the Islamic Republic would be toppled.

Unsurprisingly, this perspective did not resonate with those inside Iran. The pleas of the deposed



A flag featured at a recent gathering of the Iranian opposition in the West is under fire from Iranians worldwide, who say the group demonstrated its alliance with Western governments and Israel

Shah’s son holding a presser packed with Western journalists during the war, calling on people to “rise up” against the Islamic Republic, was the furthest thing from the minds of Iranians whose lives were disrupted, who feared for themselves and their families, and who mourned scenes of random Tehran neighborhoods lying in ruins. In fact, inside Iran people have always afforded little credibility to the Western-based opposition.

“I don’t know what that clown was thinking,” said Sara, an office worker in her 40s, originally from eastern Iran and a long-time Tehran resident. “Some say I’m too harsh, but I genuinely believe anyone who’s left this country and made a life for themselves abroad doesn’t get to have a say anymore. The Shah’s son, and many of these so-called opposition members, became citizens after swearing an oath to protect American interests. That’s all they are: Amer-

icans.”

What perhaps many observers failed to foresee was that the opposition’s alignment with Israel would also alienate Iranians living abroad, most of whom reside in the United States and western Europe.

While around 80,000 Iranians attended a rally in Berlin in 2022 calling for the Islamic Republic’s overthrow, according to German reports, a similar gathering in Munich last month attracted only around 300 people at best. I reached out to a distant relative I knew had been at the Berlin rally to ask if she had also attended the Munich gathering. “I haven’t,” she said over text. “I will never again participate in anything these traitors organize.”

### The opposition’s future

We now know that the Western-based Iranian opposition backed Israel during the war, hoping to replace the Islamic Re-

public. The Iranian government prevailed. The opposition lost public support in the West and it will likely be remembered as traitors in history. But can they recover from this self-inflicted wound and regain relevance, even as mere dissenters, in the near future? One former member of the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MEK) believes they likely cannot.

“The last straw for people observing the MEK in the 1980s was the group’s backing of Saddam Hussein during his invasion of Iran. After almost four decades, everyone still remembers the MEK as traitors,” explained Ebrahim Khodabandeh, who was one of the group’s top members for years.

The MEK, a terrorist organization responsible for the deaths of over 24,000 Iranians, was initially formed to oppose the Shah’s regime. However, after failing to secure a political foothold post-revolution, they turned against the Islamic Republic and have largely been operating from outside Iran ever since. MEK members are currently based in camps in Albania while the leadership spends time in Western countries.

Although the MEK presents itself as an opposition group and is currently recognized as such by Western states, even those critical of the Islamic Republic have increasingly distanced themselves from the organization over the years. Most are unwilling to be publicly associated with the group, even if cooperation occurs behind closed doors. “You simply can’t rebrand yourself after treason, at least not with Iranians,” Khodabandeh stated.

## Our goal is to make history at World Games: Anahita Mehtarpour



TEHRAN – Anahita Mahtarpour, a member of Iran’s women’s canoe polo team, believes that Team Melli have the potential to make history at the 2025 World Games.

The Iranian delegation will participate in this edition with over 30 athletes across nine different sports.

In the women’s competition, Iran are in Group A, competing against New Zealand, Germany, and China. Meanwhile, Italy, Spain, Denmark, and the Netherlands are placed in Group B.

“I have been involved in canoe polo for about 10 years, and I’ve been a member of the Iranian national team for over a year,” Mehtarpour said in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

“Last year, we qualified for the World Games for the first time, and we are doing our best to be thoroughly prepared for the upcoming competitions.

“Our group is very challenging, with tough opponents like New Zealand and Germany, but we see these games as an opportunity to shine on the global stage,” she added.

“We want to bring pride to our country and make history, and this effort is also a way to acknowledge the hard work of our families and coaches. We are fighting for the best results and hope to return to Iran with notable achievements.

“We are heading to the Games in the best physical and mental condition possible. However, it’s important to note that due to current circumstances in the country, we missed out on participating in a training tournament. Nevertheless, our success at the 2025 World Games can attract worldwide attention to women’s canoe polo and demonstrate the capabilities of Iranian women athletes,” Mehtarpour concluded.

## Andrea Belotti on Persepolis’ radar: report

TEHRAN – Iranian football club Persepolis are reportedly keeping an eye on Andrea Belotti.

The 31-year-old Italian striker currently plays for Como. Although his contract with Como is valid until 2026, there is uncertainty surrounding his future.

Despite his preference to remain in Italy, interest is coming from clubs in the Middle East, including Persepolis, as well as from Russia, Greece, and Portugal.

Belotti, known for his impressive career in Serie A and his participation in Italy’s Euro 2021-winning team, is also engaging in individual training sessions, fueling speculation about a possible transfer.

He has been recently associated with clubs such as Panathinaikos and Pisa.

## Golsapoosh runners-up in Russia Beach Soccer tournament

TEHRAN – Golsapoosh of Iran became runners-up in the Moscow International Beach Soccer Cup.

The competition was held in Moscow at the RZD Arena from July 31 to August 3.

The tournament featured the Russian national team and seven clubs from Russia, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Iran.

Golsapoosh defeated Brazilian Corinthians, Russia national team, and Strogino Moscow.

The Iranian team lost to Moscow Lokomotiv 7-3 in the final match.

## Iran freestyle runners-up in 2025 World U17 Championships

TEHRAN – The 2025 U17 World Championships wrapped on Sunday evening at Ano Liosia Olympic Hall in Athens, Greece with the U.S. winning the men’s freestyle team title in dramatic fashion by adding three more gold medals, plus a bronze, to claim this year’s championship trophy.

The U.S. won the title with 154 points. Iran finished with 150 points after its three losses in the finals and one in a bronze-medal bout.

Kazakhstan managed to pip Azerbaijan by one point and finish third with 91 points. Azerbaijan finished fourth 90 points and Japan got 79 points and finished fifth.

Iran and the U.S. had two face-offs in the finals and the latter’s wrestlers won both to get huge advantage over Iran.

## Anthony Louis Mandrea linked with Tractor

TEHRAN – French goalkeeper Anthony Louis Mandrea has been reportedly linked with a transfer to Iran’s Tractor.

Tractor are set to part ways with their current goalkeeper, Alireza Beiranvand, after the player was suspended for four months following the illegal termination of his contract with Persepolis.

Mandrea, who currently plays for Caen, is expected to join Tractor to fill the vacant position.

Tractor will have to represent Iran in the upcoming 2025-26 AFC Champions League Elite.

## Antonio Adan to undergo medical exam in Dubai

TEHRAN – Spanish goalkeeper Antonio Adan will undergo medical exam in Dubai, the UAE to join Iran’s Esteghlal football club.

A youth product of Real Madrid, where he primarily served as a backup, Adan has spent most of his career with Betis. He has also played for Atlético Madrid, for whom he signed in 2018, and has accumulated a total of 129 La Liga appearances across these clubs.

Esteghlal, under the management of Portuguese coach Ricardo Sá Pinto, are seeking a new goalkeeper after parting ways with Hossein Hosseini.

## Azmoun and Ghaedi nominated for Best Player award

TEHRAN – The UAE Pro League announced the shortlists for the Best Awards ceremony for the last season 2024-2025, on August 9, at the Emirates Palace “Mandarin Oriental in Abu Dhabi”.

The shortlist for the Ballon d’Or award for best player includes: the trio Mehdi Ghaedi (Kalba), Sardar Azmoun (Shabab Al-Ahly), and Caio Lucas (Sharjah).

Competing for the Golden Boy Award for Best Under-23 Player are Brahim Diarra (Al Wahda), Guilherme da Silva (Shabab Al Ahly), and Siaka Sidibe (Al Wasl).

Ali Khaseef (Al Jazeera), Adel Al Hosani (Sharjah), and Hamad Al Muqbali (Shabab Al Ahly) are competing for the Golden Glove Award for Best Goalkeeper.

## Iran and Pakistan are bridging borders and defying pressure



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) shakes hands with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at the prime minister’s presidential palace in Islamabad, Pakistan, on August 3, 2025.

From Page 1 ► The significance of President Pezeshkian’s visit is further elevated by the fact that this was his first official trip abroad. It was a gesture reflecting trust, closeness, and a shared sense of priorities in diplomatic protocol. Nowhere could this symbolism have been more pronounced than in Lahore, where he visited the shrine of Muhammad Iqbal—a nod to civilizational kinship and intellectual affinity. The verse by Iqbal—“If Tehran becomes the Geneva of the East, perhaps the destiny of the world may change”—resonates as more than poetry. It reads like a mission statement.

Bilateral discussions focused on trade, security, energy cooperation, and regional convergence. Both nations pledged to raise annual bilateral trade to USD 10 billion, up from the current USD 3 billion—a commitment that, if realized, could revive economic tourism and unlock potential long stifled by sanctions, border tensions, and bureaucratic red tape. Notably, the talks also addressed the establishment of Free Economic and Trade Zones, border markets, and transit corridors

that could link Iran not only to Pakistan but also to China, Central Asia, and Europe via the Silk Road.

Before his departure from Tehran, President Pezeshkian said, “We shall have a Silk Route and connect with Pakistan and China, and this road may extend to Europe.” This aspiration aligns neatly with Islamabad’s ambition to position itself as a trading hub within the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Geography is to diplomacy what blood is to the veins. Iran’s westward reach and Pakistan’s eastward orientation can complement each other—provided vision is translated into execution.

