

Alaska's Show Over but Ukraine's War Not

No concrete outcomes from Trump-Putin summit as uncertainty looms



President Donald Trump greets Russia's President Vladimir Putin Friday, Aug. 15, 2025, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

Iran envoy discusses ties with Ankara, emphasizes peaceful nuclear rights

TEHRAN – In a diplomatic visit to Ankara on Friday, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister and Head of the Center for Political and International Studies, Saeed Khatibzadeh, held high-level meetings with Turkish officials to reaffirm the importance of close coordination on key regional issues.

The discussions were held against a backdrop of a worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza and ongoing Israeli aggression in the region. ▶ Page 3

Eurasian Economic Commission expresses readiness to expand trade with Iran

TEHRAN – The Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) expressed readiness to deepen trade ties with Iran during a meeting between its trade minister and Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Seyed Mohammad Atabak, on the sidelines of a summit of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Andrey Slepnev, the EEC trade minister, said on Friday that the partnership with Iran goes beyond a free trade deal and represents "a qualitatively new level of interaction."

He described the scope for cooperation as broad and extending into key sectors.

Slepnev and Atabak reviewed the first results of the EAEU-Iran free trade agreement, which took effect on May 14, 2025, and outlined plans to deepen cooperation. ▶ Page 4

Greater Israel: A 'spiritual mission' or 'evil mission'?

By staff writer

TEHRAN – Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has shocked the world by saying that he is backing a "Greater Israel" vision.

There are serious questions why Netanyahu openly speaks about such an evil plan.

There are credible reasons why Netanyahu has become so emboldened and says he is on a "historic and spiritual mission" to extend Israel's border that in his vision includes the occupied West Bank and parts of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt.

These unsettling remarks come as Israeli military has occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip and parts of southern Lebanon and southern Syria following the war with Hezbollah and the ouster of the Assad regime in 2024.

Famine as a weapon: How Israel's siege is starving Gaza into silence

By Muhammad Akmal Khan

ISLAMABAD – Gaza's suffering has never been so extended, so intentional. Airstrikes take lives in moments; hunger erases them slowly, without sound. This is not the work of failed rains. It is the result of a calculated policy.

From the start of the war, Israel's leaders made their intentions plain. On 9 October 2023, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant announced a "complete siege" of Gaza: "No electricity, no food, no fuel—everything is closed." Then—Energy Minister Israel Katz described humanitarian supplies as "one of the main pressure levers." National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir was blunter: "No grain, no meds, no mercy."

Hezbollah chief denounces sedition fueled by Nawaf Salam cabinet

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — Hezbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem, for the first time, adopted a notably stern tone, issuing a direct warning to anti-Resistance factions about the consequences of aligning with the Israeli project.

The Hezbollah chief issued the warning in a speech commemorating Arbreen, the 40th day marking the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS).

What Sheikh Qassem implied was that the Resistance's patience was running out, to the point that there would be no room for diplomacy if Nawaf Salam's government were to engage in a confrontation with Hezbollah to disarm the movement in accordance with the US-Israeli plan.

Gaza City puts up fierce resistance

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Palestinian resistance forces have carried out multiple attacks and ambushes against Israeli occupation forces trying to advance in Gaza City.

The al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, announced a series of operations south of the al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City.

These included targeting an Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Merkava tank and several armored personnel carriers (APCs), using explosive devices and "Yassin 105" and "TBG" shells.

Al-Qassam released footage of sniping IOF soldiers, destroying armored vehicles, and targeting infantry positions with machine guns and RPGs.

They also attacked the IOF forces who had taken shelter inside residential buildings.

▶ Page 5

Iran and Arbreen: Memory, resistance, and legitimacy in motion

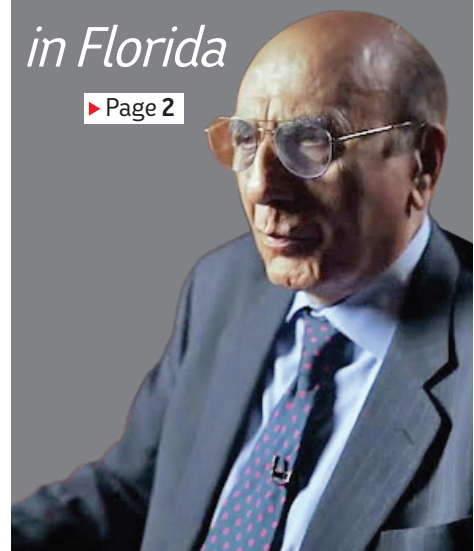
By Xavier Villar

MADRID – Arbreen, the pilgrimage that each year brings together millions of people on the road to Karbala, has transcended any reading reduced to mere ritual to become the core of a political and historical-discursive pedagogy central to 21st-century Islam.

Traditionally, Arbreen marks the fortieth day after the martyrdom of Hossein ibn Ali in Karbala—a foundational symbol of Shia Islam and a universal emblem of dignity in the face of oppression. No attentive observer can ignore that Arbreen has become one of the most powerful socio-political phenomena in the region, an event that condenses—and renews—central themes of resistance, sacrifice, and justice, which are key pillars in the ideological and theological architecture of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ▶ Page 3

SAVAK's chief torturer Parviz Sabeti to stand trial in Florida

▶ Page 2



Every year in late August, the astronomical phenomenon of the Perseid meteor shower occurs, with its peak activity between the 20th and 23rd of the month. At the peak, around 100 to 120 meteors per hour can be observed. The Perseid meteor shower is caused by the passage of debris left behind by the Swift-Tuttle comet, with its radiant located in the constellation Perseus."

Sanctions kill like bombs

By Peiman Salehi

TEHRAN – In early 2023, a nurse in a pediatric ward in Caracas described how a nine-year-old leukemia patient was wasting away. His chemotherapy drugs had vanished from hospital shelves, while his family had neither the money nor the visas to seek treatment abroad. Black-market alternatives were either unsafe or unaffordable.

No missiles were launched. No soldiers invaded. But in the quiet devastation of daily life under economic siege, a child was lost.

From Havana to Khartoum, from Tehran to Damascus, these stories are not outliers. They are symptoms of a global practice that hides behind technocratic language but delivers harm with brutal efficiency: economic sanctions. Once marketed as a humane alternative to war, sanctions have become weapons of mass disruption. They collapse currencies, block medicines, cripple infrastructures, and deepen poverty. Though supposedly "smart" and "targeted," they often hit the sick, the young, and the poor the hardest. ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

An important trip to Lebanon

In an interview with Mojtaba Amani, the Iranian Ambassador to Lebanon, Jam-e-Jam examined the significance of the trip of Dr. Ali Larijani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, to Iraq and Lebanon.

He said: This trip took place in a situation where the region is in an extremely tense and sensitive security situation, and the Zionists and the United States are designing dangerous plans. This trip in itself was an important success for Iranian diplomacy, especially since it took place at a time when the opponents of the Islamic Republic were trying to present an isolated image of Iran.

Also, Hezbollah's opponents, the Zionist regime, and the Americans, were pursuing a policy that conveyed the illusion that Hezbollah was not victorious. They wanted to convey the idea that this movement had failed, was incapable of revival, and had left the scene. Therefore, one of the manifestations that could have neutralized this fancy was the presence of a high-ranking Iranian official in Lebanon as a supporter of the resistance. The positive developments and news during this trip left a significant impact. The wave of public acceptance and positive news atmosphere overcame all the efforts of the enemies.

Etemad: Trump route and a solution for it

Etemad commented on the Zangezur Corridor (also called Trump Route) and wrote: In order to maintain and enhance its position in the regional transit networks and confront negative geopolitical trends, Iran needs a comprehensive strategy that simultaneously encompasses economic and political dimensions.

The first step is to strengthen its geopolitical position through strategic partnerships with neighboring countries and regional actors. Iran must be able to become an actor by creating a network of political and economic cooperation that would be costly and difficult to eliminate from geopolitical equations.

The second step is to use economic diplomacy as a complement to foreign policy. The third step is to develop and update transportation infrastructure. The combination of these three approaches can solidify Iran's position on the global transit map.

In such a framework, Iran will not only maintain its share in the transit market but will also use communication routes as a lever to increase its political and security influence in the region and beyond.

Arman-e-Melli: Enrichment through a consortium

Arman-e-Melli discussed the issue of nuclear enrichment through a consortium in an interview with Sabah Zangeneh, an international relations expert.

He said: Iran has a history of limiting the production of enriched uranium, and with this history, it is ready to limit production. In any case, the issue of enrichment has many dimensions. One of these dimensions is the construction of equipment, storage, distribution, investment, research, and development. All of these dimensions are negotiable in forming a consortium.

The consortium can solve many issues because there are some member countries in this consortium. It will also provide good assurance to all member countries in the consortium, and with the presence of several countries, the enrichment path will never deviate (from its peaceful course).

From this point of view, it should be said that Iran's policies in the nuclear field and the negotiations have been announced; now it remains to be seen what the reaction of other countries, including the United States, will be to this proposal.

Ettelaat: Consequences of snapback mechanism

Ettelaat sought the views of Hassan Beheshtipour, an international affairs analyst, about the snapback mechanism. He said: Europe has decided to activate the snapback mechanism and is raising this issue with great noise in the media to force Iran to react. However, this mechanism does not impose tougher and broader sanctions on the country from a sanctions point of view. However, politically, the return of Security Council sanctions is detrimental to Iran. This situation will be used against Iran within an international framework. In fact, if new sanctions are imposed, nothing extraordinary will happen. The primary concern is that, from a legal standpoint, resolutions issued against Iran carry adverse implications and exert significant influence on both political and security dynamics.

UN sanctions have a legal aspect, and their return could create legal consequences against Iran. This is important, although from an economic point of view, it will not have a special impact on the country's economy, it hurts the country's political image and is detrimental to the country from a security point of view.

SAVAK's chief torturer Parviz Sabeti to stand trial in Florida

TEHRAN – A U.S. federal court in Florida has agreed to proceed with a landmark case against Parviz Sabeti, a senior official of Iran's notorious pre-Islamic Revolution security organization, SAVAK, accused of overseeing systematic torture of political prisoners.

Survivors of the Pahlavi regime say the ruling represents the first genuine opportunity in nearly half a century to hold one of the most feared men of that era legally accountable.

The charges against Sabeti

Sabeti, born in 1936 in Semnan, rose to become head of SAVAK's Third Directorate—the branch responsible for internal security—and later deputy director of the entire organization between 1973 and 1978. Survivors describe him as “the chief architect of torture in Iran,” accusing him of institutionalizing practices such as forced confessions under extreme physical and psychological abuse.

Three former political prisoners, now U.S. residents aged 65, 72, and 85, filed a lawsuit in 2023 demanding \$225 million in damages. They accuse Sabeti of orchestrating their arrests, supervising interrogations, and enabling methods of torture that included electric shocks, suspension by the wrists, genital mutilation with attached



weights, and the notorious Apollo device—an iron chair with a metal mask designed to amplify victims' screams.

The Florida court rejected Sabeti's request to dismiss the case, ruling that the evidence provided by the plaintiffs—supported by historical records—was sufficient to hold him accountable under the Torture Victim Protection Act. The court also acknowledged documented threats against the plaintiffs and their lawyers, granting them the right to proceed under pseudonyms.

Most importantly, the court dismissed Sabeti's claim that the case should be thrown out due to the statute of limitations, ruling instead that the plaintiffs had provided enough evidence to justify



suspending the time bar. In other words, justice delayed did not mean justice denied.

