



Larijani speaks at a presser in Baghdad after meetings with top officials:

Resistance Groups 'Don't Need Guardianship'

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Sovereignty 'non-negotiable' in Caucasus transit talks, Araghchi tells Armenian counterpart

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi emphasized the importance of respecting national sovereignty in a Tuesday phone call with his Armenian counterpart, Ararat Mirzoyan, as the two discussed recent developments in the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process and regional connectivity initiatives.

"Every decision must fully respect the national sovereignty of countries," Araghchi stated, underscoring Iran's firm position that any agreement affecting regional geopolitics must prioritize the territorial integrity and security of all neighboring states. ► Page 2

Understanding the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty: key points explained

TEHRAN – On Monday, the Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministries released the full text of a peace treaty the two countries agreed upon in March 2025.

The announcement came after Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev met in Washington last Friday, where they signed a joint declaration of peace and initialed the treaty.

The 17-article agreement lays out principles for normalizing relations after decades of hostility, including mutual recognition of borders, renouncing territorial claims, pledging non-aggression, and opening avenues for economic, transit, and cultural cooperation. ► Page 2

Solar power projects totaling 400MW capacity launched in 4 provinces

TEHRAN – Iran has begun construction and opened operations for solar power projects totaling the capacity of nearly 400 megawatts across four provinces, the Energy Ministry said on Tuesday, coinciding with the country's Small Industries Support Day.

As IRIB reported, the inauguration ceremony of the projects was attended by officials from Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) and President Masoud Pezeshkian was also in attendance via video conference. ► Page 4

International outrage grows over Israeli killing of journalists in Gaza

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN — Despite growing international condemnation following the killing of five journalists in Gaza, Israeli military operations continue unabated, causing significant civilian casualties and deepening the humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian territory.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry's report on Tuesday, around 90 Palestinians—including dozens of aid seekers—were killed and over 500 injured in Israeli attacks across Gaza in the past 24 hours. The ministry also said that five more Palestinians, including two children, have died of starvation, bringing the total hunger-related deaths since Israel launched its war on Gaza in October 2023 to 227, with 103 of them children.

The United Nations, the European Union, and key Israeli allies such as Germany and France have condemned the targeted killing of the journalists.

Israeli command and control centers under attack in Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Palestinian resistance forces are striking Israeli centers in Gaza, killing and injuring the occupation regime's soldiers.

Resistance forces have targeted the Israel's command and control sites, one in the southern city of Rafah and the other east of Gaza City in the north.

Resistance fighters successfully sniped two IOF soldiers. They also documented the shelling of a gathering of IOF troops and military vehicles in northeastern Khan Younis.

The Israeli Occupation Forces acknowledged the death of one of its soldiers.

The Al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, struck an IOF command and control center near Salah al-Din axis, close to Tel al-Zarub in southern Rafah, using short-range 114mm "Rajoum" rockets.

Nawaf Salam's government preemptively attacks Larijani visit

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — Meanwhile, Lebanon's anti-Resistance team has launched a low-level campaign calling for not receiving Ali Larijani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, who visits Beirut on Wednesday.

Observers warned that an attempt to prevent Larijani from visiting Beirut would be met with an angry popular backlash.

Instead of mobilizing to condemn Benjamin Netanyahu's statement that "Israel assisted the Lebanese government in the efforts to disarm Hezbollah," Nawaf Salam's government is busy considering the idea of apologizing for not receiving Larijani in protest against official Iranian statements supporting the Resistance.

Undoubtedly, this reveals either voluntary cowardice by Salam's government or complete submission to the U.S.-Saudi orders that prevents it from attacking Israel, even with a stance!

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Iran, South Africa pledge to deepen military and anti-terrorism collaboration

TEHRAN – Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, has emphasized Iran's readiness to expand military and defense cooperation with South Africa, noting, "Today, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps is recognized as the world's largest anti-terrorist force and possesses valuable experiences that it can share with South Africa."

Major General Mousavi made these remarks during a meeting with a visiting South African delegation led by the Chief of the South African National Defense Force, General Rudzani Maphwanya, in Tehran on Tuesday. ► Page 3



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Looming Putin-Trump meeting on Ukraine war and a few lessons

Siasat-e-Rooz dedicated its editorial to the upcoming meeting between Vladimir Putin of Russia and Donald Trump of the United States, set to take place in Alaska, focusing on its implications for the Ukraine war. The editorial argues that Europe's exclusion from this meeting underscores the diminishing relevance of the European Union and the European troika in global affairs. It suggests that Europe has effectively lost its authority and cannot initiate or uphold any commitments without U.S. approval. In this context, the editorial claims that negotiating with Europe over mechanisms such as the snapback provision is futile, as Europe lacks the autonomy to make or revoke decisions independently. The Putin-Trump meeting, it argues, not only highlights the importance of strength over diplomacy but also exposes the unreliability of the United States and the global impotence of the European Union. Consequently, the editorial concludes that Iran's best course of action is twofold: first, to strengthen itself across all sectors by relying on domestic capabilities and strategic global allies; and second, to abandon negotiations with both the United States and Europe, as past experiences have shown that such talks yield no meaningful results.

Ettelaat: Iran at a critical juncture

Ettelaat spoke with Hassan Beheshtipour, an international affairs analyst, about possible resumption of nuclear negotiations between Iran and the United States. He said: An important issue that both Iran and the United States are well aware of the need for dialogue, but neither Tehran is willing to back down from its position nor Washington. Therefore, the possibility of reaching a common point seems unlikely and out of reach. This point should also be taken seriously. The Americans are seeking that Iran, in addition to the nuclear issue, should also engage in an exchange of views on its missile program, regional issues, and human rights issues, which are considered Iran's red line. Iran is at a critical juncture. The shadow of war hangs over us, and the Europeans are very seriously and intensely pushing to activate the snapback mechanism (that would return the United Nations sanctions lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal against Iran). Accordingly, we should avoid extremism and emotional decisions and have a realistic approach toward the facts on the ground, and as a result, we should consider expert decisions.

Khorasan: Iran lagging behind in the corridor competition

In a recent analysis, Khorasan examined the Zangezur agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia, brokered by the United States. The editorial highlights that this corridor has carved

out a new strategic highway through the heart of the South Caucasus. However, it argues that Iran has fallen behind in the regional power dynamics due to delays in developing its own internal transit corridors.

Economic expert Taher Rahimi has proposed at least four key measures to mitigate the negative impact of the Zangezur corridor:

- Initiating a gas swap with Russia via Turkmenistan instead of Azerbaijan
- Finalizing the Neka-Jask oil corridor in cooperation with Russia
- Making the North-South corridor independent of Azerbaijani territory
- Establishing a regional food hub in partnership with Russia

The editorial emphasizes that the Zangezur corridor represents a rapid and inevitable reshaping of regional geopolitics. It warns that if Iran fails to define its strategic role today, it risks becoming isolated—reduced to a map of borders with no meaningful links to the region's economic lifelines.

Ultimately, the future of corridor diplomacy in the Caucasus and beyond demands a proactive, strategic, and multilateral approach—one that can elevate Iran from a passive bystander to a central player in regional influence.

Javan: Iran will not back down from its red lines

In an interview with international relations expert Dariush Safarnejad, Javan discussed Iran's stance on the Zangezur corridor. Safarnejad emphasized that Iran must adopt a firm position to safeguard its geopolitical interests, in alignment with the strategic vision of the Leader of the Revolution. He noted that Iran's initial recognition of Armenia was based on the country's existing borders as a neighboring state. Should there be any change in these borders, Iran would be legally entitled—under international law—to reconsider its recognition of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Safarnejad warned against any shifts in regional borders facilitated by NATO intervention, asserting that such a development would represent a direct intrusion by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Israel into a region that lies at the heart of Iran's national security interests. In response, he argued that Iran has every right to firmly assert its red lines, express opposition to the proposed corridor under NATO influence, and re-evaluate its diplomatic relations with Armenia if such developments threaten its sovereignty. Additionally, he stressed that Iran should be prepared to react decisively to any military or security presence by external parties in the region.

'No crime but knowledge:' Pezeshkian honors nuclear scientists killed by Israel

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian paid tribute to Iran's assassinated nuclear scientists Tuesday, calling their “only crime” the pursuit of national scientific sovereignty.

Speaking at Shahid Beheshti University, he stated: “These loved ones had no sin except that they knew, and had the will, to equip their country with advanced technologies.”

He condemned Western powers’ “hypocritical claims of democracy and human rights,” noting scientists such as Amir-Hossein Feghhi, Mohammad-Mehdi Tehrani, Ahmad-Reza Zolfaghari, Abdolhamid Minouchehr, and Fereydoon Abbasi-Davani “took no action but serving Iran's people and shielding the nation from aggression.”

Standing before the memorial for the scientists, Pezeshkian declared: “These martyrs prove that knowledge, not threats, guides Iran's future.”

The five were among 19 Iranian scientists martyred during the Israeli regime's campaign of aggression against Iran, which began with coordinated strikes on June 13 targeting nuclear facilities and residential areas. The regime's attacks resulted in the martyrdom of more than 1,065 Iranians throughout the war.



Pezeshkian pays tribute at the memorial site honoring Iran's martyred scientists in Tehran's Shahid Beheshti University on August 12, 2025.

Collectively, the five martyred scientists authored 555 peaceful, high-impact research papers in radiation safety, nanotech, and environmental science.

Iran maintains that its nuclear program is peaceful, citing the fatwa issued by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, explicitly prohibiting the development and use of nuclear weapons.

Iran, IAEA agree to continue consultations amid Tehran's demands for new framework

TEHRAN – Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi announced Monday that Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have agreed to continue consultations following talks in Tehran, marking a potential thaw in relations after cooperation was suspended in June.

The breakthrough follows Tehran's call for a fundamental restructuring of its engagement with the UN nuclear watchdog, citing the IAEA's failure to fulfill its responsibilities during U.S.-Israeli attacks on civilian nuclear sites in June.

IAEA Deputy Director General Massimo Aparo led the international body's delegation, and although inspections did not take place, both sides agreed to advance technical discussions. “Taking into account the discussions held during the meeting, it was decided to continue consultations,” Gharibabadi said, stressing that future cooperation will depend on meaningful IAEA reforms.

During the latest meeting, the Iranian delegation strongly criticized the IAEA's silence in response to recent attacks—carried



out with U.S. support and involvement—against nuclear facilities in Fordo, Isfahan, and Natanz.

Gharibabadi underscored that Iran's “strong objections” to the agency's inaction were formally communicated, demanding corrective measures for its “improper processes” regarding Iran's nuclear activities.

The talks follow Iran's June 25 parliamentary vote, which unanimously approved a law suspending IAEA cooperation. The legislation mandates that any future inspections require explicit approval from Iran's Supreme Na-

tional Security Council and guarantees for the physical and technical security of nuclear facilities.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has condemned the IAEA for becoming a “political tool” after it accused Iran of non-proliferation violations days before the Israeli regime's attacks—a move Tehran believes provided pretext for the aggression.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi excoriated the IAEA's “poor conduct” as enabling “the gravest violation of international law” in a televised interview last week.

Sovereignty ‘non-negotiable’ in Caucasus transit talks, Araghchi tells Armenian counterpart

From page 1 ► The conversation followed Armenia's announcement of a peace memorandum with Azerbaijan, signed under U.S. mediation at the White House, where President Donald Trump claimed credit for brokering the deal.

The agreement, which includes provisions for unblocking regional transport routes, has raised concerns in Tehran about potential shifts in the South Caucasus' geopolitical landscape.

Iran has consistently advocated for regional stability and opposed arrangements that could disrupt its strategic interests or access to vital transit routes, particularly those connecting it to Armenia and Georgia.