Energy cooperation, long viewed as an underutilized area, is once again gaining traction. Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar told reporters that “America cannot afford to ignore Pakistan’s national interest, and for Pakistan, American sanctions are of no significance.” The long-delayed Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline—stalled for years due to geopolitical constraints—is being revisited with renewed determination.

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

## The ripple effects of a potential Iranian war crisis on Russia and China



From Page 1 ►

### Beijing’s precarious pivot

A war crisis or heightened external threats to Iran would pose significant risks to China’s economic and strategic interests. Despite its deep economic ties with the West and Israel, China prioritizes diplomatic and political support for Iran over direct military involvement.

Iran is central to China’s energy security, supplying approximately 90% of its crude oil exports to China, averaging 1.4 to 1.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2025, peaking at 1.8 million bpd in June 2025. These discounted supplies, a byproduct of Western sanctions, are critical for China, the world’s largest oil importer. A crisis in Iran would disrupt this vital supply chain, compelling China to seek costlier or less reliable alternatives, potentially hampering economic growth. Additionally, non-oil trade between Iran and China, valued at \$32.3 billion in 2024, would face severe constraints.

Iran is a “key gateway” for China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), facilitating connections to European and West Asian markets. A war crisis or external threats disrupting Iran’s transport and energy corridors would jeopardize China’s major infrastructure projects

and critical logistical routes to the West. Events like the June 2025 attacks on Iranian military and nuclear facilities by Israel could further threaten strategic projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The “Middle Corridor” (Trans-Caspian International Transport Route), an alternative to routes through Iran or Russia, suffers from infrastructural limitations, including limited transport capacity, making it an inadequate substitute for Iran’s role in China’s BRI objectives.

Geopolitically, a crisis in Iran would undermine China’s diplomatic credibility, particularly after its successful mediation of the Iran-Saudi Arabia rapprochement in March 2023. It would also compromise China’s strategic autonomy in securing energy and logistical routes, increasing vulnerability to external pressures, particularly in choke points like the Strait of Malacca, which remain under significant American influence. This would diminish China’s regional and global standing, creating opportunities for the West to bolster its position and potentially shift focus toward directly confronting China.

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



## Iran–Pakistan trade conference opens in Islamabad with President Pezeshkian in attendance



TEHRAN - The Iran–Pakistan Business Conference opened in Islamabad on Sunday with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in attendance, alongside a high-ranking delegation.

The event was hosted by Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

Upon his arrival at the conference venue, Pezeshkian was welcomed by Senator Dar. The gathering brought together numerous business leaders, officials from chambers of commerce, and representatives of major Pakistani investment firms.

In his opening remarks, Pakistan's Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan welcomed the finalization of a draft Free Trade Agreement between the two countries and said both sides are committed to resolving tariff-related issues and enhancing border infrastructure.

He announced that the next session of the Iran–Pakistan Joint Economic Commission will be held in Tehran next month and highlighted the activation of the Pishin–Mand border market as a joint commitment aimed at boosting bilateral trade. He also revealed plans to open a new border crossing at Chadgi–Kouhak.

Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad Atabak, also addressed the conference, expressing appreciation for Pakistan's support of Iran during Israel's recent 12-day offensive, which he said had deeply resonated with the Iranian public.

Atabak noted that while trade volumes between the two countries had increased last year, implementation of current agreements will require expansion of land terminals, improvement of rail connectivity, and enhanced port cooperation.

Senator Dar emphasized the close ties between Iran and Pakistan under the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and invited Iranian investors to explore opportunities in Pakistan, citing broad economic reforms and the creation of a special investment facilitation council.

Referring to his recent talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Dar said both countries are determined to strengthen cooperation in customs and border infrastructure development.

Iran and Pakistan have been striving to

expand economic cooperation despite longstanding infrastructure bottlenecks and geopolitical challenges. Both nations are part of the ECO bloc and share strategic interests in regional trade connectivity, especially through initiatives like the Pishin–Mand border market and the INSTC corridor.

Iran and Pakistan signed 12 documents for cooperation in different areas, in Islamabad on Sunday, during the visit of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian to Pakistan.

During his official visit to Pakistan, the president of Iran took a significant step toward strengthening bilateral relations by signing 12 cooperation agreements in various fields, enhancing economic, cultural, and technological ties between the two countries.

In the president's trip, senior officials from both nations held a joint meeting and signed 12 documents to facilitate and deepen bilateral cooperation.

These agreements cover areas including tourism, agriculture, judicial and legal cooperation, industry, science and technology, transportation and transit, cultural heritage, as well as trade and economy.

The deals establish a framework for knowledge exchange, expanding trade capacities, strengthening people-to-people connections, and boosting regional cooperation between Iran and Pakistan.

As Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian commenced his two-day official visit to Pakistan on Saturday, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi described Tehran and Islamabad as “partners in shaping a shared future” in an article published ahead of the trip.

President Pezeshkian's visit, conducted at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, reflects growing momentum in Tehran-Islamabad ties, following a series of high-level exchanges, including the late President Ebrahim Raisi's landmark visit to Islamabad and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's trip to Tehran.

As recently announced by Hamidreza Karbalaei Esmaeili, the deputy for the Indian subcontinent at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Iran enjoys a trade surplus with Pakistan, exporting goods at 3.5 times the volume of its imports from the neighboring country.

Karbalaei Esmaeili shared the figures ahead of President Masoud Pezeshkian's official visit to Islamabad on Saturday, his first bilateral foreign trip since Israel's 12-day military campaign against Iran. The visit, taking place under ongoing regional uncertainty, is seen by analysts as both a symbolic and strategic move tied to post-conflict diplomacy and regional stability.

“Trade between Tehran and Islamabad is on an upward trajectory,” Karbalaei Esmaeili said in an interview with IRNA. He noted that bilateral trade increased by 13.6 percent in the Iranian year 1403 (March 2024–March 2025) compared to the previous year, reaching a total of \$3.129 billion.

with 60 firms and branches in the international passenger transport sector.

He added that over 40,000 commercial vehicles—with an average operational age of 12 years—currently serve Iran's international corridors. Additionally, more than 51,000 licensed drivers are engaged in cross-border trade.

Iran currently operates 26 land border terminals across 12 provinces, facilitating both passenger and cargo exchanges with neighboring countries.

Iran's geographical position makes it a vital transit hub linking Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Persian Gulf, and South Asia. Amid efforts to revive and expand trade routes like the International North–South Transit Corridor (INSTC), Iran is investing in road and rail infrastructure to enhance its transit capacity and regional connectivity.

# NIDC drills 48 oil, gas wells in 4 months amid rising output plans

TEHRAN - The National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) has drilled and completed 48 oil and gas wells across onshore and offshore regions during the first four months of the current Iranian year (March 20–July 21), marking a year-on-year increase of 17 wells.

Hamidreza Shafiei Makvandi, deputy head of operations at NIDC, said the wells included 11 development and appraisal wells and 37 workover and completion wells, Shana reported.

Of the total, 40 wells were drilled in the operational zone of the National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC), two in the Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC), two by the Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), one by the Central Iranian Oil Fields Company (CIOFC), and three as part of drilling projects.

Makvandi expressed appreciation for operational crews working under extreme heat and said total drilling depth during the period reached 41,573 meters. He added that 18 of the company's 64 active drilling rigs are currently being relocated to new operational sites.

Iran, which holds some of the world's largest proven oil and gas reserves, has been ramping up drilling activities to boost production capacity despite ongoing international sanctions. The increase in the number of drilled wells reflects the country's strategy to maintain energy output and offset natural declines in aging oil fields.

National Iranian Drilling Company, a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), is a key player in Iran's oil and gas industry, responsible for drilling operations.

The company that conducts exploration, development, and drilling of oil and gas wells, as well as repair and maintenance services, and has been actively involved in both onshore and offshore drilling projects, is now ready to play a more prominent role in the region.

The deputy managing director of the company has announced the implementation of a comprehensive program to modernize the drilling fleet, widely localize equipment, manufacture a national drilling engine, and set a goal of repairing and completing 150 wells by the end of this year, emphasizing: “Based on decades of experience, this company is ready to play a more prominent role at the regional level.”



Regarding the most important challenges of the NIDC due to sanctions, Masoud Afshar has stated: “Domestic production of many equipment has reduced dependence on foreign countries, but in the engine sector, we had challenges that are being resolved with the new contract. The production of SCR, cables, and tanks are other successful examples of self-sufficiency.”

“Our experts are currently involved in international projects, and the successful drilling experience in Turkmenistan will be a basis for expanding activities in other neighboring countries”, the official has underlined.

Afshar has emphasized that with the development of technology, self-sufficiency in equipment, and the benefit of efficient human resources, the National Drilling Company is firmly on the path of sustainable development and is ready to play a more effective role in the regional arena.

Meanwhile, the managing director of the company has explained the outlook for the development of the drilling industry in the country, and said: “The most important global indicator in the field of drilling is the reduction of unproductive times; so, we have reduced this indicator from 21 percent to about 9.6 percent and set a goal to reach below three percent.”

Mehran Makvandi said that in the five-year outlook, the modernization of the onshore and offshore drilling fleet, the development of offshore drilling in the Persian Gulf oil fields, and the upgrading of technical service equipment and their integration are priorities.

