

What Lessons Can Europe Learn From 'Daddy' School?



GUP1

Trump and European leaders, including Zelensky and PM Sir Keir Starmer, met in the Oval Office on Monday to discuss Ukraine's future

US pursuit of 'zero enrichment' derailed nuclear diplomacy: Araghchi

TEHRAN – Iran's top diplomat has stated that Washington's recent military actions against Iran were a direct result of its failed efforts to force Tehran into completely abandoning its nuclear enrichment program.

Iran and the United States participated in five rounds of indirect talks in April and June in a bid to craft a deal that would limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the termination of U.S. sanctions. Only days before the two sides were set to travel to Oman for a sixth round of discussions, Israel launched airstrike on Iranian soil with U.S. backing, with American aircraft later joining the war directly to bomb three Iranian nuclear sites. The talks were called off by Tehran when the war broke out, and have stayed in limbo since. ▶ Page 3

Six Iranian universities in Shanghai ranking 2025

TEHRAN – Shanghai University ranking 2025 has placed six Iranian universities among the top 1,000 institutions worldwide, down from 9 in 2024.

ShanghaiRanking Consultancy has released the 2025 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). Since 2003, ARWU has been presenting the world's top universities annually based on transparent methodology and objective third-party data. ▶ Page 7

'Turning point' for Iran-Belarus relations as new cooperation roadmap planned

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said his visit to Belarus marked a "turning point" in bilateral relations, stressing that Tehran sees no limits to strengthening cooperation with Minsk across political, economic, and cultural fields.

Speaking at a joint press conference with President Alexander Lukashenko on Wednesday, Pezeshkian praised Belarus as "a reliable partner in the strategic Eurasian region" and reaffirmed Iran's commitment to fully implementing the 2023-2026 roadmap for cooperation between the two countries.

"Relations with Belarus are now being pursued at the high-



est level. This trip is a milestone in our ties, and its results will soon be visible in the expanding trend of cooperation," Pezeshkian said. "Today, more than ever, we need cooperation to overcome unilateralism and its destructive consequences."

Iran, Belarus sign 12 cooperation documents

During the visit, Iran and Belarus signed 12 cooperation documents and one joint statement in the presence of the two presidents. The agreements cover

politics, international law, tourism, arts, media, health, pharmaceuticals, industry, environment, free zones, special economic and industrial zones, and investment.

Pezeshkian said the recent meeting of the Joint Economic

Commission in Minsk, alongside the new agreements, will help deepen "mutually beneficial cooperation." He highlighted areas such as customs coordination, joint investment, trade and transit, resolving private-sector obstacles, and securing vital goods.

He also underlined people-to-people ties: "In the field of media and cultural exchanges, we are ready for more effective cooperation to present an accurate image of both countries and promote mutual understanding of history, culture, and capacities," he said, noting that several documents had been signed in this area. ▶ Page 2

Saudi media keep inciting sectarian strife in Lebanon!

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — There is a hadith that says, "Sedition is dormant, may God curse those who awaken it." However, Saudi media has recently missed no opportunity to incite public feelings against the Shiites, reflecting the official Saudi position which aligns with American-Zionist pressure to disarm the Resistance, the common name for Hezbollah.

In a regrettable position, Maronite Patriarch Cardinal Mar Bechara Boutros al-Rahi has also claimed that there is a "decisive Lebanese consensus on implementing the decision to disarm Hezbollah."

In response, Jaafari Mufti Sheikh Ahmed Qabalan has said, "There is no force on earth that can disarm Hezbollah."

In an interview with the Saudi Al-Arabiya channel, al-Rahi also accused the Resistance of submitting to "blatant" Iranian dictates, saying, "Declare your ultimate loyalty to Lebanon." ▶ Page 5



Vice Admiral Abbas Hassani speaks at a press conference ahead of Thursday's naval drills

Iran launches major naval drills, drawing on lessons from Israel war

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – Iran's naval forces on Wednesday prepared to enter the operational phase of an extensive missile and drone drill, with the drill's spokesman telling the Tehran Times that the exercises will draw on Iran's combat and defense experiences from recent years, including the recent 12-day war with Israel.

Vice Admiral Abbas Hassani stated that the drills were thoroughly reviewed on Wednesday and will be carried out on Thursday. ▶ Page 2



Exclusive Interview

American filmmaker exposes Israel's war on Palestinian journalists

▶ Page 5

Scan this QR code to watch the video.