Survivors' accounts versus media rebranding

After fleeing Iran with his wife during the Revolution, Sabeti lived in obscurity for nearly four decades, operating a real estate business in Florida under names such as “Peter Sabeti.”

His public reemergence came only during the 2022 riots in Iran, when he was seen at gatherings of monarchist exiles in the U.S.

That reappearance was not accidental. Over the years, Persian-language satellite networks outside Iran have played a central role in reshaping Sabeti's public image. In glossy documentaries, he

was portrayed not as a torturer but as a pragmatic security official who defended Iran against Cold War-era subversion. In these programs, Sabeti denied involvement in torture, insisting that accusations against him were fabricated.

This effort at image rehabilitation coincided with a broader attempt by monarchist groups to soften memories of SAVAK and distance Reza Pahlavi, the Shah's son and current opposition figure, from the organization's dark legacy. For critics, however, the attempt to whitewash Sabeti's past only underscored the unresolved trauma of thousands who suffered under SAVAK.

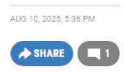
The court recognized historical records confirming that Sabeti knowingly directed operations in the Third Directorate and Joint Anti-Sabotage Committee, enabling torture carried out by his subordinates.

For survivors and advocacy groups such as the Iranian Collective for Justice & Accountability (ICJA), the case represents far more than compensation. It is about recognition. “The plaintiffs are not seeking political gain or revenge,” the coalition stated. “They want truth, accountability, and the dignity that comes from having their suffering recognized by a court.”

Israel confirms funding MEK, marking second time group sides with foreign aggressor

THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Pragmatism Over Idealism: Why Israel Must Embrace MEK in the Post-12 Day War



The recent 12-Day War between Iran and Israel has fundamentally altered the strategic landscape of Middle Eastern opposition politics, revealing stark truths about the nature of effective resistance against authoritarian

THERAN – What has been an open secret for many years was officially confirmed by Israeli media last week, with the Times of Israel stating that the Mojahedin-e-Khalq terrorist organization (MEK) has “repeatedly and effectively” proved its capabilities to Mossad, and that ties between the Zionist regime and the terror outfit must be formalized for better

effectiveness in the future.

The article reveals that MEK's collaboration with Israel began in 2002 and reached its “peak” during Israel's 12-day war against Iran.

During the war, the group assisted in Israeli strikes on civilian targets—including a hospital in Kermanshah—and helped identify Iran's nuclear scientists. It also confirmed long-standing Iranian

media reports that the MEK has been “financed, trained, and armed by Israel's secret service.”

The article admits that the MEK is largely unpopular in Iran, but nonetheless, it recommends the Israeli regime to back the group more publicly, in order to be able to make the most of its “devastatingly effective” operational capabilities.

Formed during the deposed Shah's rule, the MEK is responsible for the deaths of over 24,000 Iranians in terrorist attacks. This latest admission by Israeli media marks the second time the group has openly allied with a foreign aggressor waging war against Iran.

In the 1980s, the MEK collaborated with Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein during his invasion of Iran, even participating in the killing of Iranian soldiers at the border.

Sanctions kill like bombs

The human toll of Washington's economic warfare is huge, and must be addressed

From page 1 ► In Iran, U.S. financial sanctions have made it virtually impossible to import life-saving medications even when humanitarian exemptions exist on paper. Banking restrictions and the fear of violating OFAC (U.S. Treasury) guidelines have led to widespread overcompliance by firms around the world. Pharmacies run out of insulin and chemotherapy drugs.

Dialysis machines break down without spare parts. According to a 2019 report by Human Rights Watch, Iranian cancer and rare-disease patients suffered worsening outcomes due to restricted access to essential medicine.

The Iranian rial, meanwhile, has lost more than 80% of its value since 2018, exacerbating poverty and inflation.

In Venezuela, a 2021 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures noted that sanctions have worsened food insecurity, disrupted the health-care system, and contributed to large-scale migration. The country's public revenue loss has been estimated at more than \$17 billion per year since 2017.

In Zimbabwe, two decades of sanctions have compounded economic decline and capital flight, without compelling meaningful political reform.

A 2022 African Union report called for the lifting of sanctions, labeling them an impediment to sustainable development.

Despite claims of “humanitarian carve-outs,” in practice, sanctions regimes often suffocate supply chains. Humanitarian actors, banks, and insurers fearing penalties shun even permitted transactions. The UN Special Rapporteur warned in 2020 that this chilling effect turns legal exemptions into “empty formalities.” The result: hospitals without antibiotics, universities without research software, students locked out of global education platforms.

In Iran and Syria, academic collaboration has become nearly impossible. U.S. export restrictions block access to online tools, cloud computing, and even platforms like Zoom. Sanctions kill quietly. There are no bombed-out buildings, no burned villages, no frontline images for television. But there are infant mortality spikes, empty operating rooms, and families walking miles for fuel.

This is war by spreadsheet administered through Excel sheets and compliance reports. No politician pays a price for imposing it. But those on the receiving end pay with shortened lives and broken futures.



Venezuela is grappling a health crisis that's particularly affecting children

Yet the landscape is shifting. Countries across the Global South are growing resistant. From BRICS to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, new platforms are emerging that seek autonomy from Western-dominated systems. Currency swaps, regional payment systems, and de-dollarization efforts are gaining momentum.

These aren't just technical changes they are political declarations. As one African diplomat put it at a 2024 BRICS+ forum: “If you can sanction our children's insulin, you cannot lead the moral order.”

To be clear, none of this exonerates misrule or repression within sanctioned states.

But sanctions rarely impact rul-

ing elites. Instead, they hurt civilians who had no vote in their government's decisions. Institutions such as the IMF, FATF, and even some UN bodies have become entangled in enforcing these punitive regimes, often under the guise of neutrality.

This structural complicity undermines the credibility of global governance itself.

In a world that claims to value human rights, we must confront the human cost of economic coercion. Military intervention is rightly scrutinized. Sanctions deserve the same moral and legal rigor. Because whether a child dies from a missile or from a medicine shortage, the outcome is the same. And the responsibility must be owned.

Iran offers rescue aid as Pakistan floods kill over 320



People gather around a wrecked, mud-covered car after a flash flood in Mingora, Pakistan, on August 16, 2025.

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian expressed Iran's solidarity with Pakistan following catastrophic monsoon floods that killed at least 320 people.

In an official message to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday, Pezeshkian conveyed “the sincere sympathy of the Iranian government and people” and emphasized Tehran's readiness to provide “any cooperation and humanitarian and relief assistance” to alleviate suffering in the flood-stricken nation.

The disaster has devastated northwestern Pakistan, with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bearing the brunt: 307 fatalities occurred in Buner district alone, where flash floods swept away entire villages.

Nine more died in Pakistan-administered Kashmir and five in Gilgit-Baltistan. Survivors described “doomsday” conditions as torrents collapsed homes and severed access roads, hampering rescue efforts for thousands of stranded residents.

With Pakistan's military deployed for emergency operations and rainfall forecast until August 21, officials fear the toll could rise.

Iran's message continues a legacy of support: During Pakistan's 2022 super floods—which submerged a third of the country—Iran delivered 100 tons of aid via the IRCs, earning praise from Islamabad for “historical and brotherly relations.”

Iran envoy discusses bilateral ties between Tehran and Ankara, emphasizes peaceful nuclear rights

From Page 1 ▶ Khatibzadeh's visit included a meeting with the Secretary of Turkey's National Security Council Okay Memis. The two officials reviewed the latest regional developments, including the ongoing genocide in Gaza and the "expansionist policies of the despised Zionist regime."

Both sides stressed the crucial need for solidarity and cohesion within the Islamic world, as well as the necessity of continuous consultations between Iran and Turkey to overcome shared challenges.

The visit also saw Khatibzadeh meet with Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Nuh Yilmaz. According to the Iranian read-out of the meeting, both officials reviewed the latest developments in bilateral relations and underscored the importance of expanding Tehran-Ankara cooperation across various sectors.

The discussion also focused on the need for greater coordination on regional issues and matters concerning the Islamic world.



Iran's deputy FM Khatibzadeh (L) and Turkey's security chief Memis in Ankara on August 15, 2025.

A primary point of convergence was the humanitarian crisis in Gaza; the two diplomats emphasized the urgency of providing immediate support to the oppressed people of Palestine, stopping the attacks, and lifting the siege on the region.

The Iranian diplomat also expressed his gratitude for the position taken by the Turkish government and its people in condemning the Israeli regime's

12-day campaign of aggression against Iran in June.

For his part, Yilmaz declared his country's readiness to deepen relations and work more closely with Iran to support the Palestinian people.

'Ready to defend our peaceful nuclear program'

In an interview with Turkey's A Haber TV channel during his Ankara visit, Khatibzadeh addressed Iran's nuclear program

and the recent regional tensions. He affirmed Iran's unwavering commitment to its peaceful nuclear rights and its readiness to defend them.

"Iran is ready to defend its peaceful nuclear rights," Khatibzadeh stated. "Iran has dedicated a significant portion of its resources and energy to this peaceful program, and they [the Israeli regime and the West] cannot deprive Iran of it."

The Iranian official also discussed past and potential nuclear negotiations in the future. "Now, these negotiations will continue," he said. "We have decided to continue, and we will do so."

He stressed the need for vigilance to ensure that no one misuses the issue as a "tool in their foreign policy toolbox."

Khatibzadeh concluded by stating, "We hope that the Europeans understand that if the goal is to reach a meaningful understanding between the two sides, anything is possible."

Iran condemns ICJ VP's 'shocking breach of ethics' in backing Israel

TEHRAN – Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, Kazem Gharibabadi, has denounced the Vice-President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Julia Sebutinde, for a "shocking breach of judicial ethics."

In a post on X on Saturday, Gharibabadi stated that Sebutinde's open alignment with Israel—a regime facing multiple cases before the ICJ—constitutes "blatant bias" that "undermines the ICJ's credibility and violates the fundamental principle of judicial impartiality."

The rebuke follows Sebutinde's remarks at a church event in Uganda on August 10, where she declared, "The Lord is counting on me to stand on the side of Israel," adding that "the whole world was against Israel, including my country."

She further claimed "divine signs of end times" were manifesting in West Asia, framing her judicial dissent as a dogmatic declaration.

Sebutinde, the sole African judge on the ICJ bench, has repeatedly isolated herself through controversial opinions favoring the Israeli regime.

In 2023, she opposed all six provisional measures ordering Israel to prevent geno-

cidal acts in Gaza, despite the court's 16-1 ruling that Israel's actions were "plausibly" genocidal.

In July 2024, she again stood alone in a 15-1 ruling that declared the Israeli regime's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territories illegal.

Her positions have drawn accusations of ideological bias, compounded by her admission that she campaigned for the ICJ vice-presidency while issuing these rulings, and by speculations that Mossad may have blackmailed her.

Uganda swiftly distanced itself from her stance. Adonia Ayebare, Uganda's Permanent Representative to the UN, clarified on X: "Justice Sebutinde's ruling at the ICJ does not represent the Government of Uganda's position on Palestine."

The Ugandan Foreign Ministry emphasized its consistent UN votes supporting Palestinian rights, labeling Sebutinde's views "independent" and misconstrued.

Sebutinde's comments coincide with the Israeli regime's systematic war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

Since October 2023, Israeli forces have killed over 61,000 Palestinians—predominantly women and children—and displaced

1.9 million people (90% of Gaza's population).