Regarding digital developments in the company, he stated: “Digitalization of drilling processes, from design and monitoring to operation analysis and well data management, is one of the main axes of the company's future vision; this ap-

proach will lead to reduced errors, faster decision-making, economic savings, and greater safety.”

In addition to upgrading equipment, strengthening cooperation with scientific centers and knowledge-based companies, developing human resources, and increasing competitiveness in the international market are also among the company's strategic priorities in the 5-year outlook, the official added.

The NIDC managing director has also referred to the company's move towards domestic production of the equipment, and said: “One of the strategic priorities of the National Iranian Drilling Company is to increase the share of domestic manufacturing.”

“In this regard, cooperation has been developed with companies such as Fajr Shiraz Complex, which has experience in manufacturing key components of drilling rigs. The project to build the third drilling rig in the country with a savings of seven million dollars is an example of these measures”, Makvandi added.

According to him, prioritization is based on the operational needs of the fields, the type of projects, and domestic capacity, although the lack of some technical infrastructure, the need for technology transfer, and the timely supply of quality parts are some of the challenges on the localization path. However, the company is determined to strengthen domestic manufacturing and reduce dependence.

Makvandi further referred to the NIDC's contracts with knowledge-based companies and added: “Nine one-megawatt generator motors and four drilling fluid purification centrifuges, which were previously imported, will be manufactured inside the country, and the first samples will be delivered by the end of the [current Iranian]

year (March 20, 2026).”

He also noted: “A specific roadmap has been developed for utilizing these technologies, which includes continuous cooperation with science and technology parks, universities, knowledge-based companies, and the formation of specialized working groups to evaluate and implement technologies in field operations.”

The NIDC managing director has also stated that purchasing 15 new drilling rigs for the oil and gas industry is on the agenda.

Makvandi said that a plan to purchase 15 onshore drilling rigs with different capacities and a value of over \$800 million has been prepared, which is being implemented with the support of the Ministry of Oil and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC).

Pointing out that last year, the company was able to drill, repair, and complete 100 oil and gas wells using 62 active drilling rigs and the return of two more rigs to operational lines, he added: “Of this number, 24 were development and explanatory wells and 76 were dedicated to repair and completion operations.”

He attributed this success to careful planning, interdepartmental coordination, increased operational efficiency, and strengthened integrated technical services, and noted: “This performance is a significant leap compared to previous years, given the economic and sanctions conditions.”

Makvandi stated that the reactivation of idle rigs played an effective role in this success, adding: “Increasing productivity, reducing unproductive times, and relying on domestic capacity are the main pillars of this achievement.”

The managing director of the NIDC further emphasized: “These rigs are designed for descriptive and exploratory purposes and will be equipped with the latest technologies. Specialized technical service equipment including high-pressure pumps, and well testing are also on the purchase list.”

He continued: “The convergence of this equipment with the current fleet and the integrated planning management of the National Iranian Oil Company is underway in the form of a joint supervisory working group and in coordination with the Ministry of Oil.”

## Iraq, 2nd destination of Iranian non-oil products

TEHRAN- Iraq has been the second top destination of Iranian non-oil products during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), according to data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

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

In late May 2024, the head of the Department of Spatial Planning and Regional Planning of the Iranian Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said that Iran exports some 2,200 products, valued at \$12 billion, to neighboring Iraq annually.

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

Currently, Iran exports over 2,200 various

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

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

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

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

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

## Overhaul of phases 19 offshore platforms at South Pars completed

TEHRAN - The overhaul of the offshore platforms in phase 19 of Iran's South Pars gas field has been successfully completed, Shana reported.

As reported, the four gas platforms of this project have been put back into production after completing the repair proce-

dures and achieving maximum production.

It took 14,475 man-hours to complete the overhaul program for these four platforms in 14 working days.

South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf water, is divided into

24 standard phases of development in the first stage. Most of the phases are fully operational at the moment.

The huge offshore field covers an area of 9,700 square kilometers, 3,700 square kilometers of which are in Iran's territorial waters in the Persian Gulf. The

remaining 6,000 square kilometers, called North Dome, are situated in Qatar's territorial waters.

The field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

## Iran's road transit surpasses 5m tons in 4 months

TEHRAN - More than 5.1 million tons of goods transited through Iran's road network during the first four months of the current Iranian year (March 20–July 21), according to the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization.

Javad Hedayati, director general of the organization's Transit and International Transport Office, said the volume was recorded through nearly 232,000 truck trips, signaling the continued role of Iran's land routes in regional trade logistics.

He noted that approximately 4.88 million tons of goods were moved through Iran's land borders—775,391 tons inbound via over 35,000 road trips and more than 4.1 million tons outbound through close to 176,000 trips.

Highlighting the role of the private sector, Hedayati said around 2,490 companies are active in international freight transport, along



# Tuesday cabinet meeting: Where is Lebanon headed?

From page 1 ► In light of these pressures, the pro-Resistance team believe that talk of disarming Hezbollah under these circumstances only serves the enemy's interests, as its weapons constitute a fundamental deterrence against any new aggression.

Ali Fayyad, a senior Hezbollah lawmaker, stressed the need for the Lebanese to adhere to the hierarchy outlined in President Joseph Aoun's statements before any further discussion, namely, the priority of cessation of hostilities and the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

The Al-Anba Kuwaiti newspaper said the Lebanese government's decision will be issued unanimously to avoid any division and fragmentation among Lebanese political forces at this sensitive stage.

An official source confirmed to the Kuwaiti newspaper that "the negotiations and exchange of responses regarding what is required of Lebanon, as well as what Lebanon wants in exchange for disarming, have reached the end of the road.

On this basis, the return of US envoy Tom Barrack, or his predecessor Morgan Ortagus, is no longer a critical issue. The US



A handout picture released by the Lebanese presidency shows Lebanon's newly formed cabinet, led by Prime Minister Nawaf Salam (center-right), posing for a group photo, along with President Joseph Aoun (center), Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri (center-left) and cabinet members at the presidential palace, on February 11, 2025. (Lebanese Presidency / AFP)

and it's have been crossed. If an agreement is reached to define a mechanism and timetable for disarming, implementation can be monitored by any American diplomat."

The source indicated that the new ambassador to Beirut (of Lebanese origin), Michel Issa, "expressed great enthusiasm for assuming this task related to disarmament during his hearing before the US Congressional Foreign

Relations Committee last week. It seems that his appointment to succeed Ambassador Lisa Johnson is only a matter of time."

Since the end of the Lebanese Civil War and the adoption of the Taif Agreement in 1989, the debate has raged over the restriction of arms to the state.

The debate was focused mainly on armed militias, with Hezbollah's weapons being treated as a weapon of resistance against the

Israeli occupation of Lebanon in most ministerial statements of successive governments until the defeat of the Israel in 2000.

After the issuance of UN Resolution 1559 in 2004, and despite the Lebanese state's weak ability to confront any Israeli threat, the issue has posed a constant challenge to successive presidents of the republic, whose approaches have varied between implicit support for arms and calls for their gradual inclusion within a national defense strategy.

The most prominent national stance was that of President Emile Lahoud, who, despite all external pressures, took a decisive stance in fully embracing the option of resistance, describing it as "a necessity to defend Lebanon's sovereignty, in light of the ongoing Israeli occupation and threats."

Lahoud was the one who established what became known as the "army, the people, and the resistance" equation.

During his presidential term, he did not allow any discussion about the status of the resistance's weapons, as he considered any attempt to subject Lebanon to external pressures to be an infringement on sovereignty.

## Global voices unite against Israel's war and starvation campaign in Gaza



From page 1 ► Police estimated attendance at around 90,000, while organizers said the number could be as high as 300,000.

New South Wales Senator Mehreen Faruqi addressed the crowd, demanding the "harsh-est sanctions on Israel" and condemning the "massacres" of Palestinians as crimes that must not go unpunished.

Author Antony Loewenstein, whose work exposes the Israeli arms industry, highlighted the

Australian government's role, accusing it of complicity through supplying fighter jets used in Gaza's bombardment.

Loewenstein pointed out that Australia is deeply entangled in Israel's war machine, enabling and profiting from the destruction.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza has reached catastrophic levels. Since October 2023, over 180 people—more than half children—have died from starvation

caused by Israel's siege.

Israeli forces have also killed nearly 900 people near aid distribution centers run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, a US- and Israel-backed initiative criticized by Human Rights Watch as "death traps" due to repeated deadly attacks.

Tragically, hundreds more have died attempting to access UN-led food convoys, further underscoring the brutal reality of the siege.

Overall, Israel's war has claimed the lives of more than 60,800 Palestinians in Gaza, with reports from Israeli human rights groups confirming allegations of genocide—a charge already under investigation at the International Court of Justice.

The deliberate starvation, mass killings, and systematic destruction of Gaza reveal a state policy aimed at collective punishment and ethnic cleansing.

This campaign cannot be dis-

missed as collateral damage or an unfortunate byproduct of war. It is a calculated effort to crush Palestinian resistance by any means necessary.

The world's silence and inaction in the face of these crimes only embolden Israel's apartheid regime.

Without decisive global intervention, Israel will continue its path of genocide, supported by complicit governments and military suppliers around the world.

Justice for Palestinians demands not only condemnation but concrete measures to end Israel's siege, hold its leaders accountable, and ensure freedom and dignity for Gaza's people.