In their phone call, Mirzoyan briefed Araghchi on the details of the peace agreement and the planned Caucasus transit corridor

project, assuring Tehran that Armenia considers its relationship with Iran a priority.

He described the ties as rooted in mutual respect and good neighborliness, emphasizing Armenia's commitment to ensuring that regional decisions align with Iran's interests.

Araghchi welcomed the peace efforts but cautioned that any new transit routes must not alter the region's geopolitical balance or sever Iran's access to existing networks.

The Iranian top diplomat stressed that stability and security considerations are essential for any regional agreement.

Experts, meanwhile, note that Iran has the legal right to object and potentially block transit plans in the South Caucasus if they



Photo combo shows Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) and his Armenian counterpart Ararat Mirzoyan

might harm its interest, as international law requires countries directly affected by a decision to be involved in making it. According to the Vienna Convention on treaties, any plan impacting Iran's borders or trade routes needs Iran's approval to be legal.

Also, according to a ruling by the International Court of Justice, Iran's closeness to Syunik and its dependence on regional trade means its borders and economy should be taken into account in the potential development of new transit routes.

Understanding the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty: key points explained

From page 1 ► **What is the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty, and why is it significant?**

The treaty is a comprehensive agreement aimed at establishing “a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region” between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It commits the two countries to establish “inter-state relations” based on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and international law. As stated in the preamble, the Parties express their “mutual will to establish good-neighborliness,” reflecting the importance of ending decades of hostility and conflict.

How was the treaty reached?

The treaty text was agreed upon earlier in March 2025 and was initiated by both sides during a joint meeting in Washington, following the visit of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. Initialing “formally confirmed both sides' acceptance of the agreement's wording and their commitment not to alter it,” although the treaty is not yet legally binding.

Is the treaty already in force?

No, the treaty is not yet in force. Article XVI states that the agreement “shall enter into force following the exchange of instruments notifying the completion of internal procedures in accordance with the national legislation of each Party.”

What are the treaty's main commitments?

The treaty includes several key commitments, including:

- Recognition of each other's “sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of international borders and political independence” (Article I).
- Neither party “has any territorial claims against each other and shall not raise any such claims in the future” (Article II).

- Refraining from “the use of force or the threat of the use of force” against the other (Article III).

- Not allowing “any third party to use their respective territories for the use of force against the other Party inconsistent with the UN Charter” (Article III).

- Refraining from intervening in each other's internal affairs (Article IV).

- Establishing diplomatic relations after ratification (Article V).

- Conducting “good faith negotiations” on border delimitation and demarcation (Article VI)

- Not deploying third-party forces along the border and implementing confidence-building measures (Article VII).

- discrimination, separatism, violent extremism and terrorism” (Article VIII).

- Addressing cases of missing persons from the conflict (Article IX).

- Potential cooperation in economic, transit, environmental, humanitarian and cultural fields (Article X).

How does the agreement address the transit and transport routes?

While the treaty does not explicitly mention the specific transit routes, Article X allows for cooperation in “economic, transit and transport” fields, subject to future agreements: “In order to establish cooperation in various fields, including economic, transit and transport...the Parties may conclude agreements in respective areas of mutual interest.” This means transport corridors are to be negotiated further but must respect each country's sovereignty as emphasized in Articles I and VI regarding borders.

What does the deal say about border delimitation?

Article VI commits the Parties to “conduct

good faith negotiations between their respective border commissions...to conclude the Agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of the state border between them.” This negotiation must comply with Article I, which confirms recognition and respect for sovereignty and borders. Additionally, Article VII prohibits deployment of third-party forces along the mutual border and requires confidence-building measures for border security until demarcation is complete.

Will there be involvement of any third parties like the U.S.?

Article III states clearly: “They shall not allow any third party to use their respective territories for the use of force against the other Party in a way inconsistent with the UN Charter.” This prohibits third-party military involvement against either party from within each other's territory.

How could the peace deal affect Iran's position in the South Caucasus?

The treaty text does not mention Iran directly. However, by requiring respect for sovereignty and political independence (Article I) and promising cooperation on transit and transport under mutual agreement (Article X), the treaty implies that any transport corridors must respect the territorial integrity of all involved states, indirectly affecting regional dynamics including Iran's connectivity.

What happens next?

According to Article XVI, the treaty will become legally binding only after both parties complete their internal ratification procedures and exchange notification instruments. Until then, the treaty is a formal but non-binding agreement. The final signing date remains uncertain, as Azerbaijan awaits Armenia's constitutional amendments related to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Larijani speaks at a presser in Baghdad after meetings with top officials:

Resistance groups ‘don’t need guardianship’

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – Iran’s top security official, Ali Larijani, continued his visit to Iraq on Tuesday, where he took a look at facilities hosting Iranian pilgrims in Iraq after spending Monday on several high-level meetings with the Arab country’s officials.

Larijani, who was recently appointed secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), was seen serving tea to Iranian pilgrims visiting Iraq to commemorate Arbaeen. Arbaeen marks 40 days after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hossein (AS) and represents the world’s largest annual gathering, drawing millions to Karbala, where Imam Hossein was martyred in his stand against Yazid.

Following the previous day’s meetings with Iraq’s president, parliament speaker, and prime minister – which resulted in the signing of a new joint security agreement between Tehran and Baghdad – Larijani’s second day was relatively quiet.

The veteran Iranian statesman is scheduled to return to Tehran after a stop in Beirut, where meetings with top Lebanese officials are expected. The visit occurs amidst growing Western pressure on Hezbollah to disarm, despite the group’s successes against Israel during a 14-month war that also saw the assassination of key Hezbollah figures by Israel.



Larijani walks in the streets of Karbala, Iraq during an official visit on August 12, 2025

While a ceasefire agreement signed in November 2024 was meant to end the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, Israelis have been violating the terms, conducting airstrikes in different parts of Lebanon on a regular basis.

Apart from the cessation of attacks, the agreement stipulated Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon following Hezbollah’s retreat behind the Litani River. However, after Hezbollah’s withdrawal, Israel occupied at least five new areas in southern Lebanon and is now demanding full implementation of UN Resolution 1701, which calls for the disarmament of all military groups in Lebanon, restricting weapons possession to the Lebanese Army. Hezbollah

maintains it will only discuss implementing the resolution once Israel withdraws from Lebanon and fulfills its obligations under the ceasefire agreement.

The Lebanese government, however, seems to have caved in to pressure from Israel and the West at a time when Hezbollah’s potential disarmament could embolden Israeli attacks. Following a cabinet meeting on Thursday, Lebanon’s Prime Minister Nawaf Salam announced that ministers had approved the “objectives” of a U.S. proposal aimed at “ensuring that the possession of weapons is restricted solely to the state.” He did not address concerns regarding the potential for increased Israeli aggression should a strong deterrent force

be absent. Hezbollah was formed in the early 1980s in response to Israel’s occupation of southern Lebanon and has served as a significant and undeniable force countering Israeli aggression alongside the Lebanese Army in past decades.

Israel has been trying to paint Hezbollah as a “proxy” of Iran to justify its disarmament and dissolution, an assertion rejected countless times by Iran, most recently during a presser Larijani held in Baghdad.

“The nations of Iraq and Lebanon are wise and courageous; they do not need us to tell them what to do,” Larijani said to a room of reporters. “Iran is a friend to both countries and engages in mutual consultation, but it does not issue commands.”

He specifically addressed Hezbollah, saying the group along with other Resistance factions in the region “possess a highly developed political mindset and do not need guardianship.” Top of Form

Israel and the U.S. have carried out similar efforts to disarm Resistance factions in Iraq. “Each of these groups is considered a national asset in their respective country, and has a good understanding of the situation. They know what to do at any particular moment. Therefore, I believe, all efforts should be devoted to maintaining this capacity,” Larijani noted.

Iran, South Africa pledge to deepen military and anti-terrorism collaboration



Visiting Chief of the South African National Defense Force, General Rudzani Maphwanya, met with Iranian military officials, including Army Commander Major General Amir Hatami (L) and Defense Minister Major General Aziz Nasirzadeh (R), in Tehran on August 12, 2025.

From Page 1 ▶ He issued a stern warning to the Zionist regime and the United States that the Iranian armed forces are fully prepared to deliver a decisive response to any renewed aggression.

Earlier, the South African delegation also met with Major General Amir Hatami, Commander of the Iranian Army, who called for expanding military cooperation between the two countries. He praised South Africa for its courageous stance condemning the June Israeli and U.S. aggression against Iran.

Iran, South Africa share commitment against global arrogance and colonialism

Iran’s Army Commander Major General Amir Hatami and South African Defense Chief General Rudzani Maphwanya underscored their countries’ common goal of confronting global arrogance and colonial aggression during their talks in Tehran on Tuesday.

General Hatami pointed out that Iran and South Africa are united by anti-colonial, anti-arrogance, and justice-seeking principles. He emphasized that South Africa holds a “prioritized” place in Iran’s foreign policy.

He stated, “The Islamic Republic and South Africa have always supported each other and oppressed nations. This mission must continue until the restoration of a global order based on justice and human dignity.”

The Iranian commander also lauded South Africa’s “firm stance” in condemning the Israeli regime and U.S. joint atrocities against Palestinians as both “courageous and commendable.”

Highlighting Pretoria’s fight against Zionist aggression, General Hatami praised South Africa’s move to challenge Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over its ongoing genocide in Gaza, calling the initiative “historic.”

He warned that Gaza’s besieged population urgently needs concrete support, not just symbolic gestures. “Unfortunately, due to the influence of the United States and some Western powers, support remains mostly verbal, allowing the crimes of this regime to continue unabated,” he lamented.

Recalling the unprovoked 12-day US-backed Israeli war on Iran in June, Major General Hatami condemned Tel Aviv and Washington for violating international law. However, he noted that their campaign ended in humiliation, with Iranian missile strikes forcing Israel to seek a ceasefire and Washington to halt attacks.

He described South Africa’s supportive stance during the conflict as “courageous and commendable.”

General Hatami stressed that political alignment between Tehran and Pretoria grants South Africa a special place in Iran’s outreach to Africa. He expressed hope to convert this into concrete joint military projects.

General Maphwanya conveyed greetings from South Africa’s president and defense minister and affirmed, “The Republic of South Africa and the Islamic Republic of Iran have common goals. We always stand alongside the oppressed and defenseless people of the world.”

Reiterating solidarity with Palestinians, he condemned the Zionist regime’s “bombing of civilians standing in line for food.” He said

South Africa’s ICJ case aims to hold those responsible for genocide accountable.

He also criticized Israel’s ongoing aggression in the occupied West Bank, calling it an extension of illegal settlement expansion.

Concluding, General Maphwanya highlighted the longstanding mutual respect between the two countries and called for deeper cooperation, especially in defense.

He emphasized that his visit “carries a political message,” arriving in Tehran “at the best possible time to express our heartfelt sentiments to the peace-loving people of Iran.”

Iranian Defense Minister emphasizes shared values and South Africa’s role

Iran’s Defense Minister Major General Aziz Nasirzadeh met with General Rudzani Maphwanya and highlighted the longstanding friendly relations between Iran and South Africa rooted in shared values such as resistance against oppression, apartheid, discrimination, colonialism, and the pursuit of independence, human dignity, and justice.

He noted South Africa’s strategic geopolitical and socioeconomic role in the African continent and praised its independent and courageous stance on international matters.

Nasirzadeh thanked South Africa for its bold condemnation of the Israeli regime’s recent aggression against Iran, calling South Africa’s ICJ case against Israel’s genocide “a historic step in defending Palestinian rights.”

He underscored common views between the two countries on fighting injustice, opposing unilateralism,

rejecting hegemonic domination, promoting human rights, and combating terrorism. Iran expressed readiness for political and international consultations with friends including South Africa.