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Highlights of Pezeshkian's strategic trip to Armenia

In a note, Hamshahri discussed President Masoud Pezeshkian's trip to Armenia and wrote: About 10 days after the signing of the peace agreement between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan at the White House (on the establishment of the Zangezur corridor), the President's visit to Yerevan carried special strategic importance. It included consultations that, in addition to bilateral relations, focused on recent geopolitical developments in the South Caucasus. Iran's emphasis on the need to observe Iran's (security and economic) considerations in the Yerevan-Baku-Washington agreement was one of the most central points raised in the consultations between the two sides. The consultations, considering recent developments in the region, highlighted important points, including a special commitment by the Armenian side, compliance with Iran's considerations, agreement on a strategic document, detailed private talks, and private-sector consultations. Discussions on the Zangezur corridor and Iran's considerations, which were the main focus of the trip, were accompanied by Yerevan's special commitment to Tehran's interests, stating that the Armenian side has assured that there will be no threat to Iran from its territory.

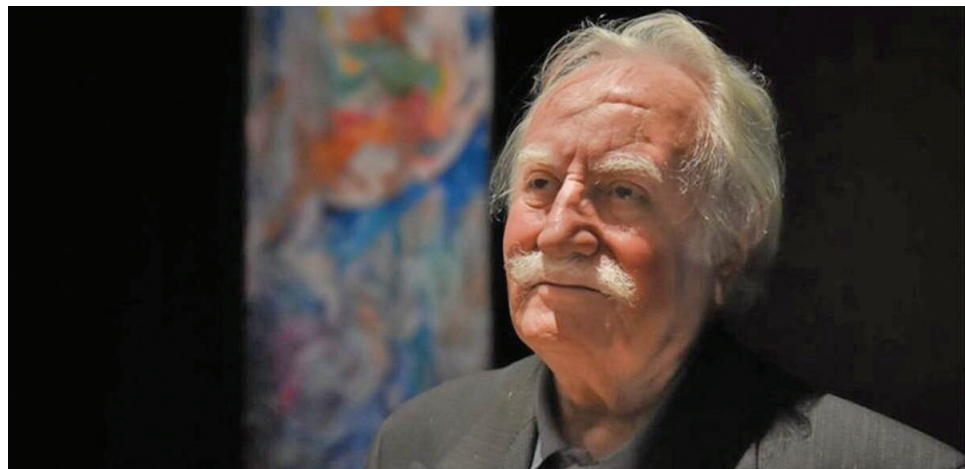
Etemad: The Zangezur game

In an analysis of the Zangezur corridor, Etemad wrote: This project is not just a transportation route, but a profound geopolitical development that threatens our economic interests in the short term and limits our regional influence in the long term. Iran must decide today whether it is a spectator, a player, or even a stage manager in this game. The bitter experience of missed opportunities should make Iran aware that in this competition, silence is equivalent to retreating and losing a position that may take more than a century to regain. Iran must adopt a field-based and purposeful approach towards Armenia.

This presence should not remain merely in the form of political meetings or symbolic military maneuvers, but be expanded to operational levels in the fields of logistics, intelligence, and military. Iran must move beyond the status of "passive confrontation" in regard to the developments in the Caucasus and reach the doctrine of "active deterrence leadership."

In the evolving global order, effective action requires timely presence, intelligent action, and a correct perception of threats. The Caucasus, in this regard, is not only a threat, rather it can also be a platform for enhancing Iran's role in global equations, provided that a purely defensive approach is avoided.

Ayatollah Khamenei offers condolences on passing of Iranian miniaturist Mahmoud Farshchian



TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has offered his condolences on the passing of the celebrated master miniaturist Mahmoud Farshchian.

In a message following the death of Farshchian, widely regarded as a master of contemporary Iranian painting, the Leader described him as "a shining star in the sky of Iranian art." Ayatollah Khamenei highlighted Farshchian's deep faith and religious devotion, noting that his talent was placed in the service of spiritual teachings and religious values, leaving behind a legacy of immortal works. He extended his condolences to the late artist's family, students, and the country's artistic community.