The protests spreading worldwide are a powerful reminder that the fight for Palestinian rights and liberation will not be silenced — and that the struggle against Israeli aggression and oppression must intensify until peace and justice prevail.

## US lawmakers sign letter pushing for Palestine recognition: report

US Representative Ro Khanna is one of the latest lawmakers to call for the recognition of a Palestinian state, a position he adamantly advocated for when he held a town hall over the weekend.

On Saturday, the progressive congressman, who represents Silicon Valley, held a town hall at Santa Clara University.

There, he spoke at a packed auditorium to constituents who have expressed growing concern for US support for Israel's war on Gaza, which has led to an alarming hunger crisis, Arab News reported.

"It is time for the United States to officially recognize a Palestinian state. To follow Britain, to follow Canada, to follow 147 other countries," he said, followed by loud applause.

"We believe recognizing Palestinian statehood and obligating Palestinian leaders to abide by the international law binding on states and their governments will make that far more achievable and sustainable than de-

cades of statelessness and repression have," reads the draft letter dated July 31.

Though the crowd largely consisted of seniors, the congressman declared that he represented a new generation that would not tolerate [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu violating human rights.

"There is a new generation in this country that is not going to watch you violate human rights," he said.

He said Israel's aid blockage was causing a manmade starvation, called on Israel to allow food into Gaza, and said it was time to end the US giving Israel a "blank cheque".

He also called out the "leaking" of him signing on to a letter by lawmakers supporting a Palestinian state, what he believed was an attempt to sabotage the letter and his support.

According to a report by The Hill, signatories to the letter (originally reported by Jewish Insider) include Texas Representa-

tives Greg Casar, Veronica Escobar, Lloyd Doggett and Al Green, Mark Pocan of Wisconsin, Jared Huffman of California, Bonnie Watson Coleman of New Jersey, Pramila Jayapal of Washington state, and Maxwell Frost of Florida.

"I didn't think this was going to be controversial, and then they leaked my letter because they wanted to sabotage other members of Congress from getting on the letter, and a publication said, 'Khanna is going to face significant pushback in his own district. How many people here support my effort that the United States should officially recognize a Palestinian state? And how many people are opposed?'" he said.

"I know my district, and I'm proud of representing this district," he added, followed by another moment of loud applause. The progressive lawmaker has sparked rumors of a presidential run with a recent visit to South Carolina, where he drew large crowds.

Last month, he spoke out on

what he described as mass starvation of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel.

"There is mass starvation of the Palestinian people in Gaza, according to the World Health Organization. Over 900,000 children face the possibility of starvation.

Then children just this week have died. There are reports of children crying themselves to sleep because they don't have enough to eat," he said.

He went on to note reports of more than 1,000 Palestinians who have been killed while trying to collect aid from the controversial Gaza Humanitarian Fund, calling out the US for being "complicit" in supporting Netanyahu.

The Palestinian Authority, Like Vatican City, currently has observer status at the United Nations. Making Palestine a full member state would require the support of the UN Security Council, over which the US has veto power.

## Le Monde publishes new details of campaign against Karim Khan and ICC

French newspaper Le Monde has reported extensive details of an intensifying intimidation campaign targeting the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor Karim Khan.

The campaign has taken place against the backdrop of Khan's efforts to build and pursue a case against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant and other Israeli officials over alleged war crimes, Middle East Eye reported.

Khan went on leave in mid-May after an attempt to suspend him, prompted by a senior

member of his own office, failed. This was amid an ongoing United Nations investigation into sexual misconduct allegations against the prosecutor.

In a story published on Friday, the French newspaper quoted British barrister Andrew Cayley, who oversaw the ICC's Palestine investigation, saying Dutch intelligence informed him that he was at risk in The Hague.

Cayley said that in December 2024 he was directly threatened: "I was told I was an enemy of Israel and that I should watch my back."

## Nurse killed in airdrop operation in Gaza

One Palestinian man has been killed when an aid box dropped from the air fell in Deir el-Balah in central Gaza, a medical source told Al Jazeera.

The victim was identified as Uday al-Quraan, a nurse at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir el-Balah.

Humanitarian organizations have long

warned that airdrops are dangerous.

Beyond putting lives in danger, UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said last week that airdrops were a "distraction" and smokescreen, urging Israel to allow the UN and its partners to operate at scale "without bureaucratic or political hurdles".

## Hundreds of Israeli ex-security officials call on Trump to end Gaza war

More than 600 retired Israeli security officials including former heads of intelligence agencies have urged US President Donald Trump to pressure the Israeli government to end the war in Gaza, France 24 reported.

"It is our professional judgement that Hamas no longer poses a strategic threat to Israel," the former officials wrote in an open letter shared with the media on Monday, calling on Trump to "steer" Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decisions.

"At first this war was a just war, a defensive war, but when we achieved all military objectives, this war ceased to be a just war," said Ami Ayalon, former director of the Shin Bet security service.

The war, nearing its 23rd month, "is leading the State of Israel to lose its security and identity", Ayalon warned in a video released to accompany the letter.

Signed by 550 people, including former chiefs of Shin Bet and the Mossad spy agency, the letter called on Trump to "steer" Netanyahu towards a ceasefire.

In recent weeks Israel has come under increasing international pressure to agree a ceasefire that could Israeli hostages released from Gaza and UN agencies distribute humanitarian aid.

But some in Israel, including ministers in Netanyahu's coalition government, are instead pushing for Israeli forces to push on and for Gaza to be occupied in whole or in part.

The letter was signed by three former Mossad heads: Tamir Pardo, Efraim Halevy and Danny Yatom.

Others signatories include five former heads of Shin Bet – Ayalon as well as Nadav Argaman, Yoram Cohen, Yaakov Peri and Carmi Gilon – and three former military chiefs of staff, including former prime minister Ehud Barak, former defence minister Moshe Yaalon and Dan Halutz.

The letter argued that the Israeli military "has long accomplished the two objectives that could be achieved by force: dismantling Hamas's military formations and governance."

"The third, and most important, can only be achieved through a deal: bringing all the hostages home," it added.

In the letter, the former officials tell Trump that he has credibility with the majority of Israelis and can put pressure on Netanyahu to end the war and return the hostages.

After a ceasefire, the signatories argue, Trump could force a regional coalition to support a reformed Palestinian Authority to take charge of Gaza as an alternative to Hamas rule.

## Yemen strikes three sites inside Israel with drones



From page 1 ► He further stated that Yemen, by relying on its faithful people, committed leadership, and steadfast army, will not abandon its religious, moral, and humanitarian responsibilities toward the Palestinian cause, al-Aqsa Mosque, and the suffering in Gaza.

Saree also condemned the silence surrounding the genocide in Gaza, calling it a disgrace that will haunt the region's history. He warned that the consequences of inaction will eventually reach all nations.

The military spokesman concluded by affirming that Yemen will continue its support operations until the genocide ends and the blockade on Gaza is lifted.

Earlier, Israeli media reported the sounding of sirens near the Gaza envelope and elsewhere, triggered by suspected drone incur-

sions from Yemen.

### Undeterred Yemen

The Israeli regime has launched a series of air raids on Yemen, targeting the capital Sanaa and the strategic port of Hodeidah in an effort to disrupt Yemeni military support for Gaza.

These strikes also aim to pressure the Sanaa government into lifting its Red Sea blockade on Israeli and Israeli-affiliated vessels.

Despite these repeated attacks, Yemen has continued to launch ballistic missiles and drones at key Israeli sites in the occupied territories, including Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv and other critical military targets.

The ongoing Yemeni blockade has not only withstood Israeli aggression but has also extended to targeting Israeli ships in both the Red and Arabian seas.

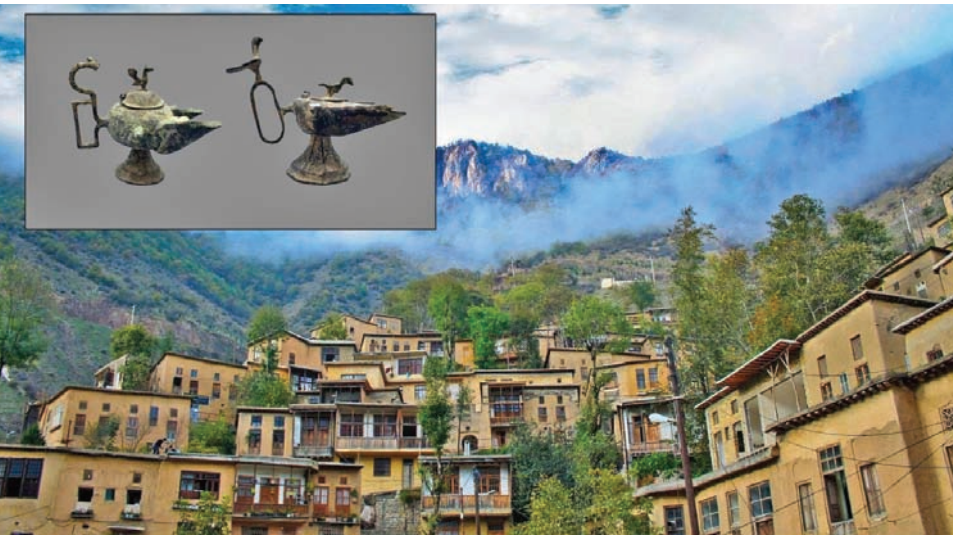
One of the most significant economic consequences of the blockade imposed by the government in Sanaa has been the impact on the Israeli regime's southern port of Eilat.