A recent Human Rights Watch report documented Israel's "massive, deliberate forced displacement" and "widespread destruction" of civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, and cultural sites.

The UN Human Rights Council corroborated these findings, noting Israel's "intentional" demolition of 90% of Gaza's schools and 53% of religious sites, acts constituting "extermination" as a crime against humanity.

Israel has also weaponized starvation, blocking sufficient aid and destroying agricultural land and bakeries. HRW emphasized this policy as "instrumentalizing necessities" to collectively punish Gazans.

While the International Criminal Court (ICC) moved to hold Israeli officials accountable—issuing arrest warrants in November 2024 for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and War Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity—efforts to obstruct justice persist.

Israel and its allies have pressured the ICC through diplomatic threats and withheld cooperation. The court's mandate, which covers crimes in Palestine since 2014, faces systematic challenges, including intimidation of officials.



advanced by the Islamic Republic, Arbæen is far more than the commemoration of an original injustice. It is the revival of the demand for justice as the organizing principle of politics, society, and the Islamic state.

The procession becomes a communal testimony against all forms of oppression: Imam Hossein's narrative speaks to every participant, linking them to the current struggle against marginalization, colonialism, and the instrumentalization of peoples.

Islam, as both discourse and political practice, refers to Arbæen to insist that justice is not abstract but a concrete demand that runs from the local community to the regional geopolitical stage. Iranian authorities do not hide their aim of transforming

historical memory into present-day mobilization: the message conveyed from the Islamic Republic is that—faced with hegemonic actors, whether foreign empires or corrupt domestic elites—the organized people, faithful to their Islamist heritage, can and must challenge the status quo.

Arbæen operates as a political pedagogy in which the injustice suffered does not lead to victimhood, but to a permanent demand for dignity, equality, and the redistribution of power.

The Iranian state recognizes itself and legitimizes itself as the heir to this struggle, presenting its political system as the vehicle for realizing Islamic justice.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Zahra Nemati wins top APC accolade

TEHRAN – Zahra Nemati of Iran received the Exemplary Asian Official award Wednesday night.

She won the accolade in recognition of her leadership, vision, and commitment to advancing the Paralympic Movement. Her efforts have significantly supported governance, athlete advocacy, and visibility for Para sport in Asia.

The Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) held its prestigious Asian Awards Ceremony on Aug. 13 in Astana, Kazakhstan, celebrating the region's most outstanding contributors to the Paralympic Movement.

The event took place during a landmark week for the APC, which also included the 2025 Conference and General Assembly.

Nemati, a three-time Paralympic champion, replaced Milad Vaziri, as head coach of Iran's Para archery team shortly after the 2024 Paralympic Games.

She is also a two-time World Archery Para Champion from Bangkok 2013 and Beijing 2017, and was recognized by the International Paralympic Committee with its next-generation leader award in 2021 for her campaigns on women's rights and disabilities in sport.

Iran volleyball to hold training camp in Qatar

TEHRAN – Iran volleyball team will travel to Doha on August 26 to hold a preparatory camp in Qatar.

Team Melli is going to prepare for the 2025 FIVB Men's Volleyball World Championship.

Iran has been drawn in Pool A along with Egypt, the Philippines and Tunisia.

Roberto Piazza's Iran will play warm-up matches with Egypt and Qatar in Doha.

Team Melli will also play two friendly matches with Germany and Slovenia in Manila.

The tournament will take place in the Philippines from Sept. 12 to 28, 2025.

Sepahan's Karimi sidelined for six months

TEHRAN – Sepahan captain Mohammad Karimi has been sidelined for at least six months due to an anterior cruciate ligament injury.

The iconic midfielder sustained the injury in the match against Al Duhail, where Sepahan lost to the Qatari giant 3-2 in the 2025-26 AFC Champions League preliminary stage.

His absence will be a major setback for Sepahan ahead of the new season of the Iran Professional League (IPL). Sepahan, headed by Moharram Navidkia, are scheduled to meet Malavan in Bandar Anzali on Tuesday. Sepahan wish Karimi a rapid and complete recovery, and look forward to his return to the squad.

Amini among fearless young stars

TEHRAN – The FIBA Asia Cup 2025 in Jeddah has given us the full package. The fans have seen high-stakes games, jaw-dropping plays and the kind of drama only Asian basketball can deliver. However, beyond the established stars and household names, a fresh wave of talent is making its mark.

The under-23 crowd is not just tagging along. They're driving their teams deep into the tournament with fearless play and breakout performances. Keep in mind, these players were chosen based on their age (born 2002 or younger) and their form over the first 10 days of the FIBA Asia Cup 2025. Only players whose teams advanced to the Quarter-Finals were considered.

Iran's Mohammad Amini is one of them.

It's rare to see a 20-year-old dictate the flow of knockout basketball, but Amini has done just that for Iran. He's second on the team in scoring (17.8), rebounds (6.5) and efficiency (16.0) while also ranking third in assists and steals.

His defining moment came in the Quarter-Finals against Chinese Taipei, when he exploded for 30 points and 11 rebounds to lead an epic comeback.

Iran's march to the Semi-Finals has Amini's fingerprints all over it.

Friendly: Iran U21 volleyball team to play France

TEHRAN – Iran U21 volleyball team will play France in a friendly match on Sunday.

The match serves as part of preparation for the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men's U21 World Championship.

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

Gholamreza Momeni Moghaddam's boys will open the campaign on August 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.

Gholizadeh undergoes surgery

TEHRAN – Lech Poznań officially announced on Friday that Ali Gholizadeh underwent foot surgery in Finland.

This injury is another blow to a Polish side ahead of the new season. Gholizadeh will be sidelined for at least three months.

The surgery took place on Friday in Turku, Finland. It is expected that Gholizadeh could return to the field by mid-November, during which he will follow physiotherapy programs and dedicated training to reduce the risk of returning too early and re-injury.

Sepahan eye Enzo Crivelli: report

TEHRAN – Sepahan football club have reportedly set their sight on signing French forward Enzo Vito Gabriel Crivelli.

The 30-year-old striker most recently played at Swiss club Servette.

He started his playing career in 2013 in Bordeaux and has also played in Bastia, Angers, İstanbul Başakşehir, Caen, and Saint-Étienne.

Crivelli has also represented France U-20 and U-21 football teams. Sepahan parted ways with French forward Wissam Ben Yedder at the end of the last season and Crivelli can be a replacement for his compatriot.

Fulham up efforts to beat Leeds for Taremi

TEHRAN – Fulham are pushing to beat Leeds United in the race to secure the signature of Inter Milan star Mehdi Taremi.

The 33-year-old center forward joined Inter Milan from FC Porto last summer but failed to make an impact, as he started only seven Serie A games for them.

In the ongoing transfer window, Taremi is expected to leave and his preference is to stay in Europe, with several clubs showing interest in him.

Taremi has suitors in the Premier League, with Leeds United and Fulham both looking to sign him and he is expected to join an English side.

Leeds have loaned Mateo Joseph to Spanish side Mallorca, something which has made their need for another striker even more pressing.

The Yorkshire giants approached Inter Milan to find a deal for the Iranian frontman and it has been suggested that they are leading the race over Fulham.

However, Fulham are not ready to throw in the towel, as they are pushing to beat Leeds in the race to Taremi, according to Italian journalist Raffaele Amato.

Iran and Arbæen: Memory, resistance, and legitimacy in motion

From Page 1 ▶ The Arbæen pilgrimage operates on different levels: as a stage for mass mobilization, as an affirmation of communal Islamic identity, and as a political operation focused on the internal legitimacy and external projection of the Iranian state.

The performativity of resistance

Arbæen condenses the founding narrative of Shia Islam: the memory of Imam Hossein's martyrdom in Karbala, the suffering in the face of injustice, and the dignity preserved even in physical defeat.

This historical core is translated—within Iranian political discourse and practice—into a pedagogy of resistance: a collective act in which millions embrace the experience of sacrifice not merely as something of the past, but as an active principle for the present and the future.

The Arbæen pilgrimage stages the idea that resistance is both possible and necessary in the face of adverse political realities.

Pilgrims, walking hundreds of kilometers often in precarious conditions, embody an ethic of action, solidarity, and perseverance, illuminating the popular capacity

to overcome material and political limits imposed from outside. Resistance here is not framed as an act of violent confrontation, but as fidelity to the principle of justice, autonomous mobilization, and the offering of one's own body as political testimony.

The message of Arbæen challenges passivity: against despotic power, against structural injustice, and against the global hegemony of exclusionary models, what is affirmed is the possibility of articulating emancipatory practices grounded in a horizon of meaning with deep roots.

Arbæen is a material reminder that the Islamic community can challenge injustice and reclaim a central role in history

Sacrifice, therefore, is redemptive not as an isolated act, but as the founding moment of a political community that survives and resists.

Justice as a political-social foundation

In the contemporary reading

Iran exports non-oil products valued at \$2.1b to UAE in 4 months



TEHRAN— Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$2.1 billion to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), according to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

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

Exporting commodities valued at \$5.4 billion to Iran, the United Arab Emirates was Iran's top source of non-oil import in the said four months, the IRICA head added.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Referring to the location of Iran and the UAE in the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), Bazarpash said: "Access to the markets of the north and south can create an opportunity for the two countries to cooperate."

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

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

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

Referring to the performance of the UAE government in the field of investment, the

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

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

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

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

Speaking at the Iran Expo 2025 event, in late April, Ghadir Ghiafeh, deputy head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), said the initiative would help streamline trade and improve alignment with global standards. "To fully benefit from the UAE's logistics and re-export infrastructure, a formal committee should be created between our chambers," he told the Secretary General of the UAE Chambers Federation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Eurasian Economic Commission expresses readiness to expand trade with Iran

From Page 1 ► The two sides agreed to hold the inaugural meeting of their joint committee this autumn, where mechanisms for implementing the trade deal are expected to be finalized.

A draft roadmap for trade and economic cooperation between Iran and the bloc is in the final stages of approval, Slepnev said.

Atabak is accompanying Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref at the EAEU's 43rd Intergovernmental Council meeting, hosted in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan.

The gathering began Thursday in a restricted format among prime ministers and continued Friday in an expanded format.

The EAEU groups Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia. Observer members include Iran, Uzbekistan, Moldova, and Cuba. Iran obtained observer status in 2024 and is seeking permanent membership, Aref has said.

According to the Iranian officials, steel and petrochemicals are expected to account for 50 percent of the objectives set under



Iran's free trade agreement (FTA) with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

The officials highlight the sectors' pivotal role in boosting exports and activating trade opportunities in the region.

Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, head of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO), said the FTA, which entered into force on May 15, 2025, is unprecedented for Iran, reducing tariffs on 87 percent of traded goods.

He noted that while previous

preferential trade agreements with the EAEU had expanded trade volumes, this latest agreement presents a unique opportunity for deeper integration.

"Trade agreements create both opportunities and challenges. The overall outcome is positive for both sides if vulnerabilities are addressed and opportunities maximized," Dehnavi said. He emphasized that steel and petrochemical industries are major drivers of production and exports, and leveraging them effectively could achieve half of Iran's FTA objectives.

Oil minister says gas flaring to end by 2029

TEHRAN – Iran's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad said on Saturday the country aims to eliminate gas flaring by the end of the Iranian calendar year 1407 (March 2029), as one of the largest gas recovery projects in southern Ilam came online.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Paknejad said the launch marks a major step toward capturing associated petroleum gas, known as "flare gas."