Nasirzadeh emphasized that the 12-day Israeli war proved the regime and the U.S.’s disregard for international norms. He condemned Israel’s attacks on Iran’s nuclear, military, civilian, and medical facilities, which killed Iranian commanders and scientists and their families, calling it state terrorism backed by Washington.

He affirmed Iran’s legitimate right to respond decisively, stating the strikes led Israel to seek a ceasefire and Iran to agree to it to prevent escalation, while remaining vigilant for any new provocations.

Nasirzadeh described the damage inflicted on Israel as unprecedented in the regime’s history, noting Israeli censorship hides the full extent but that officials know the severity.

General Maphwanya expressed disgust at Israeli actions and genocide in Gaza and highlighted shared ideals between South Africa’s late leader Nelson Mandela and Iran’s Imam Khomeini (RA) in opposing injustice and discrimination.

He emphasized Iran’s strategic and geopolitical importance in the Persian Gulf and West Asia and called for strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two independent nations.

Finally, he said their visit, considering both countries’ BRICS membership and geopolitical positions, symbolizes their desire for solidarity and unity.

2025 World Games: Bagherzadeh takes gold



TEHRAN – Iranian wushu athlete Yasaman Bagherzadeh won a gold medal in the 2025 World Games on Tuesday.

She defeated China’s Hailan Zhu 2-1 in the women’s 70kg.

Egyptian Menaalla Aly beat Briton’s Krista Dyer 2-0 in the bronze medal match.

The 12th edition of The World Games take place from Aug. 7-17 in Chengdu, China.

Iran ready to defend title at FIVB U21 World Championship, coach says

TEHRAN – Gholamreza Momeni Moghaddam says that Iran aim to repeat their title at the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship.

Iran have been drawn into Pool B alongside Poland, Canada, South Korea, Kazakhstan, and Puerto Rico.

“Our goal is to achieve good results and defend our title at the World Championship. The aim is to bring home honors, but it’s not easy, especially this year since it’s the year after the Olympics and teams are in a rebuilding phase,” Momeni Moghaddam said.

“We will enter the competition well prepared and with strong motivation to defend our title. Unfortunately, we didn’t play any warm-up matches this year, which is why we’re traveling a week early to adapt to the weather conditions and to play several warm-up games,” he added.

The Iran U21 team will open the campaign on Aug. 21 with a match against Kazakhstan. They are also scheduled to play Puerto Rico (Aug. 22), South Korea (Aug. 23), Canada (Aug. 25), and Poland (Aug. 26).

The 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship, which marks the 23rd edition of the tournament, will be held in Jiangmen, China, from Aug. 21 to 31.

Iran’s NPC and APC sign agreement

TEHRAN – Iran’s National Paralympic Committee (NPC) and the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) signed an agreement to establish the APC Higher Education Center in Iran.

The agreement, signed by APC President Majid Rashid and Iran’s NPC head Ghafour Kargari on the sidelines of the 38th APC Executive Board Meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan, aims to establish a regional sports training center capable of hosting continental Sport Training and Events Centre (APC STEC) in Iran.

The center will focus on developing specialized training and raising the scientific level of Paralympic sports across the continent.

The agreement is the result of the NPC’s well-planned efforts in education, human resource development, active international diplomacy, and upgrading the country’s scientific and operational infrastructure in Paralympic sports.

Tractor win 2025 Iran’s Super Cup

TEHRAN – Tractor football team came from a goal down to beat Esteghlal 2-1 in 2025 Iran’s Super Cup on Monday.

In the match held in Isfahan’s Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium, Rouzbeh Cheshmi scored an early goal for Esteghlal in the 12th minute.

With three minutes remaining, Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh leveled the score from the penalty spot and Tomislav Štrkalj scored the winner four minutes later.

This high-profile match saw Tractor, the reigning champions of the Iran’s Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL), faced off against Esteghlal, the Hazfi Cup winners.

Historically, Persepolis are the most successful team in Super Cup, having won the title five times.

Nice shows interest in signing Taremi

TEHRAN – French football club Nice Mehdi Taremi has showed interest in signing Inter Milan forward Mehdi Taremi.

Taremi has expressed a clear preference to remain in Europe for his next move.

In a boost to the likes of Leeds and Nottingham Forest, Taremi has rejected a move to South America to join Flamengo. The report states: Taremi’s agents and intermediaries are working to find him a place in Europe, as this is his wish, as evidenced by the fact that he turned down Flamengo.

Leeds, Fulham, and Nottingham Forest are interested in him, but in the last few hours, Ligue 1 club Nice has also made a move.

Nice’s entry into the race could present a challenge for Leeds and their Premier League rivals, as they can offer Champions League football to the wantaway Inter man.

Nice finished fourth in Ligue 1 last season and will enter the qualifying rounds of the UCL.

Iran to face S. Arabia in 2026 AFC U17 Women’s Asian Cup Qualification opener

TEHRAN – Iran’s fixtures in the 2026 AFC U17 Women’s Asian Cup qualification was revealed.

Iran is drawn in Group B along with Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Kuwait.

The Persian young girls will start the campaign on October 13 against Saudi Arabia at the Prince Saud bin Jalawi Stadium in Khobar, Saudi Arabia.

Iran will meet Kuwait and Lebanon on October 15 and 17, respectively.

The eight group winners will progress to the 10th edition of the Finals, where they will be joined by the four AFC representatives from the FIFA U-17 Women’s World Cup Morocco 2025 who have automatically qualified, namely DPR Korea, Japan, Korea Republic and China, to form a 12-strong line-up --four more than the previous edition.

The Finals will be contested from April 30 to May 17, 2026.

Iran’s Mansourian wins bronze in 2025 World Games

TEHRAN – Iranian wushu athlete Soheila Mansourian claimed a bronze medal in the 2025 World Games on Tuesday.

She defeated Hong Kong’s Tsz Ching Chan 2-0 in the women’s 60kg bronze-medal match.

Li Zhiqin of China beat Vietnamese Nguyen Thi Thu Thuy 2-0 in the gold medal match.

The 12th edition of The World Games take place from Aug. 7-17 in Chengdu, China.

Iran, Turkmenistan agree to build 2 new rail lines at Sarakhs border



TEHRAN – Iran and Turkmenistan have agreed to construct two new railway lines at the Sarakhs border crossing to ease freight congestion and boost rail trade, the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways said after meeting Turkmenistan's railway minister.

Jabbarali Zakeri said the plan includes adding one standard-gauge line and one broad-gauge line between the Sarakhs stations on each side of the border.

The agreement was reached during a bilateral meeting in Turkmenbashi on the sidelines of the United Nations' Third Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.

Zakeri, who is also deputy minister of transport and urban development, stressed that expanding the number of exchange tracks is vital for strengthening rail links between the two countries.

He said expert-level meetings between the two rail administrations will be held to advance implementation.

The talks also addressed the backlog of export freight at Sarakhs.

Zakeri said Turkmenistan's railway will add 200 to 300 Uzbek freight wagons to the joint transport fleet to help increase international cargo capacity and speed up rail trade along the route.

The Sarakhs crossing is a key gateway for cargo flows between Iran, Central Asia and beyond, forming part of the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC) and other regional rail networks.

Officials say the planned infrastructure expansion will enhance both bilateral trade and multimodal transit operations through the corridor.

In mid-May, Iran and Turkmenistan signed a commercial roadmap aimed at boosting bilateral trade to \$3.0 billion.

The agreement was signed in Tehran by Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadegh and Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov following the 18th session of the Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Committee.

Sadegh said the recent committee meeting marked a new chapter in bilateral cooperation, stressing that intensive talks had yielded fresh approaches and agreements to expand

trade. "The trade roadmap is expected to be finalized before the Iranian president's upcoming visit to Turkmenistan," she added.

The minister highlighted the strategic location of both countries within the North-South and East-West corridors, describing them as critical to regional connectivity. She noted that Iran and Turkmenistan had agreed to aim for 20 million tons in transit volumes, with a 16-million-ton target set for 2028.

Other key understandings included plans to establish joint free trade zones in Sarakhs-Sarakhs and Lotfabad-Artiq, strengthen border markets—especially in Incheh Borun—and prepare a bilateral gas contract. The roadmap also calls for constructing the Qamdaq-Atrak road toward the Iranian border and building a gas pipeline to Turkmenistan.

Agreements were also reached on developing a third electricity transmission line between Mary and Sarakhs and launching feasibility studies for a fourth. "If both sides follow through, the 18th committee will open up new avenues for economic and cultural cooperation," Sadegh said.

Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov thanked Iranian officials for their hospitality, stating that bilateral relations are at a high level. "The close dialogue between the two presidents is grounded in mutual trust, which plays a pivotal role in advancing ties," he said.

Meredov emphasized the importance of the Joint Economic Committee as a coordination mechanism for implementing bilateral agreements across sectors such as oil, gas, transport, trade, telecommunications, agriculture, and environment. He also expressed readiness to expand cooperation in health, sports, tourism, and science.

Meredov said the Turkmen delegation had held productive meetings with Iranian officials and that President Pezeshkian had shared his vision for future cooperation during their encounter. "We view Iran's proposals seriously and are committed to joint efforts," he added.

Speaking on the sidelines of the joint economic commission, RAI Head Jabar Ali Zakeri said rail transit is currently at its best level, and Iran aims to resolve logistical issues at Sarakhs, Lotfabad, and Incheh Borun border points to facilitate growth.

He said talks had addressed problems such as the movement of Iranian wagons on Turkmen railways and activation of the Lotfabad border terminal. The terminal will now offer special freight discounts, expected to add 170,000 to 200,000 tons of transit freight—a first for the crossing.

Iran is also working on resolving customs hurdles and expanding infrastructure at the Sarakhs and Incheh Borun terminals.

‘Maritime-based economy is a national mission’

TEHRAN- Iranian deputy oil minister for engineering, research, and technology stressed that maritime-based economy is a national mission.

Speaking at a specialized meeting on the IMO's carbon emission reduction requirements, Omid Shakeri announced the new requirements set by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to reduce carbon emissions in the shipping sector, stating: "The policies for developing a maritime-based economy, which were issued by the Leader in November 2023, have opened new horizons for the oil industry, maritime transportation, and modern technologies."

He noted that these regulations could be both a threat and an opportunity, emphasizing, "If we aim to expand international trade, maritime transportation in compliance with global standards is inevitable. We believe that through timely action and reliance on engineering and research capabilities, we can turn this threat into an opportunity."

Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), in a report, has underlined the importance of the country's maritime capacities and the role that the sector can play in developing the country's economy.

According to the report, maritime sector in Iran has very high capacity in various fields including trade, ports and shipping due to the

country's strategic location, long coastal strip in the north and south and access to open waters, and can bring economic prosperity to the country.

"About a third of the country's borders are water borders, so we cannot ignore port and shipping activities because for a country that has long water borders and access to open waters, the prosperity of shipping and maritime trade is essential. Therefore, the government should pay full attention to the strengths and weaknesses of this sector and make the best use of the current capacities with proper planning," the report read.

Increasing the share of the maritime sector in the country's gross domestic product (GDP) under the framework of the newly proposed maritime-oriented policy should be one of the most important concerns of the government, which can be achieved with proper planning, the PMO said.

The share of the sea in the gross domestic product in advanced coastal countries such as the European Union is 50 percent, but the figure is not significant in Iran despite having more than 5,800 kilometers of coastal strip, and this is despite the fact that there are huge capacities for the transit of goods from Central Asian countries.

Solar power projects totaling 400MW capacity launched in 4 provinces

From Page 1 ► The projects, spanning 12 sites in Markazi, Bushehr, Khorasan Razavi and Tehran provinces, represent an investment of about \$237 million, funded by both public and private sectors, according to state media.