The port, unable to sustain operations due to the sharp decline in maritime traffic, reportedly requested financial support from the government, but to no avail. As a result, Eilat has declared bankruptcy and, according to recent reports, ceased operations entirely this month.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](https://tehrantimes.com))



## Seljuk, Ilkhanid oil lamps transferred to National Museum of Iran

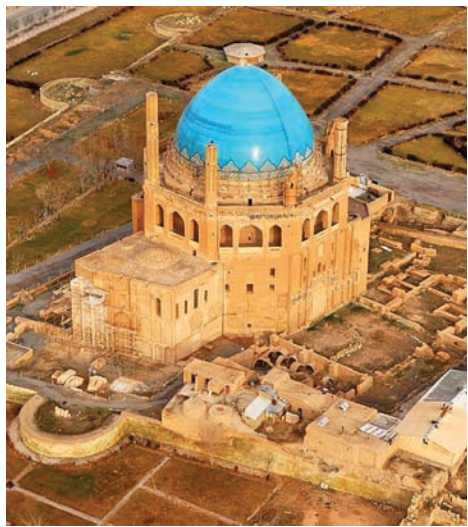


TEHRAN--According to an official in charge of the dossier for the UNESCO registration of Masuleh Cultural Landscape, two metal oil lamps from the Seljuk (11th-12th centuries) and Ilkhanid (13th-14th centuries) periods, discovered in Masuleh, have been transferred to the National Museum of Iran for permanent display.

Dr. Mostafa Pourali stated that these artifacts were discovered in 2012 during archaeological test excavations to determine the boundaries of historical sites. The excavation, led by Behrouz Hamrang, took place on the northern part of the ancient city of Masuleh, near the Old Masuleh archaeological site, an official with the National Museum told the Tehran Times on Monday.

The oil lamps feature distinctive decorative elements, including symbolic bird motifs, reflecting the region's rich metalworking heritage. Experts confirm that these pieces' date back to the Seljuk and Ilkhanid eras and bear close typological similarities to contemporaneous examples from Khorasan and Herat in eastern Iran.

## Exploration of historical Soltaniyeh Dome continues



TEHRAN--Abolfazl Ali, Director of the Soltaniyeh World Heritage Base, gave news of continuation of the new excavation season in the area of Abvab al-Bar with the aim of identifying the Ilkhanid architectures and rereading the historical structures.

He told ISNA that based on the historical texts, Oljaytu, the eighth Ilkhanid Mongol ruler, built a mausoleum for himself concurrent with construction of new capital of Ilkhanid government in Soltaniyeh. It is known as Soltaniyeh Dome, he added.

Imitating his brother, Ghazan Khan, in Tabriz, and upon the advice of Iranian ministers, Oljaytu established a series of public buildings called Abvab al-Bar next to this dome and within the citadel.

Referring to the historical sources, he added: "Abvab al-Bar consisted of 19 buildings with different functions that provided services to the residents of the capital and travelers in the form of a charitable foundation with a specific administrative structure and independent budget. However, detailed information about the location of these buildings and their architectural structure is not mentioned in the historical texts, and this has provided an incentive for new excavations."

Stating that the Soltaniyeh World Heritage

Pourali emphasized that this discovery highlights Masuleh's artistic and cultural connections with other major centers of Islamic metalwork during that period. Given their significance and with the approval of Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the artifacts have been relocated to the National Museum of Iran's Archaeology and Islamic Art section. They will soon be displayed in the Seljuk and Ilkhanid galleries.

He further noted that Masuleh was a prominent region during the Seljuk and Ilkhanid periods. Archaeological surveys in the area have uncovered numerous sites from these eras, some linked to iron mining, smelting furnaces, and metalworking, while others were seasonal settlements for pastoralists.

Additionally, joint Iranian-Chinese excavations at the Khan Baji Sera site near Masuleh revealed late Seljuk-era metalworking furnaces, showing strong Central Asian influences. Pourali concluded that these findings underscore Masuleh's historical importance and its extensive ties with eastern Iran.

Base has started explorations in eastern and western sides of the dome, he said that in this phase, the concentration is on defining the precincts of the dome, the entrances and how this complex is connected to the other parts of the historical Soltaniyeh Citadel.

According to Ali, in continuation of the research, considering the previous findings in the 1970s by Dr. Ganjavi, as well as the excavations in the 1980s and 1990s led by Dr. Mirfatah on the eastern side of the dome, another goal of this season of excavation is to recognize and make legible the works and results of the past excavations.

He added: "In this season of excavations, significant results were obtained on the western side of the dome, and some of the spaces adjacent to the dome belonging to the Ilkhanid period, along with works from subsequent periods, have been identified."

Constructed between 1302 and 1312 under the rule of Oljaytu, the Dome of Soltaniyeh is located in Zanjan province and is regarded as a landmark of Persian and Islamic architecture. The octagonal mausoleum features a 50-meter-tall turquoise-blue faience dome – the earliest known example of a double-shelled dome in Iran – flanked by eight slender minarets.

Its elaborate interior decoration has drawn praise from historians, with noted scholar Arthur Upham Pope describing it as "anticipating the Taj Mahal" in grandeur and vision.

According to UNESCO, the Mausoleum of Oljaytu is an essential link and key monument in the development of Islamic architecture in central and western Asia. Here, the Ilkhanids further developed ideas that had been advanced during the classical Seljuk phase (11th to early 13th centuries), during which the arts of Iran gained distinction in the Islamic world, thereby setting the stage for the Timurid period (late 14th to 15th centuries), one of the most brilliant periods in Islamic art. Particularly relevant are the mausoleum dome's double-shell structure (an inside shell and an outside shell), and the materials and themes used in its interior decoration.

# Promoting green tourism, a joint strategy of DoE and Cultural Heritage Ministry

TEHRAN-- Shina Ansari, Vice President and Head of Iran's Department of Environment (DoE), emphasized the need to redesign the tourism development model in Iran and urged for improving strategic cooperation with Cultural Heritage Ministry in green tourism field.

Speaking at the 18th meeting of the Strategic Council of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, which was held in the Fajr Hall of the Ministry on Monday with the presence of Minister of Cultural Heritage Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri and senior members of the council, she called the handicrafts as a clean, local industry that is in line with the country's natural ecosystem, Miras Arya (CHTN) reported.

She warned that promoting tourism industry without environmental attachments will be a threat for cultural and natural heritage of Iran.

Emphasizing the need for institutional synergy to protect the country's natural and cultural heritage, she stated: "There is a strategic and fundamental link between the missions of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Department of Environment. Developing sustainable and na-



ture-based tourism is one of our common priorities, because ignoring the environment in the tourism process not only damages natural resources but also leads to the gradual erosion of our civilizational capital."

Pointing to the landslide crisis as one of the emerging threats against historical monuments of the country, she said: "Although the direct responsibility for the subsidence phenomenon lies with other institutions, we are also concerned about its consequences for the historical monuments. Therefore, we have suggested that special considerations for the protection of the historical heritage be included in land use planning and location of the projects."

Referring to the existing de-

ficiencies in some tourist areas, he said that in some destinations such as Hormuz Island, the tourism with environmental considerations has led to serious damages to the local ecosystem, she said. This situation is a warning that without a sustainable tourism model, development will become self-defeating, she added.

Ansari emphasized that people, tourists and travel activists must stand with environmentalists. Protecting the nature is not just an organization's responsibility, but a national and cultural duty, she added.

Pointing to the importance of the handicrafts in sustainable development system, she said that the handicrafts sector is a local, green, non-polluting, and environmentally friendly indus-

try. "This valuable resource plays a role in both creating local employment and protecting natural heritage. We are interested in supporting this craft and considering it as part of green tourism development plans."

On Iran's biodiversity and geography, she called natural potential as one of the most important pillars of tourism.

"The wetlands, forests, mountains and pristine natural areas of Iran have the potential to be introduced as sustainable tourism destinations. DoE is ready to compile and implement sustainable green tourism in form of a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage."

In conclusion, Ansari appreciated the Minister of Cultural Heritage's strategic vision on the issue of environmental sustainability and tourism, noting: "Salehi-Amiri, with a scientific, cultural, and development-oriented approach, has paved the way for strengthening the cross-sectoral cooperation. We hope that this synergy will lead to strengthening the discourse of green tourism and intelligent protection of the country's natural and historical ecosystems."

## Borujerd, city of handicrafts

TEHRAN--Production of various handicrafts, each of which reflects a specific culture and tradition, has made Borujerd one of the most important cities in Lorestan province.

In addition to the traditional nickel silver crafts, Borujerd has long been a fosterer of industries and arts due to its climate, beautiful nature, and urban center. Today, other industries and arts have entered it, some of which have been forgotten for various reasons, ISNA wrote.

Varsho Sazi, the art of making beautiful crafts using nickel silver, is among the oldest traditions in Lorestan province in western Iran.

Since long times ago, the artists of Lorestan, the city of Borujerd in particular, have been earning their livelihood through making various types of handicrafts including rug, jajim, carpet and a valuable art piece deeply rooted in the province's history called nickel silver crafts.

The crafts used to be among the most profitable careers in Borujerd making up for most parts of the old business in the region so much so that the Borujerd's name and the crafts were associated with each other.