The move, he added, will not only cut environmental pollution but also prevent the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

According to the minister, Iran's Seventh National Development Plan sets a target to recover 16 billion cubic feet of flared gas by 2029, equal to about 44 million cubic meters per day.

Achieving this, he said, would end flaring permanently.

When President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration took office last year, daily recovery capacity stood at about 330 million cubic feet, Paknejad said.

Since then, both short- and long-term proj-

ects have been launched to expand the figure.

Short-term measures, he noted, added around 9.2 to 9.3 million cubic meters per day, while auctions to sell flare gas to private investors lifted capacity by about 60 million cubic feet per day.

Another nine projects now under way are expected to recover a further 207 million cubic feet per day.

To encourage private participation, the Oil Ministry has tendered 36 investment packages with a potential capacity of 700 million cubic feet per day, Paknejad said.

The auctions are offered at a base price of zero, allowing investors to recover and use the gas for power generation or extracting higher-value products.

The minister outlined three major long-term projects: the \$1.6 billion NGL 3100 complex in Dehloran, known in the industry as North Dezful; the NGL 3200 project to capture gas from West Karoun oilfields in Khuzestan; and a Persian Gulf NGL project designed to recover offshore flare gas.

Domestic investment in Iran's free zones rises 80% in 4 months on year

TEHRAN – Domestic investment approved in Iran's free trade zones surged 80 percent in the first four months of the current Iranian year (March 20 – July 22), reaching 2,095 trillion rials (\$4.2 billion), according to the Free and Special Economic Zones High Council.

The council reported that the figure surpassed the period's target by more than 80 percent, reflecting stronger domestic capital inflows into the zones.

In the same period last year, approved domestic investment stood at 2,185 trillion rials (\$4.3 billion), showing continued momentum in attracting local capital and underlining the zones' role in supporting Iran's economic development, the report said.

In mid-July, Reza Masrour, secretary of the Free and Special Economic Zones High Council, said that Iran is set to implement a major restructuring of its free trade zones in a bid to revive their role in regional commerce and national economic development.

Masrour said that although the zones were designed to drive trade, investment, and transit, they have fallen short of expectations in recent years.

He announced the beginning of a reengineering process, backed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, to redefine the function and governance of these areas.

The transformation plan focus-

es on deep legal, institutional, and infrastructural reforms, alongside new policies to turn the zones into export-oriented hubs.

Each zone will align its activities with its own strengths, such as transit logistics, tourism, downstream industries, or advanced technologies, he added.

Authorities also aim to transition the zones into what officials describe as "seventh-generation" areas—drawing on modern international development models.

Three key documents are being drafted to guide this transition: a strategic roadmap for reform, a digital economy blueprint, and a national productivity program.

The strategic roadmap is de-

The official called on the private sector to actively engage in Eurasian markets, pointing to research identifying which Iranian products have the highest export potential. "Private companies should focus on maximizing profitability, while policymakers ensure collective benefits such as employment, economic growth, and foreign currency inflows," he said.

Dehnavi also noted that export opportunities vary across member states, highlighting Russia as one of the most lucrative markets for Iranian products and promising further studies to optimize engagement in the region.

According to Elham Haji Karimi, head of the Iran-EAEU FTA secretariat, the agreement, signed in December 2023 after more than two years of negotiations, covers 11 chapters, including trade in goods, technical measures, sanitary standards, rules of origin, customs cooperation, dispute resolution, government procurement, and sectoral cooperation in transport, energy, automotive industries, and free trade zones.

He said additional facilities are also under way at the Bidboland and Marun gas plants and at 12 refineries of the South Pars gas complex.

With the first phase of NGL 3100 now operational, some 80 million cubic feet per day will be recovered from North Dezful. The project will reach a full capacity of 240 million cubic feet per day by early 2026.

Since last year, overall capacity has risen by about 280 million cubic feet per day and is expected to exceed 600 million cubic feet by the end of this year, Paknejad said.

The Ilam project includes NGL 3100, two compressor stations, a 100-megawatt power plant, and 350 kilometers of pipeline.

Thirty megawatts of the plant's output will be supplied to the national grid, with the rest powering project facilities.

Gas recovered will undergo dehydration and sweetening to produce products including dry gas, ethane, LPG, sulfur, and condensates, some of which will go into the national grid and petrochemical feedstock, while heavier components will be shipped to Bandar Imam until a local petrochemical plant is ready.

signed to identify systemic challenges, reassess the direction of the zones, and develop macro and sector-specific policies.

The digital economy document links the potential of tech-driven innovation with the commercial ecosystems of the free zones. The productivity program is aimed at defining and applying performance benchmarks to improve efficiency across all regions.

Masrour said these plans are being developed in collaboration with Iran's top economic policy experts and research centers, using global models and tailored analyses of domestic and international conditions.

Russia, Iran discuss Rasht-Astara railway as Moscow signals stance on 'Trump corridor'

TEHRAN – Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk said Moscow and Tehran discussed accelerating construction of the Rasht-Astara railway during a meeting between Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref on the sidelines of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) summit in Kyrgyzstan.

Speaking to reporters on Friday, Overchuk described the talks as constructive, noting that they also covered the EAEU-Iran free trade agreement and broader transport and logistics cooperation.

Russian experts are already in Iran working on the Rasht-Astara line, he added.

Iran and Russia signed an agreement in May 2023 to jointly build the Rasht-Astara link, a missing segment of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) along the Caspian Sea's

western flank.

Moscow pledged an intergovernmental loan of €1.3 billion (\$1.4 billion) toward the estimated €1.6 billion project.

The line is planned to connect with a rail segment between Astara in Iran and Astara in Azerbaijan, a project involving Tehran, Moscow, and Baku.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian last year ordered his ministers to fast-track development of the INSTC route through Rasht and Astara.

Overchuk also commented on a separate initiative signed last week in Washington, where Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev reached a U.S.-brokered peace deal in the presence of President Donald Trump. The accord established what

Trump dubbed the "Trump corridor for peace and prosperity," granting Azerbaijan special transit access to its exclave Nakhchivan.

Armenia is developing the corridor in partnership with Washington, with an agreement that could last up to 99 years, Trump said at the White House signing ceremony.

Asked about the project, Overchuk said Moscow would support Yerevan if it considered the corridor necessary. "Armenia is our strategic ally. If they believe this project serves their interests, we will back them," he said, adding that Russia supports peace initiatives in the South Caucasus.

Aref, during his meeting with Mishustin, reiterated Iran's position against foreign interference in regional geopolitics, saying countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia can resolve security and stability issues among themselves.

Alaska’s show over but Ukraine’s war not

No concrete outcomes from Trump-Putin summit as uncertainty looms

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN — Friday’s meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska has dominated headlines across the globe.

Putin received a red-carpet welcome and a firm handshake from Trump upon landing at a US airbase in Anchorage. The two leaders then held nearly three hours of talks—the first US-Russia summit since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Both presidents were accompanied by senior advisers. On the American side were Secretary of State Marco Rubio and special envoy Steve Witkoff, while Putin was joined by Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and foreign policy adviser Yuri Ushakov.

At a joint press conference, the leaders delivered carefully worded remarks but declined to take questions. Putin described the talks as “constructive” and held in an “atmosphere of mutual respect,” while Trump called them “productive.” Yet the summit ended without a breakthrough on halting Russia’s war in Ukraine.

In a subsequent Fox News interview, Trump advised Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to negotiate with Moscow. “Gotta make a deal. Look, Russia is a very big power, and they’re not. They’re great soldiers,” Trump said, stressing his preference for a permanent peace agreement rather than a temporary ceasefire.

Following the summit, Trump spoke with Zelenskyy by phone and also consulted with several European and NATO leaders. Zelenskyy confirmed he would travel to



Washington on Monday for further talks and a meeting with Trump.

European leaders broadly welcomed Washington’s efforts but signaled some divergence from the U.S. approach. In a joint statement, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen reaffirmed that “Ukraine must have ironclad security guarantees” and insisted that “international borders must not be changed by force.” They pledged continued sanctions on Russia until peace is achieved.

During Friday’s press conference, Trump closed with: “I’d like to thank you very much, and we’ll speak to you very soon and probably see you again very soon.” Putin quipped in response: “Next time, in Moscow.”

Russian journalist Maxim Nachinov told the Tehran Times that both leaders considered the meeting “very positive” and that Trump hinted at a pause in new sanctions. He noted that Putin’s warm reception in the United States demonstrated

the limits of Western efforts to isolate Russia diplomatically.

“One thing is certain: the alleged international isolation of Russia (the primary goal of Western sanctions) proved to be a lost cause, as Putin stepped onto U.S. soil to the applause of the American leader,” the Russian journalist and columnist from Yekaterinburg said.

Russian journalist on the Trump-Putin summit: Russia’s supposed isolation has failed; Putin even stepped onto U.S. soil to the applause of the American leader.

Since the war began, the US and Europe have imposed sweeping sanctions on Russia while providing massive military aid to Ukraine. Between February 2022 and June 2025, European countries commit-

ted 80.5 billion euros (\$93.7 billion) in military support—surpassing the 64.6 billion euros allocated by the United States, according to AFP. Despite this, Russia has endured, even after the International Criminal Court issued a warrant for Putin’s arrest on war crimes charges in 2023. His appearance on US soil underscored the difficulty of enforcing such measures against Moscow.

The Alaska summit also highlighted emerging divisions between the U.S. and Europe in handling the conflict. While Trump emphasized direct engagement with Putin and hinted at pausing sanctions, European leaders maintained a firmer stance, signaling a need for strict guarantees and continued pressure. Analysts suggest this divergence may complicate Western efforts to present a unified front on Ukraine and sanctions policy.

Besides, the summit’s grand staging and red-carpet welcome highlighted Trump’s flair for showmanship and theatrical moments. However, despite the spectacle, he has so far failed to deliver on his repeated promises to end Russia’s war in Ukraine.

For now, the Alaska summit may prove a diplomatic win for Russia, signaling its reemergence on the global stage after years of Western attempts at isolation. For Washington, the challenge now lies in balancing outreach to Moscow with steadfast support for Kyiv. Whether the summit sets the stage for genuine progress or simply reinforces divisions within the West will become clear in the months ahead.

Famine as a weapon: How Israel’s siege is starving Gaza into silence



From page 1 ► The famine now unfolding is the predictable result of sealing 2.3 million people off from food, medicine, and fuel. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification reports 470,000 Palestinians in “catastrophic” conditions (IPC Phase 5)—the final stage before mass death. In Gaza City, UNICEF says acute malnutrition among children under five has quadrupled in two months to 16.5 percent. In July alone, 74 people died of malnutrition, including 24 children under five.

This is not the first time Israel has used hunger as leverage. In the late 2000s, officials admitted to calculating daily caloric limits for Palestinians—enough to prevent visible famine but too little for a dignified life. That policy has now been replaced by outright denial of survival essentials.

Starvation here serves a dual purpose: punishment and displacement. In October 2023, a leaked Israeli Ministry of Intelligence document outlined the “preferred scenario” of moving Gaza’s population into Egypt’s Sinai, with a buffer zone to prevent return. The method was blunt: To make Gaza unlivable. Hunger is central to that plan, so if bombs don’t drive you out, starvation will.