SATBA head Mohsen Tarztalab said nine solar plants with a combined capacity of 100 megawatts were inaugurated in Saveh and Mamouniyeh in Markazi province, the southern port city of Dayyer in Bushehr province, and Khorasan Razavi province.

Construction has also begun on three solar plants with a combined capacity of 295 megawatts in Bushehr and Tehran provinces, Tarztalab said.

He added that SATBA plans to bring 5,000 megawatts of renewable capacity online within a year and is working on 2,000 megawatts of large-scale and floating solar plants.

Iranian Energy Ministry plans to bring 1,000 megawatts of new solar power online each month during the hot season, a senior energy official said, as the country faces growing electricity demand driven by extreme summer



heat.

Abdolamir Yaghoubi, Director General of Energy Affairs at the state-run Tavanir Company, has said the imbalance between supply and demand is largely due to inefficient consumption patterns and outdated energy designs. "It's like driving a gas-guzzling car—no matter how much fuel you have, you'll still face problems. The same logic applies to electricity," he said.

To alleviate demand pressures, Yaghoubi suggested practical measures for households such as using fans alongside air conditioners, cooking during cooler

hours, turning off unused appliances, installing reflective glass and double-glazed windows, and using external shades to block direct sunlight. "Small changes can have a major impact on electricity consumption," he noted.

With its high solar irradiance levels, Iran is geographically well-positioned to expand its renewable energy footprint. Yaghoubi said that according to global solar maps, Iran ranks among countries with excellent solar exposure, making it ideal for sustainable electricity generation.

He confirmed that Iran met its July target of adding 1,000 MW

Iran-Kenya 7th Joint Economic Committee meeting opened in Nairobi



Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Gezeljeh speaks at the 7th Iran-Kenya Joint Economic Committee meeting in Nairobi on Tuesday.

TEHRAN – Iran and Kenya have launched their seventh joint Economic Committee meeting in Nairobi aimed at deepening economic ties, with both sides setting a target to boost annual trade to \$1.0 billion from the

current \$150 million, Iran's agriculture minister said.

The two-day meeting is co-chaired by Iran's minister of agriculture and Kenya's prime minister and foreign minister.

More than 100 representatives from government ministries and the private sector are taking part, marking the first time in a decade the event has been hosted in Kenya.

Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Gezeljeh highlighted Kenya's strategic location in East Africa and its economic potential, saying Iran is ready to share expertise in greenhouse cultivation and water-efficient farming, as well as its experience in producing and exporting crops such as pistachios, saffron and dates.

He said Iran sees Kenya as a gateway to regional markets and plans to expand cooperation beyond trade to include strategic and technical partnerships.

Petrochemical industry needs \$24b investment to meet targets

TEHRAN – Iran's petrochemical sector will require an estimated \$24 billion in investment to achieve its goals under the Seventh National Development Plan, which aims to raise nominal production capacity to 131.5 million tons by the plan's end, a senior Oil Ministry official said.

Afshin Gholamalipour, special aide to the deputy oil minister for petrochemicals, said the industry's nominal capacity reached 96.6 million tons in 2024, with 76 complexes producing a range of products from methanol to polymers and aromatics.

Actual output stood at 66 million tons last year, with about \$11 billion sold domestically and nearly \$13 billion exported.

The industry relies mainly on feedstock and fuel from oil refineries, gas refineries, NGL units and gas fields, equivalent to 1.2 million barrels of crude oil per day.

Gholamalipour warned that despite extensive infrastructure, the sector faces feedstock shortages, investment challenges and the need for technology upgrades. In 2023, gas feedstock shortages amounted to around 42 percent of nominal capacity, due to falling gas field pressure, seasonal limits, competition with other energy users, and transmission constraints.

Under the plan, propylene chain capacity is to rise 344 percent to 4.6 million tons, downstream methanol capacity 391 percent to 11.6 million tons, and downstream ethylene (excluding polyethylene)

287 percent to 0.7 million tons. Polyethylene capacity is targeted to grow from 5.15 to 8.6 million tons, and aromatics from 2.28 to 3 million tons – shifting focus from raw material exports to value-added products.

A total of 66 petrochemical projects form the backbone of this expansion, covering downstream ethylene and propylene units, GTO and MTO plants, methanol and its derivatives, urea and ammonia, aromatics, and infrastructure and utility schemes. Financing options under consideration include long-term foreign loans, particularly from China, public share offerings, private equity funds, sukuk bonds, National Development Fund loans, banking consortia for mega-projects, and short-term foreign currency credit lines.

Gholamalipour said sustaining competitiveness hinges on technology, calling for domestic licensing through the Petrochemical Research and Technology Company, R&D partnerships with foreign firms, and easing equipment procurement bottlenecks. He also urged regulatory reforms, contractor capacity upgrades, and stronger oversight by the National Petrochemical Company to address environmental, legal and operational hurdles.

In earl August, Hamidreza Ajami, NPC's investment director, had said that the company is seeking to attract \$100 billion in domestic and foreign investment to complete semi-finished projects and expand the country's petrochemical value

chain.

The official said the 144 licensed projects in the sector require nearly \$100 billion in capital, adding that the exclusive reliance on domestic financing has limited growth and undermined Iran's global competitiveness.

"Petrochemicals account for 25 percent of Iran's non-oil exports and 19 percent of the country's industrial value-added," he said. "Developing this sector plays a critical role in economic, social, and national security."

According to Ajami, around \$87 billion has been invested in Iran's petrochemical industry from 1979 to 2022, with 19 percent of that originating from foreign sources and over 11 percent financed through the National Development Fund and other internal and external resources.

Under the country's seventh development plan, an additional \$22 billion in investment is envisioned, he said, noting that while some projects have already come online, others are still in progress.

According to Ajami current projects in this sector include 20 projects worth \$11 billion with over 70 percent physical progress, 32 projects worth \$22 billion which are between 20 and 70 percent complete, and 92 projects worth \$67 billion that are below 20 percent completion.

He underscored the importance of foreign investment, citing a recent agreement with Iran's Organization for Investment Economic

of solar capacity and intends to maintain that pace in the coming months. "The legal and technical infrastructure for renewable energy development is already in place," he added.

Yaghoubi pointed to regulatory incentives, highlighting revisions to Article 19 of Iran's National Building Code, which now requires buildings taller than four stories to source part of their energy from renewables.

He also outlined financial incentives for households and private investors, noting that surplus solar electricity is purchased by the government at a rate of nearly 50,000 rials (about 10 cents) per kilowatt-hour and is tradable on the Iran Energy Exchange.

Despite efforts to boost generation, Yaghoubi warned that unchecked consumption habits could undermine stability. "If we don't reform usage patterns, expanding capacity alone won't solve the imbalance—it may even worsen it," he said. "The future of a stable grid depends on behavioral change and efficiency-driven design."

Proposals under discussion include creating a joint committee to follow up on agreements, holding joint exhibitions, enhancing banking cooperation, and facilitating private-sector participation. The minister appointed senior adviser Nasser Arshad as Iran's representative to the joint committee.

Kenya's prime minister and foreign minister noted that Kenyan tea exports have grown from over 3,000 tons in 2003 to more than 13,000 tons in 2024. He said the government aims to remove remaining export restrictions to Iran and agreed with Tehran to form a joint body to address trade barriers within 60 days, particularly in the tea sector.

The committee is expected to sign multiple cooperation documents covering agriculture, health care, cultural exchanges, construction, and overseas farming projects. Officials from both countries say the outcome will lay the groundwork for a significant expansion of bilateral and regional engagement.

and Technical Assistance aimed at more actively promoting the sector to international investors. Ajami also noted Iran is pursuing increased cooperation through the BRICS group and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Despite international sanctions, Ajami said the petrochemical sector has managed to withstand external pressures by utilizing domestic funding and foreign credit lines. Several projects are slated to be inaugurated this year.

He cited Iran's large domestic and regional markets, access to open waters, skilled labor, and legal and policy incentives as key advantages for investors. He also pointed to the growing role of knowledge-based firms and advanced technologies.

In 2024, Iranian banks issued \$210 million in Islamic foreign exchange-based bonds (Murabaha Sukuk), and plans are underway to issue an additional 130 trillion rials (approximately \$2.6 billion) this year. The NPC also aims to mobilize financing through project funds, public participation initiatives, educational outreach, and expert forums.

Ajami highlighted the company's investment priorities, including the completion of unfinished projects, development of mid- and downstream units, flared gas recovery, and increasing hard currency revenues. He emphasized leveraging both domestic and foreign experiences, citing joint projects with the Philippines as well as partnerships with AriaSasoul and Karoun Petrochemical Company.

International outrage grows over Israeli killing of journalists in Gaza

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN — Despite growing international condemnation following the killing of five journalists in Gaza, Israeli military operations continue unabated, causing significant civilian casualties and deepening the humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian territory.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry's report on Tuesday, around 100 Palestinians—including dozens of aid seekers—were killed and over 500 injured in Israeli attacks across Gaza in the past 24 hours. The ministry also said that five more Palestinians, including two children, have died of starvation, bringing the total hunger-related deaths since Israel launched its war on Gaza in October 2023 to 227, with 103 of them children.

The United Nations, the European Union, and key Israeli allies such as Germany and France have condemned the targeted killing of the journalists. Around the world, protests and memorials have erupted, demanding accountability for these attacks.

Memorials and demonstrations for the slain journalists have taken place in Gaza and the West Bank as well as in cities worldwide including Berlin, The Hague, Washington, London, Oslo, and Stockholm, highlighting the global resonance of this tragedy.

Late Sunday, an Israeli airstrike hit a media tent outside the main gate of al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, killing six Al Jazeera journal-



Palestinians protest against the killing of journalists in Gaza, in Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, August 11, 2025 [Mohammed Torokman/ Reuters]

ists, including Anas al-Sharif, a well-known figure in Gaza's media community. Journalists globally have condemned the killing of their colleagues.

Patricia Esami-Lubba, a Nigerian journalist and diplomatic international correspondent, told the Tehran Times, "As a journalist committed to truth, accountability, and the ethical duty to bear witness, I view the killing of the journalists in Gaza as a tragic and unacceptable assault on press freedom and the public's right... This underscores the urgent need for all parties in conflict to respect the protections guaranteed to media workers under international law."

Talking to the Tehran Times, Xu Yawen, CGTN Radio reporter and international affairs commentator, described the killings as a "blatant attack on press freedom

and a grave violation of international humanitarian law." The Chinese journalist noted that Israel's claim linking the journalists to Hamas lacks credible evidence and fits a disturbing pattern of targeting media workers to suppress information about military operations in Gaza.

The United Nations says at least 242 Palestinian journalists have been killed in Gaza since Israel launched war in Gaza 22 months ago. Citing these figures, Xu added that Israel's disregard for international law continues largely unchecked, supported politically by the United States. "The international community must unite and act decisively to hold Israel responsible and end this cycle of violence," she said.

"The voices of Palestinian journalists must not be silenced," Xu emphasized. "The global me-

dia and public must continue to spotlight the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Only by upholding the two-state solution and advancing political resolutions can this endless bloodshed and conflict be brought to an end."

Attacks deliberately targeting journalists represent clear and egregious violations of international humanitarian law, constituting serious breaches of press freedom and the public's fundamental right to access information during armed conflict. Under the Geneva Conventions, these acts may amount to war crimes, demanding immediate, impartial investigations and accountability for those responsible.

Journalists in Gaza are protected civilians under international law, yet the repeated killings and attacks against them flagrantly violate these protections. Media workers play an indispensable role in exposing the realities of conflict and documenting human rights abuses. Allowing perpetrators to act with impunity not only undermines the rule of law but also emboldens further violations against journalists and obstructs transparency.

The international community bears an urgent legal and ethical responsibility to enforce protections for journalists, ensure justice for victims, and intensify diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution that respects the human rights and dignity of all affected populations.