Through hammering and bending as well as using some simple devices and their own physical power, the artists of Borujerd create some beautiful pieces of art from nickel silver sheets like dining dishes, samovar, sugar dish, caddy, and rosewater sprinkler.

There are various accounts on the history of the nickel silver crafts in Iran. According to one

historical account, a small number of Iranian blacksmiths from Isfahan, Borujerd, Dezful and a number of other cities were dispatched to Russia to learn the art of making nickel silver crafts.

Meanwhile, according to some historical books, Iranians used to make nickel silver crafts under the Seljuk and Safavid dynasties and the art reached its climax during the Qajar dynasty.

In some historical documents, a number of Borujerd artists are portrayed while working on nickel silver sheets. They used the sheets to make the basic items for an ordinary life. These artists came to be known as inkwell makers because they were the first artists who made inkwell from nickel silver sheets.

Nickel silver is a white-silver alloy consisting of 20 percent nickel, 35 percent zinc and 45 percent copper. It melts and takes shape easily.

It is imported into Iran from German and Poland. Given its brightness and resistance against decay, nickel silver is also known as German silver.

Varsho Sazi (nickel silverware crafting) was registered as an intangible cultural heritage.

Givhe embroidery, hosiery, carpet weaving, and jajim weaving were also other handicrafts of Borujerd. Coppersmithing was also another thriving profession of Borujerd, and today the name of the order of coppersmiths in the old bazaar (Rasteh Bazaar) of this city vokes the fame of this profession in the mind.

There have been many documents and sayings about the reception of the handicrafts of this



city by the elders and tourists. Metal industries include Varsho Sazi (nickel silverware crafting), qalamzani (a type of metalwork art) on varsho, goldsmithing, copper smithing, and knife making

Carpentry (wood) industries and related handicrafts include making doors in original and different designs, making ceiling decorations of valuable buildings, mosaic, inlay and latticework.

**National city of Varsho (nickel silverware crafting)**

Mehdi Goudarzi, head of Borujerd Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department said: "Out of 292 handicrafts covered by Lorestan's Cultural Heritage Department, 39 are native to the city. Currently, about 700 artists and craftsmen are active in various handicrafts."

He stated: "Currently, 11 handicraft shops and 45 engraving workshops, 45 engraving workshops in the Varsho industry, seven workshops in the field of Varsho Sazi are active in the city, and three handicraft houses in-

cluding metal, wood and textile have been set up in Borujerd."

Goudarzi noted that in 2019, Borujerd was registered as a national city of Varsho and some infrastructures have been created for the World City of Varsho (nickel silverware crafting).

He continued that the file for possible world registration of Borujerd's Varsho is being completed and sent to the ministry, and this file will definitely be sent. Borujerd has the capacity to register this art, because this art is unique and specific to this city, he added. Currently, the Varsho House has been completed and equipped with three floors and nine rooms for the purpose of holding production and manufacturing workshops, training, and an exhibition section for Varsho products.

About craftsmen currently work in the field of Varsho in Borujerd, and Varsho making and engraving on this metal are among the most prominent handicrafts in the city, he concluded.

## Tourism boom sparks backlash in historic heart of Athens

Surrounded by a hubbub of blaring music, restaurant terraces and rumbling suitcase wheels slalomming between overflowing litter bins, Giorgos Zafeiriou believes surging tourism has made his historic Athens neighborhood unrecognizable.

The Greek capital's Plaka district "is threatened by overtourism", said Zafeiriou, who has lived there for more than three decades and leads its residents' association, AFP reported.

This year, 10 million people are expected to visit Athens, an increase of two million from 2024 which reflects the city's growing popularity as a tourist destination since the Covid-19 pandemic ended.

Despite its label as the cradle of Western civilization, Athens was previously regarded as a mere stopping point between the airport and the port of Piraeus, from where tourists explore Greece's myriads of picturesque islands.

Nicknamed "the neighborhood of the gods", Plaka is nestled below the ancient Acropolis hill, a world heritage site hosting the millennia-old Parthenon temple which welcomed almost 4.5 million visitors last year.

Plaka is now awash with tourists who navigate its warren of narrow streets lined with cafes, souvenir shops, small Byzantine churches and relics from Antiquity and the Ottoman era.

Plaka "is Europe's oldest neighborhood which has been inhabited continuously since Antiquity", said Lydia Carras, head of the Ellet association working to preserve the environment and cultural heritage. "We cannot see it lose its soul," she added.

Tourism is a pillar of the Greek economy, which endured years of painful austerity following the 2008 global financial crash and the ensuing eurozone debt crisis.

For souvenir shop seller Konstantinos Marinakis, "Greece is finally doing better thanks to the good health of tourism which allowed the economy to recover and create jobs."



# IRCS denounces Israeli strikes on Red Crescent HQ in Gaza

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has condemned the airstrike on the headquarters of the Palestine Red Crescent Society in Khan Yunis, Gaza, by Israeli forces.

“Urgent: One Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) staff member was killed and three others injured after Israeli forces targeted the Society’s headquarters in Khan Yunis, igniting a fire on the building’s first floor,” PRCS announced in a post on X on Sunday.

Following the attack, Pirhossein Kolivand, the head of the IRCS, in a message to PRCS President Younis Al-Khatib, strongly condemned the deliberate targeting of the Organization, calling it immoral.

The full message of the IRCS reads as follows:

“It is with deep sorrow and regret that we received the news of the airstrike on the headquarters of the Palestine Red Crescent Society in Khan Yunis, resulting in the martyrdom and injury of several dedicated relief workers of your esteemed organization. This tragic event has profoundly saddened me and the entire family of the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

While extending our heartfelt



condolences and sympathy to you, the bereaved families, your fellow humanitarian colleagues, and the resilient people of Palestine, we strongly condemn this illegal and immoral act, which is in clear violation of the Fundamental Principles of International Humanitarian Law.

Targeting relief and medical centers as well as humanitarian personnel while performing life-saving missions constitutes a blatant breach of the Geneva Conventions and a flagrant violation of the principles of neutrality, independence, and protection of humanitarian operations during armed conflicts.

Such crimes must not go unanswered or uninvestigated by the international community. The Iranian Red Crescent Society, in full solidarity with your national society, declares its readiness for any legal follow-up, humanitarian support, and coordinated regional or international actions.”

The official ended the letter, hoping for a swift recovery of those wounded.

## Red crescent societies approve of IRCS call to help Gaza

Red crescent societies of Russia, Norway, Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Qatar have

supported the Iranian Red Crescent Society’s call for taking immediate actions to help address the catastrophic human crisis in Gaza.

Kolivand wrote a letter to the World Health Organization and red crescent societies on July 26, urgently requesting them to ‘facilitate the delivery of medicines and humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip’, and take immediate steps to advocate for affected people in Gaza.

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

The IRCS called upon national societies to urgently issue public statements, actively engage their 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.

## Tehran, Islamabad to develop ties on meteorology

TEHRAN – Meteorological organizations of Iran and Pakistan have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to promote cooperation on meteorology, atmospheric science, and hazards.

The MOU was signed on the sidelines of President Masoud Pezeshkian’s official trip to Pakistan.

The two countries are affected by the same natural hazards and climate change threats, such as tropical cyclones, monsoon rains, and resulting floods, drought, sand and dust storms, as well as air pollution, IRNA reported.

The signed MOU will open up a new chapter to jointly address common climatic hazards and will facilitate crisis management.

Expansion of regional and global interactions is one of the main policies of Iran’s Meteorological Organization to reduce hazards, particularly those caused by climate change.

The policy has also led the Organization to establish two regional offices with transnational missions in the fields of ‘specialized meteorological trainings’ and ‘climate’ to provide regional and international services.

Also, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters, known as ECO-RCRM, has been established in the city of Mashhad with the support of the Iran Meteorological Organization to actively cooperate in reducing the risks associated with weather-related disasters.

## Joint efforts to boost climate change resilience

The international project of managing natural disasters and enhancing resilience to climate change impacts was inaugurated officially by representatives from the Department of Environment (DOE), the Embassy of Japan, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Funded by Japan, the project’s document was signed on April 12 by Ieng Srong, the head of the UNESCO Tehran Office, and Arman Khorsand, the head of the international affairs and conventions

office of the DOE.

The main objectives of the project include developing flood hazard maps, establishing early warning systems, assessing and managing agricultural drought risk, and empowering local communities, particularly women and youth, to effectively prepare them to respond to disasters and crises, the DOE website reported.

The project also aims to develop scientific and technical infrastructure in crisis management with the prospect of becoming a regional model for combating climate change effects.

Referring to the challenges of climate change, Shina Ansari, head of DOE, highlighted the significance of public participation, indigenous knowledge, and modern technologies in disaster risk reduction.

The head of the UNESCO Tehran Office, Ieng Srong, for his part, lauded environmental cooperation between the two organizations and underscored the importance of prioritizing science and raising awareness in the fight against climate change.

## Sanctions undermine climate cooperation

Addressing the 17th BRICS Summit Session on “Environment, COP 30 and Global Health, held in Brazil on July 7, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi said that sanctions and geopolitical tensions undermine climate cooperation and hinder coordinated action.

“Climate change is no longer just a threat to the future but a current reality whose effects are increasingly being felt every day.

Rising temperatures, water scarcity, widespread wildfires, destruction of ecosystems, and climate-induced migrations have become the lived reality of millions,” the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website quoted Araqchi as saying.