Inside Gaza’s collapsing hospitals, this strategy is written on children’s bodies. Aid workers describe infants too weak to cry, their systems unable to absorb even rehydration salts. Mothers, malnourished themselves, cradle babies they cannot feed. A father from northern Gaza said his six-week-old son died because there was no formula, and his wife could no longer produce milk. He said: “We buried him in a box because he was too small for a shroud”. Multiply that by 98 and you have the child death toll from Gaza’s famine so far.

International humanitarian law leaves no room for doubt. Article 54 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions forbids starving civilians as a method of warfare. Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court defines it as a war crime. As occupying power, Israel is bound under the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure food and medical supplies reach Gaza.

Human Rights Watch says Israeli statements and actions “reflect an intent to starve civilians.” UN Special Rapporteurs warn the siege could amount to genocide. In May 2024, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Gallant, explicitly naming starvation as part of the charges though history shows such courts rarely act against Western-backed regimes without immense political pressure. The World Health Organization’s Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, calls the situation “man-made mass starvation,” stressing it is not a natural disaster but a deliberate act.

Images of skeletal children and breadlines under sniper fire have pierced public conscience. From Sydney to San Francisco, protesters carry placards reading “Starvation is a War Crime,” quoting UN officials in calls for an immediate end to the siege. Yet in many capitals, concern remains the most common currency. Over 20 countries, including European powers and regional governments have condemned the blockade but limited themselves to words, not action.

By contrast, some states have combined rhetoric with real measures. Iran has openly linked its military confrontation with Israel to the defence of Gaza, framing it as part of a broader Resistance Axis strategy to break the siege. From its support to allied movements in Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq, and Syria, Tehran has ensured that the pressure on Israel is not merely diplomatic but strategic.

On 22 July 2025, Iran’s Foreign Ministry denounced “the horrific crimes committed by the Zionist regime,” warning that over a million Gazans face starvation. Pakistan, at the UN Security Council, called the siege “unprecedented inhumanity” and demanded immediate relief corridors. Apart from Iran and a few other committed states, there is still no united and ongoing regional effort whether economic, diplomatic, or military—to bring the blockade to an end.

The famine is not over. It is a crime in progress. Each day without decisive action deepens the tragedy behind the next statistic.

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

Gaza City puts up fierce resistance

From page 1 ► According to the al-Qassam Brigades, one Merkava tank was hit in the al-Musalla area with a “Yassin 105” shell. In another operation, an elaborate ambush was carried out against IOF troops in the al-Barasi area.

During the ambush, resistance fighters shelled a house where an IOF unit had fortified itself using a “TBG” shell and opened fire on a sniper positioned inside.

Additionally, two explosive devices were detonated inside the control cabins of two APCs, and a Namer APC was also hit with a “Yassin 105” shell.

As the IOF retreated, al-Qassam resistance fighters shelled two houses sheltering the occupation soldiers with “Tandem” and “Yassin 105” projectiles, resulting in casualties among the IOF.

Earlier, the al-Qassam Brigades had also reported targeting a Merkava 4 tank and a D9 bulldozer with “Yassin 105” shells on Street 8, also in southern al-Zaytoun.

Palestinian resistance forces continue to carry out attacks against the IOF, illegally operating in the Gaza Strip.

The al-Quds Brigades, in coordination with the Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, announced that they shelled gatherings of IOF soldiers and military vehicles east of Gaza with mortars.

Together with the al-Qassam Brigades, they also targeted an IOF site, north of Khan Younis,

using heavy mortar shells.

The al-Quds Brigades published footage of their resistance fighters in cooperation with Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, shelling gatherings of IOF soldiers and vehicles penetrating east of Gaza with mortar shells.

A day earlier, al-Qassam reported targeting two Merkava tanks near Abu Hamid Roundabout in central Khan Younis using an improvised explosive device and two “Yassin 105” shells.

The Al-Nasser Salah al-Din Brigades also reported shelling IOF troops and vehicles in northern Khan Younis with 60mm mortar shells.

Palestinian political and resistance factions held a meeting in Cairo to discuss the latest political and on-the-ground developments. They emphasized that their top priority is to stop the ongoing Israeli occupation regime’s genocide and lift the blockade on Gaza.

Following the meeting, the national and Islamic factions stressed the urgent need for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire, as well as the safe and unhindered entry of humanitarian and relief aid into Gaza.

The factions also warned against the ongoing illegal Israeli settlement expansion and Judaization plans in the occupied West Bank, stating that confronting these threats, both in the West Bank and Gaza, requires building genuine national unity.

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

Greater Israel: A ‘spiritual mission’ or ‘evil mission’?

From page 1 ► Israeli extremists are even eying on the land of countries, such as Jordan and Egypt, that have signed peace treaty with them.

Netanyahu feels emboldened because his army has been committing every imaginable crime against the Palestinian people in Gaza for about two years without facing any punishment, including economic sanctions.

Now those Western countries - the United States and Western European countries in particular- that have enabled Israel to commit horrible crimes in Gaza through providing it with the most sophisticated weapons and political support must now get ready for possible new military adventures by Israel.

The opponents of his genocidal acts in the West have been accused of anti-Semitism and Hamas sympathizers. The United States has imposed sanctions against the International Criminal Court (ICC) for issuing arrest warrant against Netanyahu and his former so-called defense minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

U.S. Senator, Tom Cotton, even went too far and made military action against the ICC. He invoked a controversial U.S. law known as “The Hague Invasion Act”. Writing on X on Nov. 21, 2024, the Republican senator declared: “The ICC is a kangaroo court and Karim Khan (the ICC

chief prosecutor) is a deranged fanatic. Woe to him and anyone who tries to enforce these outlaw warrants. Let me give them all a friendly reminder: the American law on the ICC is known as The Hague Invasion Act for a reason. Think about it.” In the West, students also faced violence, suspension or expulsion for protesting war on Gaza war. The Trump administration illegally cut 2.6 billion dollars in research funding for Harvard University. The administration has also restricted the university from enrolling new foreign students. In Germany students were labelled “terrorist sympathizers”.

These moves along with political support have made Netanyahu feel free and even imagine that he has “spiritual mission” to extend the borders of Israel.

The countries that Israel has covetous eye on and others must know feel compelled to do something serious to stop Israel from embarking on its vicious goals.

The international community, especially the United Nations, particularly its Security Council, must force Netanyahu apologize for his vicious remarks. It is not the first time that the idea of a greater Israel is being raised. According to Middle East Monitor, the Israeli Foreign Ministry last January published on one of its electronic platforms an alleged map with a caption fabricating an Israeli history dating back thousands

of years, in line with repeated Hebrew claims of a “Jewish kingdom” that includes parts of the occupied Palestinian territory, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt.

Also, last year, in a documentary, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich was filmed advocating for the expansion of Israeli borders to include Damascus. He suggested that Israel would gradually grow to encompass not only all Palestinian territories but also parts of Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

“It is written that the future of Jerusalem is to expand to Damascus,” he said, invoking the “Greater Israel” ideology.

Such comments are made while Israel, including its prime minister, says Israel wants to live in peace with its neighbors and the U.S. is desperately seeking to convince Saudi Arabia to join the Abraham Accords and normalize ties with Israel.

These dangerous remarks show that Israel is not seeking peace with neighbors. Rather its vicious-minded officials feel they have a divine mission to grab the land of neighbors and even non-neighbors such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq. This list may extend to include other countries.

Netanyahu’s comments resemble greatly to those of ISIS (Daesh) that wanted and still want to capture all Muslim states and form their “promised” Islamic Caliphate.

Hezbollah chief denounces sedition fueled by Nawaf Salam cabinet

From page 1 ► It is noteworthy that the vocal tone that characterized Sheikh Qassem’s Friday speech came after the visit of Ali Larijani, Secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, to Lebanon, and the strongly worded position of Yemen’s leader Sayyed Abdul-Malik al-Houthi.

These decisive, proactive positions confirmed Tehran and Sanaa’s strong support for preventing the disarmament of West Asia’s resistance movements, which they described as nothing more than a pipe dream in light of Netanyahu’s Talmudic expansionist myths.

Sheikh Qassem explicitly accused the Lebanese government of serving the Israeli project by proceeding with the arms embargo, using the term “Karbala battle” no matter the cost.

The Hezbollah chief warned: “Either we preserve Lebanon and co-exist together, or there is no point in

regretting.”

It is noteworthy that On August 7, the Lebanese government, acting under US-Israeli influence, assigned the Lebanese Army to draft a plan in the current month to restrict arms possession exclusively to the state, with implementation set for completion by the end of 2025.

Sheikh Naim Qassem explicitly affirmed that the Resistance will not surrender its weapons and held the Salam government responsible for any sedition. It’s as if he’s saying: Let Israel withdraw from the southern lands and Lebanon obtain guarantees that Israel will not attack in the future first, and then we’ll be open to any national discussion on the arms issue.

Naturally, Hezbollah’s opponents quickly attacked Sheikh Qassem’s speech, claiming it is an explicit incitement to civil war. The single goal of this team has long been to ulti-

mately achieve normalization with the Israeli entity.

Observers believe that the timeframe for this goal is the second half of next year, i.e., after the parliamentary elections (May 2026). They are deluded that normalization with Israel will open the doors to prosperity for Lebanon!

Seemingly, they do not want (or do not want) to monitor the situation of Egypt, which has not witnessed a single economic boom since the Camp David accord; or Jordan, which relies on American aid (for 20% of its budget); not to mention Sudan, which has become a battleground for devastating conflicts!

All that can be expected from Israel is to turn Lebanon into a second West Bank, and the Lebanese government into another Palestinian Authority. Thus, the Lebanese army’s role becomes protecting Israel’s security, and

the role of the Lebanese serving the flocks of colonial settlers.

For their part, Hezbollah’s supporters countered that Sheikh Qassem’s speech was a reaction to the US-Israeli plan to disarm the Resistance through coercion, pressure, and threats.

Before discussing the fate of the Resistance’s weapons, the government must guarantee that it will launch the reconstruction program in the destroyed villages; that Israeli enemy forces withdraw from the occupied Lebanese territories; cease daily violations of UN Resolution 1701; and free the resistance prisoners. On November 27, 2024, a ceasefire agreement went into effect, but the Israeli occupation entity violated it more than 3,000 times, resulting in the martyrdom of approximately 266 Lebanese citizens and the wounding of 563, according to official data.

Mashhad is to host over 6.5 million pilgrims, governor-general says

TEHRAN – Mashhad, Iran's holiest city, is expected to host between 6.5 million and 7 million pilgrims during the last ten days of the Islamic lunar month of Safar, the governor-general of Khorasan Razavi province said.

Gholamhossein Mozaffari, who also heads the province's pilgrimage services headquarters, said the city was prepared to provide organized and high-quality services to visitors through government resources and public participation.

"Past years' experiences have provided a reliable foundation for managing Safar travels," Mozaffari told CHTN on Saturday.

He added that the anticipated number of visitors is about twice the estimated number of Iranians attending Arbæen ceremonies in Iraq.

The governor said coordination with municipalities, neighboring provinces, and Tehran authorities had been made to ensure infrastructure and facilities were ready for the mass gathering. Authorities have projected more than 850,000 overnight stays during the period, using both public and private accommodation capacity.

Mozaffari noted that hospitality has become a community tradition in Mashhad, with many residents hosting pilgrims in their homes. "This participation is the cornerstone of travel management," he said.

He emphasized that road safety was a priority, with the police and road authorities implementing new measures. "We hope pilgrims



will experience their journeys in peace and with higher quality than in previous years," he said.