Israeli command and control centers under attack in Gaza

From page 1 ► Additionally, the al-Qassam Brigades targeted another IOF site with several mortar shells, east of the al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City.

The al-Qassam Brigades also announced they had sniped two IOF soldiers using the "Ghoul" sniper rifle, leaving one dead and the other wounded in the same area.

Furthermore, the resistance movement announced it targeted a Merkava tank with a Yas-sin 105 shell east of the Shujaiya neighborhood, Gaza City.

Meanwhile, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades released footage of a joint operation carried out alongside al-Nasser Salah al-Din Brigades, the armed wing of the Popular Resistance Committees. The operation involved shelling a group of IOF soldiers and their vehicles advancing northeast of Khan Younis with 60mm mortar shells.

The armed wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the al-Quds Brigades, has released footage showing their resistance fighters shelling concentrations of IOF soldiers and vehicles infiltrating the city of Khan Younis city with mortar fire.

Another video published by the rocket force of al-Quds Brigades shows resistance fighters bombarding the settlement of Nir Am in the Gaza envelope with Quds-3 rockets.

This comes as the IOF military chief has said the regime's forces must be "prepared for an expansion" of the U.S.-backed genocidal war in Gaza.

Addressing a meeting of IOF commanders, Eyal Zamir said: "Our working assumption is that we are in a continuous war. The year 2026 will be a year of shaping and maximizing achievements, increasing preparedness, returning to fundamentals, and seizing opera-

tional opportunities."

He also hailed the "achievements of the war" so far. The remarks follow the Israeli government's decision last week to take over Gaza City and take "control" of the Strip.

A growing number of military experts agree that the Israeli regime has achieved no significant combat successes in Gaza after nearly two years of genocide. Around 2.4 million Palestinian civilians are enduring starvation, famine, and exhaustion due to the ongoing blockade and forced displacement.

However, major efforts to defeat Palestinian resistance forces have failed, as have all attempts to rescue captives through military means.

The U.S. Intelligence community has indicated that Hamas has doubled the number of its fighters since the genocidal war against the coastal enclave began in October 2023.

Nawaf Salam's government preemptively attacks Larijani visit

From page 1 ► Reportedly, the Saudi envoy Yazid bin Farhan is behind the campaign to cancel Larijani's visit, in coordination with Nawaf Salam and the Lebanese Forces leader, Samir Geagea.

However, Salam has failed to persuade Aoun not to receive Larijani. President Joseph Aoun rejected the request, considering it to be beyond all diplomatic standards.

In parallel, it was revealed that Deputy Prime Minister Tarek Mitri and Culture Minister Ghassan Salameh protested Salam's complete compliance with Geagea, partic-

ularly his handling of the Resistance's weapons issue.

According to informed sources, Larijani has not requested a meeting with the Foreign Minister Youssef Rajai (from the Lebanese Forces party), who is continuously campaigning domestically and internationally to cancel the visit or force Iran to apologize for statements supporting the Resistance.

Obviously, the Saudi envoy is interfering in every detail of Salam's government, such as recently ordering Salam to read out the decisions of the cabinet session regarding the disarmament

of the Resistance, a task usually assigned to the Minister of Information.

Informed sources also revealed that contacts are underway to fulfill Salam's request for an upcoming meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to discuss how to implement his government's decision regarding the Resistance's weapons.

In addition to what is known about the Saudi envoy's influence over Lebanon's Sunni lawmakers, it has been learned that Yazid bin Farhan will soon organize a major meeting at Dar al-Fatwa under

the title "Sunni Support" for the Prime Minister.

It is also worth mentioning that the U.S. envoy Thomas Barrack will visit Beirut, accompanied by Morgan Ortagus in her capacity as the senior political advisor at the US Mission to the United Nations, on the 18th of the current month.

Reportedly, Ortagus will return to Lebanon on August 24, accompanied by Democratic Senator Jeanne Shaheen and Senator Lindsey Graham, known for his strong support for Israel and who has previously called for a nuclear attack on Gaza.

"The overall health situation remains catastrophic," he said. "Hunger and malnutrition continue to ravage Gaza.

Over 200 people have died from the effects of malnutrition this year.

Nearly 12,000 children under five were identified to be suffering from acute malnutrition in July - the highest monthly figure recorded to date in Gaza, Peeperkorn said. This figure includes 2,562 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition, of whom 40 were hospitalized at stabilization centers.

Israel has severely restricted the entry of food, water, medicine, and fuel, with the UN warning that famine was imminent.

The Elders group of global leaders warns of Gaza 'genocide'

The Elders group of international stateswomen and statesmen for the first time on Tuesday called the situation in Gaza an "unfolding genocide", saying that Israel's obstruction of aid was causing a "famine".

"Today we express our shock and outrage at Israel's deliberate obstruction of the entry of life-saving humanitarian aid into Gaza," the non-governmental group of public figures, founded by former South Africa president Nelson Mandela in 2007, said in a statement after delegates visited border crossings in Egypt, AFP reported.

"What we saw and heard underlines our personal conviction that there is not only an unfolding, human-caused famine in Gaza. There is an unfolding genocide," it added.

Helen Clark, former prime minister of New Zealand, called on Israel to open the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza so aid could be delivered, after visiting the site.

"Many new mothers are unable to feed themselves or their newborn babies adequately, and the health system is collapsing," she said.

"All of this threatens the very survival of an entire generation."

Clark was joined by Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the visit.

She said that international leaders "have the power and the legal obligation to apply measures to pressure this Israeli government to end its atrocity crimes".

The delegation "saw evidence of food and medical aid denied entry, and heard witness accounts of the killing of Palestinian civilians, including children, while trying to access aid



inside Gaza," said the statement.

They urged Israel and Hamas to agree a ceasefire and for the immediate release of remaining Israeli captives being held in Gaza.

The London-based group also called for the "recognition of the State of Palestine", but added "this will not halt the unfolding genocide and famine in Gaza".

"Transfers of arms and weapons components to Israel must be suspended immediately," it added, saying Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should be sanctioned.

Israel has faced mounting criticism over the 22-month-long war with Hamas, with United Nations-backed experts warning of widespread famine unfolding in besieged Gaza.

Netanyahu is under mounting pressure to secure the release of the remaining captives, as well as over his plans to expand the war, which he has vowed to do with or without the backing of Israel's allies.

Israel's October 2023 offensive in Gaza has so far killed more than 61,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza.

Uruguay condemns Israeli plan to occupy Gaza City

Uruguay's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a statement strongly condemning the Israeli cabinet's decision to occupy Gaza City, calling the move a "serious breach of international law" and warning it could deepen the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

The ministry said the decision undermines efforts to reach a peaceful resolution to the long-standing conflict, and reaffirmed Uruguay's commitment to international peace and security. It voiced support for the New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Palestinian Issue and Implementation of the Two-State Solution, presented by 19 countries at a high-level international conference held on July 28-29.

According to the statement, the declaration provides a "comprehensive, practical roadmap" to achieving lasting peace in the Middle East, addressing political, security, humanitarian, economic, and legal aspects of the conflict. It also highlights the willingness of signatory nations to recognize the State of Palestine.

Uruguay emphasized the importance of constructive dialogue and regional integration as essential components of a two-state solution. The government also called for the creation of a robust post-conflict framework for Gaza, including concrete plans for reconstruction and long-term stability.

Foreign ministers of 25 countries call for "flood" of aid to be let in to Gaza

The foreign ministers of 25 countries including the UK, Australia, France, Spain and Japan as well as two signatories from the EU have released a joint statement saying that "humanitarian suffering in Gaza has reached unimaginable levels" and calling for Israel to let in aid shipments and allow essential humanitarian actors to operate in Gaza.

The statement in full:

The humanitarian suffering in Gaza has reached unimaginable levels. Famine is unfolding before our eyes. Urgent action is needed now to halt and reverse starvation. Humanitarian space must be protected, and aid should never be politicized.

However, due to restrictive new registration requirements, essential international NGOs may be forced to leave the OPTs imminently which would worsen the humanitarian situation still further. We call on the government of Israel to provide authorization for all international NGO aid shipments and to unblock essential humanitarian actors from operating. Immediate, permanent and concrete



steps must be taken to facilitate safe, large-scale access for the UN, international NGOs and humanitarian partners. All crossings and routes must be used to allow a flood of aid into Gaza, including food, nutrition supplies, shelter, fuel, clean water, medicine and medical equipment. Lethal force must not be used at distribution sites, and civilians, humanitarians and medical workers must be protected. (source: The Guardian)

WHO: 12,000 children suffering from acute malnutrition in Gaza

The World Health Organization on Tuesday asked Israel to allow it to restock medical supplies before it seizes control of Gaza City, in order to enable it to deal with the "catastrophic" health situation in Gaza, AFP reported.

"We want to as quickly stock up hospitals... following the news... about an incursion in Gaza," Rik Peeperkorn, WHO's representative in the Palestinian territories, said after Israel announced it would "take control" of Gaza City.

Peeperkorn said more than half of all medicines were out of stock.

"We all hear about 'more humanitarian supplies are allowed in'. Well, it's not happening yet, or it's happening at a way too low a pace,"

he added.

Peeperkorn said WHO was bringing in fewer supplies than it wanted "due to the cumbersome procedures" and products "still denied" entry - a topic of constant negotiation with the Israeli authorities.

Peeperkorn said only 50 percent of hospitals and 38 percent of primary health care centers in Gaza were functioning, and even when functioning, they are only partially functioning.

Consequently, bed occupancy has reached 240 percent capacity in the al-Shifa hospital and 300 percent al-Ahli hospital in northern Gaza.

Nain’s traditional cloak on its way to global registration



TEHRAN – A traditional type of cloak which is produced in Nain, Isfahan province, is undergoing the process of possible global registration at the initiative of Na'in Cultural Heritage Department, Na'in Municipality, and Isfahan Chamber of Commerce.

By registering this intangible cultural heritage, the famous handicrafts of Na'in are expected to be introduced to the world.

According to Mehr news agency, the history of Na'in cloak dates back 200 years. Na'in people used to export about 5,000 cloaks from this city annually to the Persian Gulf Arab countries and regional cold-weather countries in the 1970s, but today the weaving of cloaks has decreased, and if woven, they are exported to Lebanon and Syria, among other destinations.

This handicraft, the art of weaving of which is also part of the intangible heritage of the Na'in people in Isfahan province, is woven completely in one piece, and since its fabric is made of camel or sheep wool, it absorbs the cold in winter.

Spinning yarn should be done by young and old women, but unfortunately the number of people engaged in this work is very small, and the number of cloak weavers in Na'in has decreased significantly because it is not economically viable.

For this reason and the lack of economic viability, Na'in faces a lack of public acceptance for cloak weaving, especially among young people.

Mahmoud Madanian, head of Na'in Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, stated that unfortunately, the Na'in cloak market has declined for various reasons in the past 40 years, one of which is the high price of cloak because seven stages of work are done manually and with great effort, and the output of this art has a high price.

A number of cloak weaving workshops in Na'in have been restored by the efforts of Cultural Heritage Department and restorers.

Identifying artists in this field, issuing identification cards, issuing workshop production licenses for them, granting low-interest and long-term facilities to expand the workshops' production, marketing and providing products tailored to the needs of society from cloak fabrics, purchasing and providing a carding machine to facilitate the work of cloak weavers and eliminating their need for wool carding in nearby cities are among the measures to preserve and promote this centuries-old art.

Ezzatollah Zarghami, former Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, also said during his visit to Na'in two years

ago: "Cloak Weaving of Mohammadiéh is both a tourism complex and an area of job generation, which we will help to solve some of their problems and provide them with a market for exports."

Nain's cloak, along with 26 handicrafts in Isfahan province, has been awarded seal of excellence.