Underlining the crucial role of BRICS as a symbol of South-South cooperation and the independent voice of nations, Araqchi said, “Today, humanity faces a series of interconnected crises, from the profound impacts of climate change

and environmental degradation to increasing threats to global health, and ultimately the unjust structures that hinder the progress of developing countries”.

The official then spoke about Iran’s position in a climate-vulnerable region, saying, “We have implemented domestic programs focused on water resource management, renewable energy development, and restoration of native ecosystems”.

The top Iranian diplomat stressed that an effective climate crisis response requires climate justice, acknowledging the historical responsibility of developed countries for environmental destruction and their vital role in providing financial resources and transferring clean technologies to developing nations.

Meanwhile, Araqchi voiced concern over the failure of industrialized and developed governments to fulfill their commitments, attributing a large share of global environmental challenges, such as greenhouse gas accumulation, global warming, and various pollution, to actions by developed countries.

He noted that these countries must not only lead in reducing emissions and combating pollution but also, given their historical responsibility, provide financial resources, technical assistance, and environmentally compatible technologies to compensate for damages inflicted on developing countries.

The foreign minister pointed out that sanctions and geopolitical tensions undermine climate cooperation and hinder coordinated action.

“Unjust sanctions and unilateral coercive measures imposed by some developed countries on developing nations, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, under political pretexts, pose serious obstacles to these countries’ efforts,” said Araqchi.

He went on to note that this contradicts the global community’s goals for joint action against the harmful effects of climate change and achieving sustainable development goals, especially poverty and hunger eradication.

# SOCIETY

AUGUST 5, 2025

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

## More than 160 earthquakes hit Iran in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 163 earthquakes were recorded across the country in a week from July 26 to August 1, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 113 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3; 41 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4; and nine earthquakes with a magnitude between 4 and 5 have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

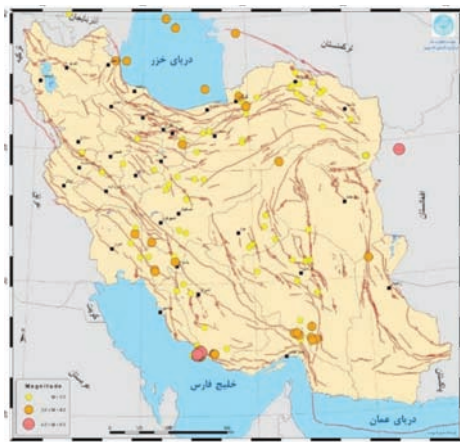
Of the total quakes, one had a magnitude of 4.6 on the Richter scale, which occurred on July 28 in Bushehr province.

Among the provinces of the country, Bushehr, with 47, experienced the highest number of earthquakes, followed by Semnan province with 19 earthquakes.

During the same period, one earthquake hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded in East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Alborz, Ilam, Zanjan, Qazvin, Kermanshah, and Lorestan provinces.

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

Out of registered earthquakes, 150 were



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

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

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

## Educational workshop being held for environmental protection students

TEHRAN – The Department of Environment (DOE), in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is conducting an educational workshop to empower students studying environmental protection.

Hosted by Mazandaran province, the project aims to boost the students’ capabilities and skills in protecting the environment based on international standards, and enhance their knowledge through making them familiar with modern concepts in environmental protection, doe.ir reported.

Throughout the workshop, the students will practically learn the best strategies for effective interactions with local communities, resolving conflicts, principles for biosphere reserve protection, and the role of local communities, as well as methods to collect and record biodiversity data.

Environmental protection is a field of study being offered by the Technical and Vocational Training Organization aimed at educating specialized forces for the conservation of the environment.

Currently, the field of study is offered in Mazandaran, Fars, Khuzestan, and Ardabil provinces.

## UNESCO programs

Environmental education is placed among the list of major programs of the UNESCO in Iran, aiming to develop sustainable solutions and international cooperation to address environmental challenges.

From UNESCO’s perspective, environmental education is a learning process that raises public awareness about the environment and its challenges; it equips individuals with knowledge, skills, values, experiences, and goals to tackle these environmental issues, IRNA quoted Hassan Fartosi, the Secretary General of the UNESCO National Commission in Iran, as saying.

The official made the remarks while addressing the 8th National Conference and Specialized Exhibition of Environmental Education held on May 20.

According to this definition, environmental education includes achieving environmental awareness, understanding challenges, and taking actions, Fartosi noted.

UNESCO helps countries and educational institutions develop and implement effective environmental education programs; it strives to preserve the environment through its international programs in the field of natural science and earth science education, the official added.

These include the international hydrology program, the international geoscience and geoparks program, the intergovernmental

oceanography program, and the international basic sciences program. Greening education partnership is one of the most important initiatives adopted by UNESCO to support countries in tackling climate change, he said.

UNESCO works to reduce the impacts of global change and water resources, and promote education for sustainable use of water resources; the organisation calls on member states to work together to address these challenges more effectively.

The 8th Conference served as a platform for sharing ideas, expertise, and achievements to promote sustainable development by conducting scientific research, utilizing modern technologies, and developing innovative solutions.

## Courses for government officials

In March, Mohammad Medadi, an official with the Department of Environment, said the DOE will hold environmental protection courses for all officials and managers working in the government sector.

Passing these training courses is mandatory, IRNA quoted Medadi as saying.

The Department of Environment’s center for environmental education and protection has developed three training courses related to environmental governance and its components for the managers and experts of agencies, he explained.

Undoubtedly, these training courses will help the government face emerging challenges such as an imbalance of energy resources, water, and biological pollution, he added.

Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment, has stated that no single organization can successfully preserve the environment on its own. Environmental issues will be best addressed through public participation.

“There are many environmental challenges in habitats, wildlife, and wetlands which cannot be tackled just by the efforts and measures of the Department of Environment,” IRIB quoted Ansari as saying.

President Masoud Pezeshkian has offered a program with a focus on the preservation of the environment that is structured around six axes: moving towards a green economy; managing and improving various quantitative and qualitative dimensions of environmental imbalances (such as economy, energy, and water); effectively protecting biological resources (including natural resources and biodiversity); achieving good environmental governance; addressing public demands in the field of environment, and enhancing international bilateral or multilateral cooperation in the field of environment.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## 81% of bus drivers responsible for fatal accidents

The number of public transport fleet accidents has increased significantly over the last two months, and 81% of bus drivers were to blame for fatal road crashes, Traffic Police chief has announced.

Over 90 percent of the whole transfers across the country are done by ground transport system, while air, rail and sea transportation hold a small share, Mehr quoted Seyed Kamal Hadianfar as saying on Tuesday.

Last year, 19 million rides have been delivered transferring over 290 million passengers, mostly through the bus transportation fleet under the Municipalities supervision, he stated.

He went on to say that bus drivers spend more time driving exceeding standard hour due to low income, which increases the risk of road crashes.

## ۸۱ درصد رانندگان اتوبوس در تصادفات فوتی مقصر بوده‌اند

رئیس پلیس راهور ناجا، گفت: در ۲ ماهه اخیر تعداد تصادفات ناوگان حمل مسافر افزایش قابل توجهی داشته و در تصادفات منجر به فوت و جرح ناوگان عمومی حمل مسافر، ۸۱ درصد رانندگان اتوبوس مقصر بوده‌اند.

سردار سیدکمال هادیانفر، افزود: بیش از ۹۰ درصد از جابجایی‌ها در سطح کشور از طریق زمینی صورت می‌پذیرد و درصد کمی را حمل و نقل‌های هوایی، ریلی و دریایی تشکیل می‌دهد. در طول سال ۹۷، ۱۹ میلیون سفر با ۲۹۰ میلیون مسافر صورت پذیرفته است که عمده آن از طریق پایانه‌هایی صورت پذیرفته که مدیریت آن بر عهده شهرداری‌هاست.

رئیس پلیس راهور ناجا افزود: رانندگان به علت میزان درآمدشان بیش از ساعت مقرر رانندگی می‌کنند که ریسک تصادف را بالا می‌برد.



TEHRAN TIMES



[www.tehrantimes.com](http://www.tehrantimes.com)

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



Tehrantimes79

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

AUGUST 5, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*One whose desires are endless, will go wrong  
in his deeds and will suffer loss.*  
**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon:12:10    Evening: 19:24    Dawn: 3:41 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 5:16 (tomorrow)

## 8th Iranian Film Festival in Tokyo to screen 7 films

TEHRAN – The 8th Iranian Film Festival in Tokyo will take place from August 8 to 10 in Tokyo, screening seven films from Iran with Japanese subtitles.

Organized by the Cultural Center of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tokyo, the three-day event will be held at the Minato City Gender Equality Center Libra Hall, ILNA reported.

The festival is open to the public and the audience can experience Iranian culture through films as film is a universal language that promotes dialogue between cultures and nations.

The lineup includes “On the Zero Line,” a co-production of Iran and Japan directed by Mehrdad Ghaffarzadeh and Yoshimasa Jinbo, “Gholamreza Takhti” by Bahram Tavakoli, “No Prior Appointment” by Behrouz Shoaybi, “The Warden” by Nima Javidi, “Tears of the Reedbed” by Mehdi Jafari, “Leaf of Life” by Ebrahim Mokhtari, and “Ameneh’s Golden Blood” by Habib Ahmadzadeh.