The last ten days of Safar hold special significance for Shia Muslims, coinciding with Arbæen, which marks the end of the 40-day mourning period for the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (A.S.) in the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE. While the primary destination for Arbæen is Karbala in Iraq, Mashhad has also become a traditional site of pilgrimage during this period.

Mashhad is home to the shrine of Imam Reza (A.S.), the eighth Shia Imam, which is surrounded by hotels and accommodation centers.

In 2020, Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts registered the pilgrimage tradition to Imam Reza's shrine on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

Five countryside destinations for traveling in summer

TEHRAN-- Summer always invites you to a short but profound journey into the hidden beauties of Iran.

This land, with its lesser-seen treasures, from ancient caves that hold the secrets of history to desert valleys and cool countryside destinations that bring peace to the soul, is home to destinations that each have a unique story, Khabar Online wrote.

Karaftoo cave

Karaftoo cave, located 70 kilometers from Divan-Darreh city in Kordestan province, is one of the most amazing caves of the country with its natural halls and ancient carvings. If you drive from Divan-Darreh to Karaftoo cave road, you will reach there in an hour.

The cool weather of the cave creates an ideal atmosphere for guided tours, photography of limestone columns and historical inscriptions, and discovery of its ancient history.

Entrance fees, parking and small cafes are available on the site, and Divan-Darreh restaurants serve local dishes such as Khalal stew and Dokhineh. On the cave paths, do not deviate from the marked paths and wear suitable shoes to avoid slipping. Karaftoo, with its underground secrets, invites you to a different adventure in the heart of Kordestan's history.

Subatan country

Subatan country is located 36 kilometers from Lisar in Talesh, Gilan province. With green plains and cool weather, it is one of the most pristine countryside destinations in the country. It is an ideal site for walking, taking photos from wooden huts, and purchasing local products such as honey and so on.

You can stay in tribal tents or near a waterfall. There are eco-lodges and local huts in Subatan. Also, Lisar restaurants serve local dishes such as Taleshi kebab and Baqali Qatoq.

The countryside routes may be uneven, so wear appropriate footwear and watch out for morning fog.

Subatan land, with its cool weather, invites you to a paradise in heart of Alborz mountain range.

Sar-e Aqa Seyyed village

Sar-e Aqa Seyyed is a village in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, western Iran. Earth-colored houses are stacked on top of one another so that the roof of one house forms the pathway for the next.

The village, which is in the heart of the Zagros mountain range, is named after Aqa Seyyed shrine. Most of the houses are windowless and only have doors. The village has a population of around 3,000 who are mostly living on husbandry and agriculture. They are very hardworking.

In summer, it is a pleasure to wander the winding alleys, take photos of the lush scenery, and buy local products such as fresh dairy products and Bakhtiari bread. You can chat with the warm-hearted locals and hear stories of the Bakhtiari tribe. Eco-lodges are available in the village and mountain restaurants with dishes such as Bakhtiari kebab are available. The mountain paths can be narrow and uneven, so wear suitable shoes and be careful not to slip.

Ab Sefid waterfall

Ab Sefid waterfall is located 50 kilometers from Aligudarz, Lorestan province. With its cool water and green forests, Ab Sefid is one of the most pristine waterfalls of Iran.

In warm days of summer, its coolness creates an ideal atmosphere for taking photos, hiking, and resting in the shade of trees. You can purchase foods like wild honey from local sellers.

Basic amenities such as parking are available nearby, and Aligudarz restaurants serve local dishes such as Lorestani kebab. The path to the waterfall can be slippery, so wear suitable footwear and avoid swimming in deep pools without supervision.

Filband

Located in the clouds, Filband is one of the most captivating villages in Mazandaran province. It is located 60 kilometers from Amol. Situated at a high altitude of 2,300 meters, travelers can experience the surreal sight of clouds passing below them, creating a dreamlike atmosphere. On clear, sunny days, the panoramic views of lush green fields and enchanting forests surrounding the village are truly extraordinary.

The village's serene setting makes it a perfect getaway from the fast-paced urban lifestyle. Witnessing the sunrise or sunset from Filband is an unforgettable experience, especially when the sunlight bathes the clouds in stunning colors. The ideal times to visit the village are during spring and summer when nature is at its most vibrant.

Eco-lodges in Filband and Amol restaurant serves cuisines such as stuffed chicken and kebab.

Fars province, cradle of the Achaemenid Empire, seeks tourism rise

TEHRAN – Iran's Fars province, home to ancient Achaemenid sites including Persepolis and Pasargadae, recorded 7.4 million tourist visits last year, officials said, as the government steps up efforts to position the region as a leading cultural tourism hub.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has identified Fars as a priority for development, citing its potential to attract both foreign and domestic visitors. The province, once known as Persis, contains UNESCO World Heritage sites such as Pasargadae, the tomb of Cyrus the Great, Persepolis, and Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region, as well as other cultural gems like Naqsh-e Rostam.

Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, head of the ministry, said the government is seeking to balance historic preservation with modern tourism growth. "We are dedicated to providing the best conditions for tourists and creating a favorable atmosphere for their experience," he said in a recent visit to Fars province.

"Our goal is to not only welcome millions of foreign tourists but also to create a sustainable tourism industry that benefits local communities and respects the heritage."

Tourist arrivals to Fars rose by 48% in Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian calendar year (March-April 2025), the ministry



People visit the Gate of All Nations within the UNESCO-registered Persepolis in Fars province, southern Iran.

said. During the Nowruz holidays, Pasargadae recorded 14,242 visitors. Officials forecast that the province could host 9 to 10 million foreign tourists by 2025, driven by expanded marketing, infrastructure upgrades, and regional cooperation.

Shiraz, the provincial capital known for its gardens and poets, remains a focal point for cultural travelers. Sites such as the Tomb of Hafez, the Tomb of Sa'di, Eram

Garden, and the Atigh Jameh Mosque continue to attract large numbers of visitors alongside Persepolis and Pasargadae.

Authorities said new investment will focus on improving transport links, tourist facilities, and site preservation.

The ministry said it is also promoting Persian cuisine, traditional crafts, and local festivals as part of its strategy to diversi-

fy tourism offerings and support community livelihoods.

Fars province, considered the cradle of the Achaemenid Empire, is central to Iran's cultural diplomacy efforts, officials said. They added that the growth of heritage tourism in the province is expected to contribute to both economic development and the preservation of the country's historical identity.

Iran tourism gems to be highlighted in five intl. fairs



TEHRAN--The CEO of Touring and Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran (TACI) emphasized that one of the missions assigned by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts to TACI is to hold Iranian tourism and handicraft exhibitions abroad.

According to ILNA, Mohammad-Hossein Soufi said that this mission has been entrusted to TACI to introduce Iran's culture, history, and civilization to the world and confront Iranophobia through holding tourism and handicraft exhibitions.

He also said that confronting Iranophobia is one of the important goals and serious priorities of TACI, and announced: "This year, we are going to participate in five international exhibitions with the aim of confronting Iranophobia."

He pointed out that the other goal of par-

ticipating in overseas fairs is to attract tourists who are interested in traveling to Iran to visit the country's ancient history directly. By observing the beauty and civilizational extent of this land, they will come to understand the harmony, synergy, and national cohesion of Iran, and closely observe the development, progress, and prosperity achieved in the country, he added.

He called significant presence in events particularly global fairs as a way to introduce Iran.

Soufi recalled that Iran has taken part in several international fairs abroad last year, adding: "This year, we will participate in at least five international exhibitions in Asia, Europe, neighboring countries and Arab nations to introduce Iran's history and civilization to the world and confront Iranophobia."

Currently, the most important mission and goals of TACI, based on its statute, are to translate and convert national driving licenses into international driving licenses, provide transit plates, issue carnet de passage (customs clearance permit) and international ownership certificates, issue international introduction cards, membership in international tourism and automobile organizations, establish Iranian tourism information offices inside and outside the country, establish clubs and recruit members in line with the goals of the association, establish recreational, tourism, cultural, artistic and sports centers, develop and implement educational and research programs, establish scientific and applied training and research

Iranian influencers highlight India's heritage at Tehran event

By Nafise Hajati

TEHRAN – "Iran and India share a timeless heritage, reflected in Bihar's ancient sites," the Indian ambassador to Iran said at a recent cultural gathering in Tehran.

The "Meet and Greet" event brought together Iranian cultural enthusiasts and social media influencers, including actor Saber Abar, to celebrate the cultural ties between the two nations.

In his speech, Ambassador Rudra Gaurav Shresth emphasized the deep cultural connections spanning five to six millennia between the two nations, highlighting their shared civilization and heritage.

He also highlighted lesser-known gems such as Bihar province, one of India's oldest and most historic states. Bihar's heritage includes sites said to

remind visitors of Iran's Achaemenid Persepolis, featuring a symbol of four lions inspired by the Achaemenid Empire and iconic motifs from Persepolis itself.

It featured short tourism films under the slogan "Incredible India," showcasing the country's diverse climate and attractions. Guests were invited to experience the traditional art of henna application, while influencers enjoyed preparing Indian street food together, fostering a hands-on cultural exchange.

As a meaningful takeaway, a book featuring Persian poetry containing references to India, translated into English by the ambassador, was gifted to all attendees.

Guests also took part in a quiz on general knowledge about In-



dia, which added an interactive element to the event.

Through their social media, the influencers helped reveal a captivating side of India, inspiring Iranian tourists to discover its rich heritage.

Influencers sampled traditional delicacies such as makhana, samosas, chicken tikka, and

arancini rice balls alongside the unique Indian beverage sattv, adding layers of flavor to the cultural journey.

Through their social media posts, the influencers revealed captivating aspects of India, inspiring Iranian audiences to explore the vibrant heritage and tourist destinations of India.

WFP releases July report on Iran

TEHRAN – The World Food Programme (WFP) has released a report, expounding on activities in Iran over the month of July.

In July, WFP food assistance reached 33,269 beneficiaries, which included Afghan and Iraqi refugees as well as Iranian teachers. Refugees are assisted with a staple food basket, which includes fortified wheat flour (12 kg per person per month) and vegetable oil (810 ml per person per month).

Under cash-based transfers, following the revision of WFP's Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) conducted in November 2024, the Centre for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (CA-FIA) confirmed adjustments to cash transfer values starting in January.

In July, WFP continued to provide the increased cash transfers to better support essential living costs. The transfer is IRR 5 million (USD 7.2) for households headed by men and IRR 6 million (USD 8.6) for households headed by women.

In response to the recent escalation developments and their potential impact on refugees' livelihoods, WFP provided an exceptional additional cash transfer equivalent to the July entitlement to all beneficiaries residing in settlements. This measure was taken to help safeguard their food security and temporarily boost the purchasing power of refugees facing reduced income during this challenging period.

WFP Iran's school-based programs, including schools feeding and educational incentives, have been temporarily suspended due to the summer holidays and will resume with the start of the new academic year in October.

By July, WFP Iran helped ease the financial burden associat-



ed with the gluten-free dietary needs of 52 refugee celiac patients from WFP's beneficiaries by providing them with an extra cash amount of IRR 9.7 million (US\$14.13) per person as a replacement for their usual food entitlement.

WFP supported 388 refugees with disabilities in July across ten settlements, each receiving an additional monthly cash support of IRR 3 million (US\$4.3), on top of their regular aid. In July, assistance covered Kerman, Lorestan, West Azerbaijan, Fars, Khuzestan, Markazi, Khorasan Razavi, and Semnan provinces after initially being introduced to two refugee settlements across two provinces.