The plan to change the use of cloak fabric into vests, shawls, belts and other usable items was carried out with the cooperation of artisans, but it was a temporary solution, and the 2,000 people employed in this field have decreased to two people in one of the workshops in Mohammadiéh.

Now, even though the cloak weaving in Na'in is facing serious problems, Madanian has given new news and talked about planning for possible global registration of the Na'in cloak.

Because recently, the second planning session for possible global registration of the Na'in cloak was held in the Na'in Municipality by Na'in Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department and with the presence of members of the Tourism Commission of Isfahan Chamber of Commerce, the Governor, the Mayor and the Chairman of the Na'in Islamic City Council.

In this meeting, it was decided that the steps for the global registration of the Na'in cloak should be followed up with special urgency and sensitivity by the Isfahan Chamber of Commerce, and that the Municipality and Cultural Heritage Department should provide the necessary assistance and cooperation.

The global registration of this ancient handicraft, which is produced in Mohammadiéh in Na'in, can introduce the city of Na'in as a prominent tourist city, more than ever before, at the international level.

The history of Na'in dates back to nearly 2000 years, which makes it one of the oldest continuously settled towns in the Iranian plateau.

Na'in lies 170 km north of Yazd and 140 km east of Isfahan.

Like much of the Iranian plateau, it has a desert climate, with a maximum temperature of 41 °C in summer and a minimum of -9 °C in winter.

In ancient times, the city was at the crossroads of a desert road connecting Tabas and Mashhad, and has been an important junction of converging trade routes since Sassanid times.

Na'in was known for its pottery and textiles; Today it is best known for its fine hand-knotted carpets and hand-woven camel wool cloaks, which are made in the surrounding villages.

Supporting the investors in this field can help boost economic prosperity, the introduction of local products, and drawing domestic and foreign tourists, he added.

"With the launch of these two projects, they offer job opportunities for the locals.

It is predicted that as activities expand, indirect employment capacity will also increase."

He emphasized that one of the main policies of Hormozgan Cultural Heritage Department is to diversify the province's agricultural products and use the native and natural capacities of different regions to create sustainable income and employment.

Iran’s culture minister calls for accelerated excavations at ancient city of Istakhr

TEHRAN – Iran's minister of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts has urged faster archaeological excavations at the ancient city of Istakhr in southern Iran, citing the site's historical importance and the need for stronger protection against illegal digging.

Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri made the call on Monday during a visit to the site, which lies about five km from Persepolis and is considered the birthplace of the Achaemenid dynasty.

"Istakhr is a symbol of the historical and cultural continuity of ancient Iran, and preserving it is both a national and international duty," Salehi-Amiri said, according to the ministry's statement.

The minister warned that unauthorized excavations in the area were endangering the integrity of the site and called on responsible bodies to respond "with greater sensitivity and speed" to prevent further damage.

Salehi-Amiri said continuous scientific archaeological work could reveal hidden layers of Iran's history and help create preservation and development plans for sustainable tourism.

He also urged an accelerated process to have Istakhr inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list, saying such recognition would raise Iran's international profile in cultural heritage, attract foreign investment and boost cultural tourism.

The ancient city of Istakhr covers about 90 hectares and contains layers of settlement from



A view of the ancient city of Istakhr in southern Iran.

the Sassanid to the Islamic periods. It was once home to palaces, fortifications and temples and served as a royal residence of Sassanid kings.

Istakhr's political prominence dates back to 224 CE, when Artashir, a Persian nobleman, overthrew Artabanus IV, the last king of the Parthian Empire, to establish the Sassanid dynasty.

According to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, geographer Istakhri wrote that in the 10th century, houses were built of clay, stone, or plaster depending on the wealth of their owners.

From the archaeological point of view, Istakhr proved to be a very valuable source of finds. Among

the types of pottery excavated from the Islamic layer, fused pottery is most often found.

These light green vases were not only of the highest quality but also showed a unique way of making the vases.

The upper and lower halves, with their sculpted decorations, were always fused separately; the two halves, which often showed the same pattern, were then joined.

Also from the Islamic period, but less frequently, jugs with floral motifs in red, yellow, and black have been unearthed.

Unfortunately, excavations at the site have returned only a few of the famous and very rare polished ceramic vessels with their

metallic luster on a golden yellowish body.

There is a lot of controversy over this pottery and whether it was made in Iran or imported from Mesopotamia.

Under the Sasanians, Iranian art experienced a general renaissance.

Architecture often took grandiose proportions, such as the palaces at Ctesiphon, Firouzabad, and Saravan.

The most distinctive and striking art of the Sassanids is figures carved on steep limestone cliffs, for example at Shapur (Bishapur), Naqsh-e Rostam, and Naqsh-e Rujab. Metalworking and gemstone engraving became highly advanced.

Sasanian ossuary inscription discovered at Naqsh-e Rostam



Naqsh-e Rostam is an ancient archeological site and necropolis located about 13 km northwest of Persepolis, in Fars province, southern Iran.

TEHRAN – Archaeologists have uncovered a funerary inscription linked to an ossuary from the late Sasanian period at the Naqsh-e Rostam archaeological site in Marvdasht, southern Iran.

The inscription, written in Pahlavi script and engraved horizontally on rock beside an ossuary, belongs to a category of funerary texts.

Abolhassan Atabaki, a historian, told local media the inscription consists of seven lines but has been heavily damaged over time, making many characters difficult to read.

"The text contains the name of a deceased individual who ordered the construction of this ossuary," Atabaki told Jamaran news outlet, adding that preliminary studies

date the piece to the late Sasanian era.

Najmeh Ebrahimi, an expert on Sasanian history, said ossuaries were a common burial method at the time.

In this practice, corpses were first placed on mountain tops to be cleaned of flesh by scavenging birds and animals, then the sun-bleached bones were deposited in stone niches carved into cliffs.

This method preserved the sanctity of elements such as soil, which Zoroastrians considered sacred," she said.

Ebrahimi noted that most known examples are in central Marvdasht, around the ancient city of Estakhr and the Naqsh-e Rostam area, including sites such as Hajjiabad and Garmabad, where over 100 ossuary niches have been recorded.

Naqsh-e Rostam, a cliffside necropolis in Fars province, contains rock-cut tombs of four Ach-

aemenid kings, including Darius I, and numerous reliefs from the Elamite, Achaemenid and Sasanian periods.

The site has long been regarded as a religious and cultural centre, with inscriptions, reliefs and structures such as the Ka'ba-ye Zartosht reflecting its importance in pre- and post-Islamic Iran.

Archaeologists say the discovery of funerary inscriptions at the site may shed new light on late Sasanian Zoroastrian burial customs and beliefs about purification and the afterlife.

The name Naqsh-e Rostam, translates to "Picture of Rostam," pays homage to the legendary Iranian hero celebrated in the Shahnameh and Persian mythology.

In ancient times, locals mistakenly believed the carvings beneath the tombs depicted scenes from Rostam's tales.

500,000-year-old stone tools discovered in South Khorasan

TEHRAN—Manager of South Khorasan Cultural Heritage Department Ahmad Barabadi announced the identification of the first samples of Acheulean industry, including hand axes dating back about half a million years, at the ancient site of Dagh Island in Aysak city in Sarayan, South Khorasan province.

A discovery that could open a new window to understanding the history of human settlement in the eastern Iranian plateau, he added.

According to Miras Arya (CHTN), Barabadi referred to the importance of these findings, adding that the recent explorations, which have begun five decades after archaeological activities of the Paleolithic era in Khounik Cave, have achieved to present various layers in 13 trenches from the ancient site.

Based on the preliminary evaluations, the objects pertaining to the Middle Paleolithic period are between 100,000 and 200,000 years old, and artifacts from the Upper Paleolithic period are more than 500,000 years old, he said.

However, the final determination of the age requires detailed laboratory studies in reliable centers so that the data can be analyzed scientifically and documented, he pointed out.

These findings could mark a new chapter in

understanding the course of human evolution on the Iranian Plateau, he added.

Also, Ali Sadraei, archaeologist who led the exploration team, said that samples of Acheulean industry, including hand axes dating back about half a million years, have been identified for the first time in the eastern Iran.

Acheulean industry which had been identified earlier in west of Iran and other parts of the world, currently with this identification, establishes the place of eastern Iran on the map of the cultural and technological dispersion of early humans, he said.

Archaeological explorations have been started as of Iranian month of Tir with support of South Khorasan Cultural Heritage Department, he mentioned, adding that it is now in its final stages.

He continued that various stone tools, Middle Paleolithic bayonets, and evidence of interglacial settlements have so far been discovered.

Mohammad Nasiri, a representative of Ferdows, Tabas, and Sarayan counties in Majlis, also visited this ancient site and emphasized the need to protect these artifacts.

He said that this precious heritage is part of the

identity and ancient civilization of South Khorasan and should be transformed into one of the country's outstanding scientific and historical tourism attractions with principled planning.

The ancient site of Dagh Jazeera (Dagh Island) with an area of more than 300 hectares in the southwestern Aysak district of Sarayan county is considered the largest Paleolithic site in eastern Iran.

The recent discovery is an important step in rereading the history of human life in this region and can draw new horizons in archaeological studies and the development of scientific tourism in the east of the country.

South Khorasan is a cultural heritage province, boasting remarkable capacities which should be presented to the domestic and inbound tourists through media.

The Lut Desert is located in the southeast part of Iran among three provinces of Kerman, Sistan-Baluchestan, and South Khorasan.

With never-ending dunes and plains, beautiful clear skies and rich cultural heritage that dates back more than 7000 years, Lut Desert (or Dasht-e Lut) is a paradise for visitors, blending geotourism, adventure tourism and cultural tourism all in one place.

Agritourism complexes inaugurated in Minab

TEHRAN— Caretaker of Hormozgan province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department pointed to the inauguration of two agritourism complexes and added that these two complexes were inaugurated to promote agritourism and create proper spaces for the visit of tourists from farms and gardens and direct supply of agricultural products.

According to IRIB, Abbas Raisi said that Minab has unique potentials in the agriculture and horticulture sectors.

Minab, which has prominent products such as mangoes, has a great capacity for promoting agritourism, he mentioned.

Research and achievements in Iran’s agriculture sector are significant: FAO representative

FAO prioritizes improving food systems for the betterment of people in the region

By Mehdi Garshasbi

TEHRAN - Farrukh Toirov, the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to Iran, says the significant achievements of Iranian scientists are important to be delivered to other countries that do not have the same level of technological advancements in the agriculture sector.

A national of Tajikistan, Mr. Toirov brings over 20 years of experience in international development and agricultural programming to his role as FAO representative to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, Toirov also said FAO's priority is to make sure that the functioning of food systems is improved, not only for the betterment of people in Iran, but also for the benefit of other countries in the region.

Hereunder is the full text of the interview.

Could you please briefly introduce FAO's mandate globally and specifically in Iran?

A: FAO's mandate is to eradicate poverty and improve food security all over the world for the entire population. Here, the challenges that human civilization is facing are unfortunately still quite big.

A significant number — at times it was nearly a billion people — now, with some improvements, is about 800 million people in the world who still remain food insecure. And that is at a time where we have technologies for sending people into space, but at the same time, not everybody in the world is, unfortunately, food secure and able to have enough food for their daily consumption.

This situation is being further aggravated by the unfortunate impacts of climate and climate change, where the production of agricultural land is reducing and



© Tehran Times/Bahman Vakhshour

where the food systems for different key agricultural commodities are being interrupted.

A significant number of people, especially in developing countries where the level of economic activities is not sufficient for them to be better integrated with the world economies to procure food from international markets, have seen their situation deteriorate.

What are FAO's current priority areas of cooperation with Iran?