Japanese violinist Tsumuji’s music video “Cloudy Isfahan,” filmed in Iran, will be screened in the opening ceremony of the festival on August 8 and the audience can enjoy the beautiful scenery of the ancient city of Isfahan paired with Tsumuji’s melodies.

The Iranian-Japanese co-production “On the Zero Line” is about a lost-for-words poet who meets a woman who has suffered a miscarriage on the equator. Two emotions intersect at zero degrees latitude.

Produced in 2022, the 76-minute movie is made in the Dadaist style, a short-lived French movement that became the origin of Surrealism. Chance is an important element in Dadaist works. A literary example is the random selection and combination of multiple words.

“On the Zero Line” was created by two directors, Ghaffarzadeh and Jinbo, from different regions of Iran and Japan, without any prior knowledge of the story. From opposite sides of the globe, they each created a fictional male and female character and traveled to Kenya, Africa, right on the equator.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza, the Bloody Strip  
**Cartoonist:** Enrico Bertuccioli from Italy

# From Metropolis to Gaza: Superman vs Israel

**By Ali Hamedin**

TEHRAN—A land of stark imbalance — where a heavily armed military, backed by a global superpower, storms the borders of a poor, besieged nation. Its people, trapped behind border fences, stand their ground with nothing but stones and flags against tanks and soldiers. The world’s media wavers between terms like “legitimate defense” and “right to life,” unsure of how to frame the suffering. Leading the assault is a commander long shielded from accountability by diplomatic alliances and military support. And then suddenly, a hero descends from the sky — uninvited, unaffiliated, moved only by the will to save lives.

What you just read is not a report on the Middle East or an analysis of current global politics — it is the plot of a fictional film that audiences around the world have lined up to see: “Superman” (2025).

Written and directed by James Gunn, the film was released on July 11, 2025, and over the past three weeks has drawn international attention for its political undertones — with many viewers interpreting it as a reflection of Israel’s genocide in Gaza.

“Feels like a major cultural moment that Israel is quite clearly the bad guy villain country in a big budget Hollywood movie,” wrote an X user.

**Boravia as Israel**

In the 2025 film Superman, the fictional and powerful nation of Boravia, backed by a militaristic billionaire named Lex Luthor, seeks to invade and occupy the impoverished, besieged land of Jarhanpur — home to people with distinctly Eastern features. As world governments remain silent, Superman crosses political borders without hesitation to protect the defenseless people of Jarhanpur.

Casting choices reinforce the metaphor: Boravians are portrayed by white actors, while Jarhanpurians are played by Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Black actors.

Viewers have described Gunn’s film as anti-Israel, interpreting Jarhanpur as a fictional reflection of Palestine — a land whose people are being slaughtered by the ruthless, heavily armed forces of Boravia (seen as a stand-in for Israel). Boravia’s president, Vasil Ghurkos, is shown receiving military, financial, and strategic support from a wealthy American tech mogul, widely compared to Donald Trump.

**U.S. diplomacy vs. Superman’s duty**

In this story, Superman breaks away from his usual stereotypical role. No longer is he the justice-seeking representative of the U.S. battling bank robbers or Aliens. This time, U.S. itself is part of the villainous front — and Superman, for standing up for the oppressed people of a fictional nation and intervening without legal authorization or alignment with the U.S. government, is constantly criticized and even arrested.

His interview with Lois Lane directly mirrors the discourse within U.S. foreign diplomacy. In that exchange, Superman distances himself from the United States and defines himself simply as someone trying to save innocent lives under oppression.

At one point, Lois questions Superman’s involvement in the conflict by arguing that the people of Jarhanpur are not “innocent.” This part of the dialogue starkly exposes the cruelty of Western media narratives and Zionist propaganda that attempt to justify atrocities and the dehumanization of Palestinians.

By using arguments like “they voted for Hamas” or labeling them “anti-Semitic,” such narratives undermine the moral obligation to stand with oppressed nations. In response, Superman declares that the people of Jarhanpur do not need to be “innocent” in order to deserve protection.

Moreover, the hero’s stance is worlds apart from the morally ambiguous, relativistic tone often taken by the U.S. toward oppressed nations. Superman does not fall into the trap of “both sides are wrong.” Instead, he takes a clear stand on the side of justice, and actively seeks to punish the aggressor. And for that reason, this version of Superman is no longer U.S.’s favorite.

James Gunn, in an interview with Comicbook.com, firmly rejected any connection between his film and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, stating: “When I wrote this the Middle Eastern conflict wasn’t happening. So, I tried to do little things to move it away from that, but it doesn’t have anything to do with the Middle East.”

**A blend of Netanyahu and Ben-Gurion**

While a few media outlets have attempted to liken the conflict between Boravia and Jarhanpur to the war between Russia and Ukraine, the film’s narrative structure, power dynamics, and the reaction of the U.S. government suggest that the Israel-Palestine parallel is far more fitting.

Boravia is a U.S. ally — unlike Russia — and the U.S. opposition to Superman’s intervention against Boravia’s invasion stands in stark contrast to America’s en-

thusiastic support for Ukraine in its defense against Russian aggression.

Vasil Ghurkos, with his Slavic accent and a visual style reminiscent of Benjamin Netanyahu, appears to be a caricatured version of the Zionist Regime Prime Minister more than of Vladimir Putin (not to mention that Boravia’s president physically resembles David Ben-Gurion). Furthermore, the stark racial contrast — white Boravians versus brown-skinned Jarhanpurians — clearly evokes the imagery of the Israel-Palestine war far more than that of Russia and Ukraine.

In a desperate attempt to deflect these comparisons, the Jerusalem Post published an article trying to associate Boravia’s dictatorship with Iran or Hamas, and eventually settled on superficial similarities between Ghurkos and Russian leadership as a way to redirect the allegory.

**Luthor’s Abu Ghraib and Unit 8200**

Over the course of the story, when Superman turns himself in to the government, Lex Luthor takes him to his secret, nightmarish prison — a place hidden in another dimension. Luthor explains that he rents out some of the prison’s cells to governments seeking to quietly detain political dissidents without due process.

This part of the film unmistakably evokes memories of extrajudicial detention centers like Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib — facilities where the U.S., under the guise of fighting terrorism, held individuals without legal accountability.

In this same eerie location, Luthor unveils his cyber army: a group of robotic monkeys stationed behind computer screens, orchestrating online hate campaigns against Superman. This portrayal of digital warfare by a supervillain is virtually unprecedented in superhero narratives — and strongly calls to mind Unit 8200, Zionist Regime’s elite cyber-intelligence division.

**A full-blown Trump**

The film’s allegory becomes even more explicit when it’s revealed that Lex Luthor — a ruthless billionaire who clearly resembles Donald Trump — has been supplying weapons to Boravia in exchange for a large portion of Jarhanpurian land. This plotline mirrors the U.S.’s active

role in funding, arming, and politically backing Israeli settler colonialism. Echoing this dynamic, Donald Trump, during a February 4, 2025 press conference with Benjamin Netanyahu, openly declared: “We’re going to take over Gaza and we’re going to own it.”

The statement effectively outlined a vision for full American control and redevelopment of the Gaza Strip — reflecting the same imperial logic that the film critiques through its SF narrative.

**The world loves Anti-Israel Superman**

James Gunn’s “Superman” has surpassed \$300 million at the U.S. box office within its first three weeks, making it the most successful solo Superman film in domestic history, even outpacing “Man of Steel” (2013). This commercial success comes despite boycott campaigns by certain Israelis over the film’s anti-genocide subtext.

The movie faced backlash from pro-Israel media and commentators. The Jerusalem Post wrote: “I find it so disrespectful and distressing that a superhero created by two Jewish artists, is now being used to promote anti-Israeli messages ...”

Similarly, Ben Shapiro, a prominent right-wing commentator and staunch defender of Israel, responded with a brief but telling remark: “Not Good.”

Superman was created by two young Jewish artists, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, and his Jewish roots have been widely explored — notably in Roy Schwartz’s book “Is Superman Circumcised?” Adding to this irony, the lead role in James Gunn’s 2025 film is played by David Corenswet, a Jewish actor, even as Zionist critics accuse the film of carrying anti-Israel messages.

Just as international audiences once compared the plight of Gazans to the story of “The Hunger Games,” their reaction to the new Superman film shows that even while watching a sci-fi blockbuster, many are still looking for reflections of the real world.

In spite of powerful media narratives and Zionist propaganda, these viewers want to know the truth — about who the real oppressors are, who the true victims are, and where the real heroes stand.

## Artists confront climate crisis in “A Final Gaze at Earth’s Breaths” exhibition

TEHRAN- The group exhibition titled “A Final Gaze at Earth’s Breaths,” offering an artistic perspective on environmental crises and the future of ecosystems, came to an end at Tehran’s Art Garden on Sunday.

The artistic event featured works by 90 active visual artists and artisans, presenting over 100 pieces across various mediums, including painting, photography, illustration, sculpture, dolls, and calligraphy.

“A Final Gaze at Earth’s Breaths” aimed to showcase contemporary artistic reflections

on environmental concerns. The exhibited works narrated the critical state of our planet—depicting species extinction, plastic pollution, deforestation, and raising questions about human responsibility in preserving or damaging ecosystems.

Several programs under the theme “Breath of the Earth: From Silence to Sound” including panel discussions with artists and environmental activists, as well as participatory workshops for creating artworks from recycled materials, involving visitors were also held on the sidelines of the event.