To enhance the economic resilience and self-sufficiency of 300 refugees (42 percent women) in July, WFP continued its support for 24 income-generating initiatives across 18 settlements. Activities included welding, tailoring, baking, and farming, among others.

In July WF advanced the procurement process for bakery equipment intended for Kerman settlements, with an estimated value of USD 30,000.

Over the past six months, more

than one million undocumented Afghans have returned from Iran to Afghanistan. In contrast, about 35,000 registered refugees in designated settlements remain largely protected from immediate return. Supported by WFP, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and other agencies, these communities receive regular assistance and are closely coordinated with humanitarian actors. However, they remain heavily dependent on external support for food, healthcare, and education, making sustained aid essential to their stability.

In 2024, WFP provided a combination of in-kind and cash assistance to address the food needs of over 33,000 vulnerable refugees in Iran. As a result, 70 percent of them were able to consume food at an acceptable level, a figure that remains nearly stable compared to the previous year.

Since August, WFP has successfully increased the value of the cash transfer entitlement by 25 percent, actively helping to mitigate the immediate economic challenges reported by refugees.

WFP has maintained a presence in Iran since 1987, primarily focused on addressing the

food security needs of refugees, mainly from Afghanistan. Iran has hosted refugees for over four decades. Most refugees, along with those in refugee-like conditions, reside in urban, peri-urban, and rural areas, often integrated with host communities. However, the most vulnerable refugees living in 20 settlements across 13 provinces face a precarious food security situation that necessitates continued humanitarian assistance by the WFP.

WFP provided food assistance, educational support, and livelihood opportunities through in-kind food distributions, unconditional cash transfers, and capacity-strengthening initiatives to eligible refugees who live in settlements.

Given the economic situation in Iran in recent years, Afghan refugees have also faced many challenges, including reduced income opportunities and diminished purchasing power, which have impacted their food security and well-being, particularly among those in settlements. In response, WFP adjusted its Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP 2023-2027) to align with the need by modifying cash entitlements and food rations, adjusting the number of beneficiaries, and extending the duration of the ICSP by two years to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UN-SDF 2023-2027), ensuring uninterrupted assistance.

WFP implemented activities under the ICSP to sustain its support to these refugees and address their increasing humanitarian needs. There are around 35,000 most vulnerable documented refugees who live in 20 settlements across 13 provinces in Iran and are benefiting from WFP-provided food assistance.

The Journal Citation Report (JCR) Impact Factor 2024 has cited 161 Iranian journals, naming five among the world's most cited in the nanotechnology sector.

Journal of Nanostructure in Chemistry (JNSC) affiliated to Islamic Azad University with an impact factor of 7.9 is placed among the top 25 percent of journals in JCR published by Clarivate Analytics in three categories including Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, ranking 34 among 147 top journals; Chemistry, Multidisciplinary, ranking 41 among 239 journals; and Material Science, Multidisciplinary, ranking 88 among 460 top journals.

Journals of International Nano Letters affiliated to Kermanshah Islamic Azad University, Nano-medicine Journal affiliated to Mashhad Medical Science University, Journal of Nanostructures affiliated to Kashan University, and International Journal of Nano Dimension affiliated to Tonekabon Islamic Azad University received an impact factor of 4.0, 1.7, 1.3, and 1.1, respectively, IRNA reported.

So far, ten out of the 12 specialized nanotechnology journals in the country have been indexed in the international Scopus database, of which five have received an impact factor.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

\$22m earmarked for equipping technical-vocational schools

A total budget of 900 billion rials (nearly \$22 million) has been requested to develop and equip technical-vocational high schools across the country in the current Iranian calendar year (ending March 20, 2019), Mohsen Hosseini, an official with the Ministry of Education has announced.

Describing some of the programs and priorities of the technical and vocational training organization affiliated to the Ministry, Hosseini pointed to improvement of technical and vocational training plans as the Ministry's main priority.

Competency-based education and assessment is among the most important programs of the technical and vocational organization, which must be well implemented in all career and technical education high school, he added, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

تخصیص ۹۰ میلیارد تومان اعتبار برای تجهیز هنرستان های کشور

مدیرکل فنی و حرفه ای دفتر متوسطه وزارت آموزش و پرورش از تخصیص ۹۰ میلیارد تومان اعتبار برای تجهیز هنرستان های کشور در سال جاری خبر داد.

به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر، سیدمحسن حسینی مقدم در دیدار با مدیران هنرستان های فنی و حرفه ای شهر شیراز و برخی از مناطق استان فارس با تشریح برخی از برنامه ها و اولویت های وزارت آموزش و پرورش در بخش فنی و حرفه ای، گفت: کیفیت بخشی برنامه های دفتر فنی و حرفه ای اولویت اصلی آموزش و پرورش است.

حسینی مقدم اظهار کرد: آموزش و ارزشیابی مبتنی بر شایستگی از مهمترین برنامه هایی است که در آموزش های فنی و حرفه ای دنبال می شود و باید این شیوه آموزش به خوبی مراقبت شده و در همه هنرستان ها اجرا شود.

SOCIETY

AUGUST 17, 2025

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Gandoman wetland a crucial stopover for thousands of migratory birds

TEHRAN –Located in Borujen county, southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, Gandoman wetland is one of the most important habitats for migratory birds in the country, hosting some 40,000 birds from across the globe.

In February, the wetland was registered as Iran's 27th wetland of international importance. Stretching to 1,070 hectares, it is one of Iran's top five birdwatching sites and the country's most important permanent habitats for migratory birds.

Shallow depth and diverse vegetation of the wetland has made it a crucial stopover point for migratory birds. The site is particularly notable for its plant diversity, with 129 species from 32 families and 87 genera identified. It is one of the most important habitats in Iran for the endemic Zagros pupfish.

All these features have made the wetland a favorable location for birds to stop by the wetland on their long journey from southern Africa and India to the north and Siberian regions, annually, IRIB reported.

Moreover, around 5,000 migratory birds including ducks, herons, and sandpipers nesting and breeding in Gandoman wetland. The birds fly to the wetland all year long using it as their temporary habitat.

As fall approaches, a new wave of migratory birds wing to the wetland, the migration will go on till the beginning of the winter.

The wetland is an important wintering habitat for several bird species, including the critically endangered sociable lapwing and the vulnerable common pochard.

While drought, climate change, fire, and pollution pose threats to the wetland, experts regularly monitor the site in accordance with the Gandoman Wetland Management Plan. Moreover, local communities play a role in mitigating such threats due to the wetland's importance to their livelihoods and spiritual beliefs.

Gandoman Wetland is not only of environmental and ecological importance, but it also plays a key role in preserving the biodiversity of the region and the country. It is an excellent destination for birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts. Protecting this international wetland will greatly help maintain local eco-



systems and mitigate environmental threats.

National plan to improve wetland conservation

In June, the Department of Environment (DOE) and the Ministry of Agriculture signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to launch a national plan for empowering local communities to protect and promote the sustainable use of wetlands.

The main objective of the MOU is to turn wetland protection from a government initiative into a comprehensive social responsibility by focusing on training, empowering, and involving local communities.

Wetlands represent a vital ecosystem and are known as the kidneys of the Earth. These ecosystems, among other things, provide clean water, protect against floods, restore underground aquifers, and maintain surface water flow during dry periods.

Iran's geography is distinct, teeming with diverse landscapes. The country has various wetlands, 27 of which were listed in the International Ramsar Convention.

On December 10, 2024, Mehri Asna-Ashari, an official with the DOE, said the conservation project of Iranian wetlands has resulted in a 27.5 percent decrease in irrigation water consumption while increasing agricultural products by 22.5 percent.

“Currently, 49 wetlands, covering around 22 percent of the whole wetlands in the country, are being conserved in the form of native ecosystem management partnership,” IRNA quoted Asna-Ashari as saying.

She made the remarks at the meeting of the steering committee of the international project for the conservation of Iranian Wetlands.

Intl. Exhibition, Conference on Sustainable Cities slated for October

TEHRAN – The third International Exhibition and Conference on Sustainable Cities is scheduled to be held from October 13 to 16 in the Persian Gulf island of Kish.

A sustainable city is a city designed with consideration for the social, economic, and environmental impact (commonly referred to as the triple bottom line), as well as a resilient habitat for existing populations.

The UN Sustainable Development Goal 11 defines it as one that is dedicated to achieving green, social, and economic sustainability, facilitating opportunities that prioritize inclusivity, as well as maintaining sustainable economic growth.

The objective is to minimize the inputs of energy, water, and food, and to drastically reduce waste, as well as the outputs of heat, air pollution (including CO2, methane, and water pollution).

Hence, the exhibition aims to develop smart urban management, sustainable economy, new and renewable energies, green and sustainable transportation, environmental protection, sustainable and smart building, smart government, information and communication equipment and infrastructure, research, innovation, and knowledge-based economy, as well as social sustainability and security.

The event will bring together key stakeholders, urban leaders, investors, innovators, and policymakers from around the world to explore solutions and opportunities in the field of urban sustainability, smart cities, infrastructure development, and green investment.

In addition to the main exhibition, the event will feature specialized panels, networking sessions, and cultural programs, offering a unique platform for dialogue and collaboration.

It will present the latest technological achievements in the field of sustainable and smart industries and cities, promote a sustainable approach in development, and introduce new concepts in the field of structure and sustainable city design, as well as the development of transportation infrastructure.

Iran Smart City

The fifth Iran Smart City international conference was held from October 28 to 30, 2024, in Tehran.

The conference focused on different topics, including smart economy, smart life, smart governance, smart environment, smart transport, and smart transformation.

A smart city is the key to achieving a smart society and sustainable development. Transferring global experiences and exchanging knowledge and expertise can facilitate and accelerate the movement towards the creation of smart cities.

The conference was held with various, high-quality programs and the attendance of domestic and foreign experts as well as practitioners to provide a proper interaction between smart city agents, city managers, industrialists, experts, and knowledge-based centers to complete the smart city puzzle in the country.



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

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



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

AUGUST 17, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The most worthless knowledge is one which comes only on the tongue, and the loftiest is one that manifests itself in the significant parts of the body, such as the head and heart.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:08 Evening: 19:10 Dawn: 3:54 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:26 (tomorrow)

“The Bald Soprano” on stage at Tehran theater



TEHRAN- The debut play of Romanian-French playwright Eugène Ionesco, “The Bald Soprano,” is currently being staged at Tehran’s City Theater Complex.

Farshid Hoda is directing the production, which is based on a Persian translation by Ali Najimi.

Mohammadreza Chaparian, Hossein Karami, Mojgan Hamed, Farideh Dadashi, Fatemeh Sarlak and Amir Saeid Afshar are members of the cast for the play, which will remain on stage until August 22.

Written in 1950, “The Bald Soprano” is a surreal and absurdist play that satirizes the banality and emptiness of bourgeois conversation. The play centers on two couples from London: the Smiths and the Martins, who come together for a casual visit. As the characters engage in seemingly meaningless chatter, they exchange nonsensical stories, truisms, and trivial poems, highlighting the superficiality and routine nature of their interactions. Later, the Smiths’ maid, Mary, and the local fire chief—who is also Mary’s lover—join the scene, adding further layers of absurdity and social commentary.

As the play progresses, the dialogue among the couples devolves into arguments filled with contradictions, yet without any resolution or genuine meaning. The play culminates in a cyclical ending, with the Martins reciting the same lines spoken by the Smiths at the beginning, emphasizing the theme of repetitive, meaningless existence and the breakdown of logical communication.