A: In Iran, we see a number of areas of importance for FAO to work on. The level and type of agro-climatic conditions here are favorable for different types of important food commodities, starting from high-value crops but also going down to grains and the food commodities of the staple crops which the population needs here in Iran.

Iran is producing the type of food commodities that are important for the food security of not only its own population but also the countries in the region with which Iran has very tight interconnectedness in the food systems.

Today, in the 21st century, the interrelationships and interconnectedness of countries in terms of food production, logistics, and then delivery and consumption to the population are much more

complex than they were before. Countries are much more inter-linked.

Iran's geographic location and level of development make it very well and uniquely positioned. Iran's food systems are interlinked with several countries in the region, and therefore, the type of work that FAO prioritizes in Iran is to make sure that the functioning of these food systems is improved for the betterment of the people of Iran but also for the benefit of other countries in the region.

We see that in Iran, the level of research and achievements in the agriculture sector is also significant, and therefore, these achievements of Iranian scientists are important to be delivered to a few other countries which do not, unfortunately, have the same level of technological advancements in the agriculture sector.

Can you tell us more about FAO's climate finance project in Iran, particularly the work with the Green Climate Fund?

A: This is a very important area that FAO works on in the context of Iran, whereby climate change is unfortunately affecting the agriculture sector of the country. At the same time, Iran's agricultural research potential is picking up, and the researchers of the country

are coming up with technologies to address the impact of climate change in the agriculture sector.

Similarly, FAO has expertise because it is working on climate change aspects and adapting to the realities of the new times based on the change in climate patterns. FAO has expertise to offer, and we are bringing from FAO's side experts who have international experience in other countries and who have worked on climate change impacts in agriculture to Iran, so that the farmers, researchers, and specialists of Iran can learn from FAO's international expertise.

Climate change is a phenomenon that has a very severe impact on the agriculture sector. For example, the change in precipitation patterns is already making a big impact on the agriculture sector because, when crops are planted, they need a certain pattern of rainfall to make sure that they are irrigated on time.

Even if the overall amount of rain in the year is sufficient, if it does not come at the specific times required, it will not help the growth pattern of the plants. Therefore, any change in rainfall patterns, temperature patterns, or seasonality has a major impact on the agriculture sector, and the sector needs to adapt to these new realities.

From FAO's side, we are implementing projects with the Green Climate Fund to come up with adaptation plans: what needs to be done in a country like Iran, what kind of strategic priorities need to be identified, and what kinds of adjustments need to be made in the different sub-sectors of agriculture in the country to ensure that production matches the new realities created by climate change.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Intl. Caspian Sea Day highlights preserving the sea’s unique ecosystem

TEHRAN – Celebrated on August 12 by the five Caspian Sea states (Iran, Russia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan), the International Caspian Sea Day serves as an opportunity to review the status of the world's largest inland body of water and highlights the significance of preserving its unique ecosystem and biodiversity.

In 2003, the Caspian littoral states signed the (Tehran) Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea.

Following ratification by all five Governments of the Caspian littoral states, the Tehran Convention entered into force on the 12th of August 2006. Since then, the Caspian Sea Day is celebrated on August 12 annually.

Known for its unique biodiversity, the Caspian Sea is home to different kinds of valuable species and plays a vital role in the economy, food security, and ecological sustainability of the region.

Over recent decades, marine life, particularly sturgeon and Caspian seals' populations in the sea, have sharply declined due to threatening fac-

tors such as illegal fishing, overfishing, oil, industrial, and agricultural pollution, climate change, reduced water flow, as well as habitat destruction.

Sturgeons are among the strategic resources of the Caspian Sea, highly valuable for their caviar, but are in danger of extinction.

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

In recent years, the increase in the discovery of seals' carcasses on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea has raised concerns among environmentalists that the Caspian seal is at greater risk of extinction than ever before.

Iran has always underscored the need for regional cooperation to protect the biodiversity of the Caspian ecosystem based on regional diplomacy and save endangered species, particularly the Caspian seals, through enhanced joint mea-

sures.

The country has taken several measures to address these challenges.

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

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

The main objective of the plan is to conserve the Caspian seal, a rare, valuable, endemic, and endangered species of the Caspian Sea, as the priority of marine environmental activities.

The establishment of a center for the Caspian seal conservation in Tarbiat Modarres University branch of Noor County is among the important measures taken in this regard.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Eleven Iranian medical universities improve ranking on Webometrics

TEHRAN – The July edition of the Webometrics world ranking has included 64 medical universities from Iran, unchanged from January's edition, 11 of which have advanced in the ranking compared to the January edition.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences (485) is the only university ranked among the top 500 institutions in the world, Mehr news agency reported.

Among Iranian universities, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, and Yazd University of Medical Sciences have improved their rankings by 1002, 961, and 948 positions, respectively.

Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences, Urmia University of Medical Sciences, Ilam University of Medical Sciences, Kashan University of Medical Sciences Alborz University of Medical Sciences, Kordestan University of Medical Sciences, Gonabad University of Medical Sciences, and Maraghe University of Medical Sciences are the other universities that have noticeably improved their rankings.

Other universities have declined compared to the January edition.

The Ranking Web (Webometrics) has been published since 2004 with the aim of promoting open access to the knowledge generated by universities. The July 2025 edition includes almost 32,000 higher education institutions (HEIs) from around the world. The ranking model is based on both webometric and bibliometric indicators, which are collected from reliable sources such as Majestic, OpenAlex, and Scimago-Scopus.

Web data is gathered during the first days of July, while bibliometric information covers the period from 2020 to 2024.

The Webometrics July 2025 ranking is based on a combination of indicators measuring a university's web presence and impact. Specifically, it uses three main indicators: Visibility (50 percent), Excellence (40 percent), and Transparency/Openness (10 percent). These indicators assess the university's website impact, the number of highly cited research papers, and the citation counts of researchers, respectively.

Based on the July edition of 2025, Harvard University, Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Oxford, University of Washington, University of Michigan, Cornell University, University of California Berkeley, Johns Hopkins University, and Columbia University New York, are the top ten institutions.

Recent rankings

The Times Higher Education (THE) has included 34 universities from Iran among the top universities pursuing sustainable development goals (SDGs), up from 33 universities in 2024.

Iran University of Medical Sciences, with a global ranking of 301-400, is placed first in the country.

Alzahra University, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, and Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (ranking 401-600) are placed second.

Iran University of Medical Sciences ranks 48th in good health and well-being as well as reduced inequalities, and 62nd in quality edu-

cation goals.

Alzahra University and Kerman University of Medical Sciences rank 85th and 89th in gender equality, respectively.

Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences ranks 30th in good health and well-being.

Amirkabir University of Technology and Shahid Beheshti University rank 46th and 60th in industry, innovation, and infrastructure.

The 22nd edition of the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings (WUR), 2026, has placed nine Iranian universities among the world's top institutes, unchanged from the 2025 ranking.

University of Tehran, with a global ranking of 322, ranks first among the Iranian universities.

Sharif University of Technology (ranking 375) and Amirkabir University of Technology (456) are placed second and third.

Iran University of Science and Technology (496), Isfahan University of Technology (571), University of Tabriz (578), Shiraz University (701-710), Shahid Beheshti University (741-750), and Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (951-1000) are other top universities included in this year's ranking.

The Round University Ranking (RUR) 2025 has placed 36 Iranian universities among the top universities in the world, up from 32 universities in 2024.

Islamic Azad University, with a global ranking of 93, is placed first in the country.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences (125), University of Tehran (202), Iran University of Science and Technology (355), Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (371), Sharif University of Technology (389), University of Tabriz (422), Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences (440), Qazvin University of Medical Sciences (445), and Shahid Beheshti University (454) ranked second to tenth.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences and Islamic Azad University are ranked third and fourth globally in terms of Teaching Ranking index; they are placed first and second in the country. Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (with a global ranking of 69) is placed third.

Based on the Research Ranking index, University of Tehran (with a global ranking of 138), Sharif University of Technology (252), Islamic Azad University (259) are placed first to third in the country, respectively.

Islamic Azad University (414), Graduate University of Advanced Technology (542), and Imam Hossein University (572) are ranked first to third in terms of the International Diversity Ranking index.

Based on the Financial Sustainability index, Imam Hossein University (155), Baqir al-Olum University (212), and Iran University of Science and Technology (245) are the top three universities in the country.

The Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2025 has placed 85 Iranian universities among the top Asian institutions, compared to 75 universities in 2024.

Sharif University of Technology is ranked first in the country, with a global ranking of 69.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Over 115 earthquakes hit Iran in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 117 earthquakes were recorded across the country in a week from August 2 to 8, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 100 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3; 13 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4; three earthquakes with a magnitude between 4 and 5, and one with a magnitude between 5 and 6 have occurred in the country, IRNA reported. Of the total quakes, one had a magnitude of 5.4 on the Richter scale, which occurred on August 5 in Kerman province.

Among the provinces of the country, Semnan, with 24, experienced the highest number of earthquakes, followed by Khorasan Razavi, and Kerman provinces with 15 and 10 earthquakes, respectively.

During the same period, two earthquakes hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded in East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Ardabil, Alborz, Ilam, Zanjan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Qom, Qazvin, and Kordestan 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.

This shows the high level of vulnerability in Iran, according to Mehdi Zare, a professor of engineering seismology.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Afghanistan thanks Iran for free services to refugees during COVID-19

Afghanistan has appreciated Iran for offering health and treatment services to Afghan refugees infected with coronavirus free of charge.

All measures, especially the recent decree by the Iranian president to provide free medical treatment to Afghan refugees in Iranian public hospitals, have assured the Afghan government, IRNA reported on Sunday.

According to the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, providing transportation services to transit trucks and providing the necessary health assistance to vulnerable Afghan nationals are among the measures that are highly appreciated.

افغانستان از همکاری ایران برای مداوای مهاجران مبتلا به کرونا قدردانی کرد

وزارت امور خارجه افغانستان از کمک و همکاری جمهوری اسلامی ایران به مهاجران افغانی مبتلا به ویروس کرونا و مداوای رایگان آنها قدردانی کرد.

در این اطلاعیه آمده است: تمام اقدامات به ویژه صدور حکم اخیر رئیس جمهوری ایران برای درمان رایگان مهاجران افغان در بیمارستان های دولتی ایران موجب خاطر جمعی رهبری دولت افغانستان شد.

براساس اطلاعیه وزارت خارجه افغانستان، ایجاد تسهیلات در رفت و آمد کامیون های ترانزیتی و فراهم آوری مساعدت های لازم بهداشتی برای مهاجران در مناطق آسیب پذیر آن کشور اقداماتی هستند که از جانب دولت افغانستان به چشم قدردانی نگریسته می شوند.



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AUGUST 13, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

There is no price for your soul but heaven; so, beware of selling it for anything else.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times Noon:12:9 Evening: 19:15 Dawn: 3:50 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:22 (tomorrow)

“World! Look at the Children” campaign launches to inspire global youth solidarity with Palestinian children

TEHRAN- The “World! Look at the Children” campaign has been officially launched, inviting children and adolescents in Iran and around the world to participate by creating paper cranes in support of the oppressed children of Palestine. They can share videos of their efforts across social media platforms as a gesture of solidarity.

Organized by Iran’s Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon, the initiative aims to raise awareness about children’s rights, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to shed light on the plight of children in Gaza, Palestine, and Iran—victims of brutal attacks by the Zionist regime, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Participants are encouraged to join the “World! Look at the Children” campaign by producing a 30-second video demonstrating the making of a paper crane.

They should invite friends to participate and share their videos on social media platforms such as Instagram, mentioning the campaign account @WLC_NGO.

Additionally, content can be shared through the campaign’s pages and channels on messaging apps, also under the handle @WLC_NGO, encouraging others to join.