“The Bald Soprano” challenges traditional theatrical forms and invites reflection on language, identity, and the absurdity of modern life. “The Bald Soprano” is considered a modern classic and a seminal work in the Theater of the Absurd. It holds the world record for the play that has been staged continuously in the same theater for the longest time.

The idea for the play came to Ionesco while he was trying to learn English with the Assimil method. Impressed by the contents of the dialogues, often very sober and strange, he decided to write an absurd play named “English without Toil”.

Other possible titles that were considered included “It’s Raining Cats and Dogs”, translated in French literally, and “Big Ben Follies”.

Its actual title was the result of an error in rehearsal by actor Henri-Jacques Huet: the fire chief’s monologue initially included a mention of “The Blonde Schoolteacher”, but Huet said “La Cantatrice Chauve”, and Ionesco, who was present, decided to re-use the phrase.

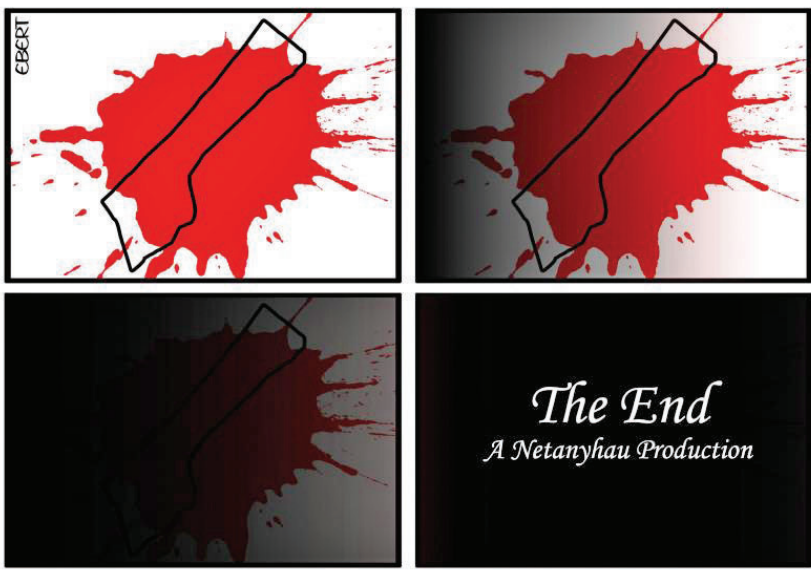
The play has been regarded by many Iranian troupes.

Eugène Ionesco was a renowned playwright and one of the leading figures of the Theater of the Absurd. Born in 1909 in Slatina, Romania, he later moved to France, where he gained international fame for his innovative and unconventional plays.

Ionesco’s work is characterized by its surreal humor, existential themes, and a focus on the absurdity of human existence. His most famous play, “The Bald Soprano,” exemplifies his style with its nonsensical dialogue and satirical critique of societal norms.

Throughout his career, Ionesco challenged traditional theatrical forms, emphasizing the absurdity of communication and the alienation of individuals in modern society. His writings often explore themes of identity, language, and the meaning of life. Ionesco’s influence extends beyond theater, impacting literature, philosophy, and the arts. He remains a pivotal figure in 20th-century avant-garde literature, celebrated for his groundbreaking contributions to modern drama.

Cartoon of Day



Horror Movie

Cartoonist: Enrico Bertuccioli from Italy

TMoCA to show documentaries on Farah Ossouli, Gizella Varga-Sinai, Farzaneh Asadi



TEHRAN – The cinemathèque of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA) will screen three short documentaries about Iranian women artists on Sunday.

“Between Shadow and Light” and “Gizella” both directed by Khosrow Sinai as well as “A Story Etched in Stone” by Maryam Navabinezhad are the documentaries selected for the program that starts on 4 p.m. at the museum cinemathèque, Honaron-line reported.

The screening program is part of “In Women’s Words” exhibition, which is underway at the TMoCA. Every Sunday, the program shows documentaries focused on women, society, and art.

Produced in 2002, “Between Shadow and Light” is about the thought, style, and works of painter Farah Ossouli, whose style blends traditional Persian painting with modern touches.

The 25-minute documentary revolves around the work of an artist who invents symbolic characters and stories in order to express her views about life. Depicting her characters in expertly composed and beautifully colored paintings, which blend a traditional Persian painting style with a modern touch, Ossouli’s art has been exhibited internationally and is deservedly award-winning. Here, it is given a new dimension through pantomime and poetic narrative. As the film follows Ossouli creating a new work, dramatic performances pieces bring her characters to life in a surreal blend of fly-on-the-wall observation and symbolic imagery.

Born in Zanjan, Farah Ossouli, 72, is a graphic design graduate from the Faculty of Fine Arts, the University of Tehran. She is known for her modern interpretation of Persian miniature. Often her work draws on issues related to women’s life, Persian poetry, and classical western art.

During over three decades of career as an artist, she has achieved a unique fusion of techniques, materials, themes, and storytelling, which has evolved into her personal style. She has been a pioneer in introducing contemporary themes and ideas into miniature painting.

She founded Dena, a female art collective that organized over 30 exhibitions between 2001 and 2007. She is a member of the Society of Iranian Painters. She has held domestic and international exhibitions in West Asia, Europe, Africa, North America, and Asia.

Her paintings are part of collections in museums across continents, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Ludwig Museum in Koblenz, Germany, Tropen Museum in Amsterdam, and Devi Art Foundation in New Delhi.

The 20-minute documentary “Gizella” (2000) explores the work of Gizella Varga-Sinai, 81, an Iran-based Hungarian artist. Featuring English language narration, this film explores her life in two countries, while showcasing some of the artist’s greatest works.

Gizella was born in Csestochowa, Hungary, moved to Austria, and studied at the Vienna School of Decorative Arts, where she received a B.A. in art teaching. There, she met Khosrow Sinai, an Iranian filmmaker, and married him, and in 1967 she came to Iran with her husband and settled in Tehran. A year after that, Gizella’s first solo exhibition was in Tehran’s Modern Art Gallery.

In 1978, she won the “Mirror in the Mirror” exhibition prize. Gizella taught at Tehran’s contemporary studio between 1981 and 1987, then taught art in the

schools of the German Embassy for 25 years.

Gizella became a member of the Dena art group in 2001. A group of Iranian female artists (including Farah Ossouli, Faridah Lashai, Maryam Shirinlou, Shahla Habibi, Rana Farnoud, etc.) who, in their 6-year career, had exhibitions in different countries such as Poland, Switzerland, Hungary, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Iran. The most important of these feats occurred in the United Nations building in Geneva, the European Parliament building in Brussels, and the Ludwig Museum in Koblenz.

She has showcased her works in 19 solo exhibitions across Austria, Finland, Hungary, Georgia, and Iran, as well as in over 120 group exhibitions in countries including China, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, the U.S., Finland, Portugal, France, Norway, and India.

Beyond her artistic practice, she has made significant contributions as a teacher and organizer of educational events at institutions like Moaser Studio in Tehran and schools associated with the German Embassy in Iran. Additionally, she has led numerous private workshops, both in Iran and internationally.

Varga-Sinai consistently aims to create a dialogue between the past and the present, illustrating how myths and legends continue to resonate within contemporary culture. Her art reflects this interplay, bridging traditional narratives with modern expressions.

One of her most significant works, “Blind Dolls,” created in the late 1970s, draws inspiration from the poetry of Omar Khayyam and captures the atmosphere of that era. Another noteworthy collection, “Echoes of Silence,” exhibited in 1986, was influenced by the reliefs of Persepolis combining them with

supplies of lifesaving aid, which “has left hospitals without basic supplies, children, people with disabilities and older people dying from hunger and preventable illnesses, and aid workers themselves going to work hungry”.

According to the Gaza health ministry, more than 62,000 Palestinians have died since Israel began its offensive after the October 7 attacks, 70 percent of whom are women and children; 235 people, including 106 children, have also died from starvation. The United Nations reported this month that 859 Palestinians had been killed near U.S.-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) sites, a claim the GHF denies.

More than 200 cultural institutions and heritage sites in Gaza—including universities, mosques, and libraries—have been destroyed by the Israeli bombardment, an incalculable loss of Palestinian collective memory and identity. The Gaza Biennale works against erasure, whether through the plaintive watercolors of the north Gazan artist Alaâ Al Shawa, whose work explores the psychological toll of forced immigration, or the furious abstractions of Motaz Naim, a painter displaced to Egypt whose current body of work explores the destruction of Gaza’s landscape.

“There is a silent pain and sorrow that quietly burns the heart, as well as the shock and loneliness—emotions that cannot be captured by camera and are often overlooked by media, who focus on dismembered bodies as if they were mere dolls, neglecting the real human suffering and the loved ones left behind,” Ruba Mahmoud, an artist featured in the biennale, said in a statement.

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The Gaza Biennale’s upcoming Brooklyn iteration builds on its British edition in 2024 and the

spring of 2025, evolving from a demonstration outside the Institute of Contemporary Art in London to protest the complicity of UK cultural institutions in the Israel-Hamas war to an indoor display in May of 2025 at Ugly Duck Gallery in Bermondsey, alongside a program of virtual talks and workshops led by Gaza-based artists.

Past iterations of the biennale have been staged in Athens, Istanbul, Padua, Valencia and elsewhere, showcasing art that is often made from humble, found materials like garment scraps or old aid boxes dropped from planes. At Recess, the exhibition will include works by 22 artists from Gaza.

“The Biennale invites us to engage with art’s capacity to reflect an unimaginable present, to defy all challenges and to build a global movement,” a spokesperson for Recess said in a statement. Additional programming details for the New York iteration will be announced in the coming weeks.

The Gaza Biennale has primarily operated as an advocacy and awareness-raising endeavor with a fundraising mission, partnering with institutions like the Al Risan Art Museum and Art for Palestine to further its cause.

The announcement of the exhibition’s New York debut comes amid increasingly grim reports from Gaza. More than 100 organizations, including Oxfam and Médecins Sans Frontières, recently signed a joint letter calling on Israel to stop of “weaponization of aid” into Gaza, which had been under a state-ordered blockade since March 2. The letter alleges that most international organizations have been unable to deliver

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Gaza Biennale, featuring works by artists from the war-torn strip, to come to New York City

As efforts to ease the humanitarian cataclysm in Gaza show few signs of progress, a group of Palestinian creatives are using the power of art to reintroduce humanity to an inhumane situation. The Gaza Biennale, a 60-artist exhibition, is a decentralized event taking place at 19 venues across 12 cities around the world, including three new pavilions in North America—in Toronto, and Washington, DC, and, next month, in New York City.

The biennale’s New York iteration will span five days (September 10 to 14) at the non-profit art space Recess in Brooklyn, with a smaller iteration remaining on view there for three months (September 18 to December 20).

The exhibition centers the work and stories of artists who still reside in Gaza or have only recently been able to leave the territory. Works in the show have been developed over the past year and a half and reflect the mounting devastation the Israeli military has unleashed on the tiny, densely populated region since the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023.

“The significance of this project lies in its ability to place art at the forefront of a global awakening, to challenge the art field to reckon with the weight of genocide, and to present a model of resilience, and fulfill a desperate need to recognize that the depth and complexity of human life,” a spokesperson for the biennale said in a statement. “The right of a people to exist with dignity on their land is fundamental to the purpose of art itself.”

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