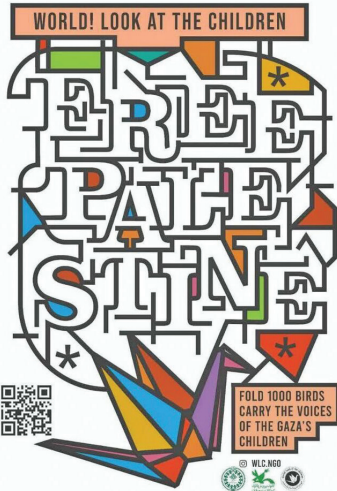
The “World! Look at the Children” campaign emphasizes the principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil as the most practical ethical and humanitarian act in current circumstances.

It advocates for creative approaches to raising awareness about children’s rights.

Furthermore, pilgrims participating in the Arbaeen walk can contribute by making paper cranes using origami or folding techniques during their journey, sharing videos, and gifting cranes to fellow pilgrims to promote the campaign.

According to the call, individuals of all ages—from children to adults—are invited to submit their works from August 11 to October 13, coinciding with National Children’s Week, to the campaign’s secretariat.

The paper crane is a universally recognized



symbol of peace, hope, and friendship, representing the desire for harmony and the healing of wounds caused by war and conflict. Its story is rooted in the life of Sadako Sasaki, a young Japanese girl who was affected by the Hiroshima atomic bombing during World War II.

As a victim of radiation sickness, Sadako believed in the Japanese legend that folding a thousand paper cranes would grant a wish and bring about recovery from illness. Inspired by this hope, she dedicated herself to folding cranes, aiming to reach her goal despite her deteriorating health.

Tragically, Sadako passed away at the age of 12 after completing 644 cranes, falling short of her goal.

Her friends and classmates, moved by her courage and wish for peace, folded the remaining cranes in her memory, creating a legacy that continues to symbolize resilience, peace, and the universal desire to end conflict.

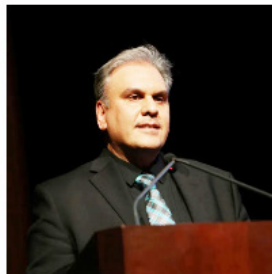
Today, the story of Sadako and her cranes inspires countless peace movements worldwide, emphasizing the importance of compassion and hope in the face of adversity.

The paper crane remains a powerful emblem encouraging efforts toward global harmony and the protection of children’s rights everywhere.

Five Iranians among voters of 83rd Golden Globe Awards



Ali Farahmand



Amir Houshang Hashemi



Bijan (Hassan) Tehrani



Mansour Jahani



Mo Abdi

TEHRAN – The list of voters for the 83rd Golden Globe Awards has been announced, with five Iranians among the voting members of the event.

The 83rd edition of the ceremony will be held on January 11, 2026 and based on the official website of the awards, a total of 387 people from around the world will be voting.

According to the published list, Ali Farahmand, Amir Houshang Hashemi, Bijan Tehrani, Mansour Jahani, and Mohammad Abdi are the Iranian and Iranian-origin members eligible to vote for the upcoming edition of the Golden Globes, ISNA reported.

The Golden Globes are unique among award shows honoring motion pictures, television and podcast programs. Golden Globe voters are comprised of experienced entertainment journalists from around the world. They are active throughout the year and participate in film festivals, serving on juries and reporting on the latest entertainment trends.

Until a few years ago, Golden Globe voters were limited to about one hundred journalists from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA).

However, the lack of people of color and other ethnic and racial minorities among them drew strong criticism. This led to boycotts and serious challenges for the awards, after which the organizers decided to expand both the number and diversity of voting members.

Ali Farahmand is a film critic, filmmaker, and lecturer in film and philosophy with nearly 15 years of experience. He has published extensively in a wide range of Iranian film and cultural journals, and more recently writes for international platforms such as IndieWire and Eurolitkrant.

He teaches at art universities and film institutes. In 2023, he founded FCI (Film Criticism Institute), an independent school of film studies

based in Tehran.

Amir Houshang Hashemi has led a life of impact: blending medicine, cinema, and cultural innovation, manifesting a renaissance spirit. From healing lives as a dedicated physician to crafting cinematic stories that resonate globally, his journey reflects an unrelenting passion for creativity, service, and excellence.

With a career spanning continents and disciplines, Hashemi’s work is a testament to a life lived boldly and purposefully. Being recognized early for his brilliance, he was accepted in the National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents – SAMPAD in Tehran. At just 17, he excelled in linguistic mastery as the youngest professional English translation program in Tehran Azad University.

In 1990, he graduated as a medical doctor. Later in Canada, he took film production course in the prestigious Vancouver Film School. Besides being an active member of the Iran Medical Council, his love for cinema led to directing & writing scripts for several short film projects during his student year. He is currently a member of the prestigious International Confederation of Arthouse Cinemas (CICAE).

As a voice in journalism, he has worked as a critic, writer, and translator for Picture World Magazine since 1998. He was awarded with the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2024 by Hafez Movie & TV Awards for his literary and critical contributions. His reports on festivals such as Cannes & Asia Pacific, captured the pulse of global cinema in the last 28 years. His journey, is a Legacy of hard work, a celebration of resilience and vision. His work bridges cultures, heals communities, and inspires through art, leaving an indelible mark on the world.

Bijan (Hassan) Tehrani is a film historian, writer, and critic whose career began 46 years ago with the

publication of his first article in a weekly film magazine in Iran. He is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Cinema Without Borders, an online publication dedicated to promoting international cinema in the United States and around the world, now in its 19th year.

For over four decades, Bijan has served as a columnist and film critic for numerous Iranian newspapers and magazines. In January 2025, he co-founded Cinema B.M. (cinemabm.com), a Farsi-language film publication based in Iran, in collaboration with Abbas Yari, a pioneering figure in Iranian film journalism.

He is also the director of the International Animation Day Festival, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in May 2025. Through the Cinema Without Borders Foundation, he presents the Bridging the Borders Award at ten international film festivals, including the Evolution Mallorca International Film Festival.

A recipient of several awards recognizing his contributions to global cinema, Bijan is currently working on a book exploring the thematic parallels between the films of Asghar Farhadi and Rodrigo Garcia.

He is a member of the Iranian Film Writers & Critics Society, as well as ASIFA and FIPRESCI.

Mo Abdi has been a film critic for more than three decades. He has published 15 books and thousands of articles and reviews in more than 50 outlets.

In 1998, Abdi published his first book “Film Criticism in Iran” about the history of film criticism and film analysis in Iran. From 1999 to 2002, he served as the editor-in-chief for “Honare Haftom” (Seventh Art) magazine.

His first short story collection with the title of “Death of an Intellectual” was published in 2002 in Iran. His second short story collection called “Enjoy the Opera” was published in Paris in 2013. His first novel called “Five Women” was

published in London in 2020. Abdi also has made five documentaries including a famous documentary about Ebrahim Golestan, great pioneer Iranian filmmaker and writer.

Mansour Jahani graduated from Media University, affiliated with the IRNA, in journalism (art and culture). Receiving his second major in film studies at The National Film School in 2018, Jahani had the privilege of studying cinema with world-known film scholars such as Jonathan Rosenbaum, Professor Jean-Michel Frodon, Anges Devictor, Jacques Kermabon, Marion Zilo, and Angel Quintana.

He also completed the cinema directing courses in 2019 at the Jozani Free Cinema Workshops under the supervision of Maestro Masoud Jafari Jozani.

Jahani is an active member of various organizations such as The International Federation of Journalists (IFI) in Belgium, core member of Association Iranian of Journalists, Iranian Society of Film Critics and Writers in House of Cinema, Sport Reporters and Photographers (ISJA) in Iran, The International Sport Journalists (AIPS) in Switzerland, Writers and Critics Association in Iran and Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq, House of Music Association in Iran, Iran Theatre Critics and Journalists Association in House of Theater, and Iranian Designers & Cinema Advertising Managers Society. Jahani has also received an award in journalism from the Goteborg Art Association.

He participated as a judge in the voting of the American magazine IndieWire at the Cannes Film Festival and selected the best films in 2023 and 2024.

As an independent journalist and reporter, Jahani has covered international film festivals in Cannes, Berlin, Venice, San Sebastian, Thessaloniki, London, Karlovy Vary, Tallinn, Locarno, Busan, Tokyo, Toronto, etc.

Iranian children’s play “First Game” performs in Iraq as part of Arbaeen pilgrimage

TEHRAN- The children’s play “First Game,” directed and designed by Meysam Yousofi, is being performed as a part of the 9th edition of the Arbaeen Pilgrimage International Theater Festival during the Arbaeen walk.

The play, produced by the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults and in collaboration with the Art Bureau’s Center for Dramatic Arts, is being performed in Iraq on the Arbaeen pilgrimage route.

The origins of “First Game” date back to 2005, written by Amir Mashhadi Abbas. The religious-themed performance was first brought to the stage at the Institute’s Theater and Puppet Center in 2011, with subsequent performances in 2016, 2018, and 2023. Currently, the street version of the play is being performed in Najaf and Karbala along the Arbaeen pilgrimage route.

Qassem Ansari-Shad, Aryarad Ansari-Shad, Noushin Sarkoubi, Mehdi Rahmati, and Behrouz Mehraliyan are the main actors and voice actors of the play.

“First Game” has celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. The story revolves around a scene



where, due to the absence of actors, a tazieh ensemble improvises a reenactment of the event of Ashura at the doorstep of Reza’s house, leading the young protagonist to enter a magical world of storytelling. Through this play, children and adolescents learn about the tragedy of Karbala, the importance of standing against oppression, and the values of freedom and resistance.

“First Game” was also performed in July at the Golestan Hall of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Tehran.

The Arbaeen Pilgrimage International Theater

Festival is held annually as a cultural vow by ritual theater artists without any form of payment or compensation.

Over the course of eight days, it showcases various genres and forms of performance art along the Arbaeen pilgrimage route leading to Karbala, welcoming Iranian audiences as well as pilgrims from Arab countries.

Performances will include tazieh (Iranian passion play), in Persian and Arabic, street theater, Naqqali (Iranian dramatic story-telling), as well as anthem and poetry reading.

The event aims to set a cultural trend, with Iraqi groups also adopting similar approaches, making the initiative more widespread across the region. Hundreds of thousands of Iranians embark on a journey to the Iraqi city of Karbala to observe the holy day of Arbaeen at the holy shrines of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam of the Shia, and his brother, Hazrat Abbas (AS).

Arbaeen, which will be observed on August 14 this year, marks the end of the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of the Imam and his loyal companions on Ashura.

Israeli writer Etgar Keret: “The war in Gaza must stop now”

This is a note that Israeli author Etgar Keret provided to Le Monde, warning Israeli leaders about the Gaza war.

The war in Gaza must stop now. It should have ended over a year ago, in the early months of the war, when there was an offer for a comprehensive hostage deal on Netanyahu’s desk. Stopping the war will put an end to the daily killing and starvation of Gazans, and bring the Israeli hostages home. All polls show that an overwhelm-

ing majority of Israelis support a permanent ceasefire. And they are not the only ones.

The whole world appears to want an end to this horror: from Europe and the U.S., to Australia and China, people see the famine and death in Gaza and they want it over. But Netanyahu is staying the course. After promising his voters fifteen months ago that he was “a mere step from total victory,” he is now leading us toward what some members of his messianic govern-

ment ecstatically call “eternal war.”

The war in Gaza must stop now. As he continues to drag Israel into committing war crimes in the name of democracy, Netanyahu has seized international attention, but as far as he’s concerned, everyone can keep barking. From mass protests on Israeli streets to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the voices of opposition seem powerless to stop the crimes and injustices.

Cartoon of Day



Press Here

Cartoonist: Maarten Wolterink from the Netherlands