Farshchian is generally credited with mod-

Kayhan: Foreign policy lessons from the 12-day war

Kayhan dedicated its editorial to the foreign policy lessons from the 12-day war and wrote: The 12-day war showed that Iran is still facing the reality of strategic isolation. Neither China nor Russia moved beyond cautious positions. This fact shows that relying solely on great powers is a strategic mistake, and a multi-layered foreign policy must be pursued. At the same time, Iran's membership in the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization provided an opportunity to elaborate on the country's positions on the global stage. The main condition for taking advantage of these opportunities is linking them to real economic projects and cooperation. Another lesson was the importance of media diplomacy. In the early days of the crisis, the Western media narrative was dominant, but with the active involvement of domestic media, the balance changed to some extent. This experience revealed the importance of investing in public and media diplomacy. The 12-day war also highlighted the importance of neighborhood policy. The countries of the region were the first to be affected by the crisis, and their concern about the spread of the war showed that regional diplomacy should be the main focus of Iran's foreign policy.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Trump's diplomatic turn towards Iran

Arman-e-Emrooz said in a commentary that Donald Trump is willing to strike a deal with Iran in his second term as president. It wrote: The U.S. President has repeatedly spoken during his second term about his willingness to negotiate with Iran. This approach, which contrasts with his headline policies during his first term, indicates a change in his strategy towards Iran. However, there are several challenges ahead of possible negotiations. Iran wants an agreement within the framework of the JCPOA, while the Trump team is seeking a more comprehensive agreement that would include not only the nuclear program but also Tehran's support for resistance groups. The difference in expectations has complicated the negotiations. On the other hand, domestic pressure in Iran is affecting the process of negotiations. Trump's willingness to negotiate with Iran reflects his efforts to achieve a major diplomatic achievement in his second term. However, the success of these negotiations will depend on several factors, including flexibility by both sides, the management of internal disputes at home, and Trump's ability to create a balance between pressure and diplomacy. While Iran is motivated to ease sanctions, the United States' broad demands could derail the talks unless both sides reach an acceptable compromise.

ernizing Persian miniature by using motifs from the Iranian cultural and religious contexts.

In a separate message, Ayatollah Khamenei also expressed sorrow over the passing of Ahmad Tavakoli, a long-serving lawmaker, government official, and revolutionary activist. The Leader praised Tavakoli as a "faithful and sincere brother" whose tireless efforts in Parliament, government, and other revolutionary institutions will remain unforgettable to those who worked with him.

Ayatollah Khamenei prayed for God's mercy and blessings upon both figures and conveyed his sympathy to their families, friends, colleagues, and the broader cultural and political communities of the nation.

'Turning point' for Iran-Belarus relations as new cooperation roadmap planned

From page 1 ► The Iranian President thanked Belarus for condemning the recent attacks by Israel and the United States on Iran's territory and peaceful nuclear facilities. Calling the strikes a "blatant violation of international law and the UN Charter," Pezeshkian said Iran would continue to respond decisively to any aggression.

"The Islamic Republic has never initiated war or aggression. But if attacked, our response will be decisive and deterrent," he said.

On June 13, Israel launched a wave of airstrikes against Iran's military, nuclear, and security infrastructure. The war lasted 12 days and left at least 1,065 Iranians dead—mostly civilians, along with senior commanders and nuclear scientists. The United States openly backed the Zionist regime from the outset and directly entered the war on June 22 by striking three nuclear sites that Israel had already targeted.

Iran responded with Operation True Promise III, launching 22 waves of coordinated missile and drone attacks that devastated Israeli military, intelligence, security, and economic sites across the occupied territories. Analysts point out that while Iran inflicted serious damage, it deliberately refrained from deploying its most advanced and destructive weaponry.

The June 24 ceasefire, which was initiated at the request of both Washington and Tel Aviv, is



The high-ranking delegations of Iran and Belarus meet in Minsk

described as only a temporary pause.

Iran considers a strategic partnership agreement with Belarus: Pezeshkian

Both sides stressed the importance of regional and multilateral cooperation, pointing to emerging structures such as the Eurasian Economic Union, BRICS, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as platforms for boosting economic and political ties. Pezeshkian congratulated Belarus on its accession to BRICS and said Iran was ready to share its experience in resisting sanctions with "friends and partners."

He added that Iran would consider a strategic partnership

model with Belarus, similar to its treaty with Russia.

Later, in a meeting between senior delegations, Pezeshkian again thanked Lukashenko for his remarks at the recent Eurasian Economic Union Summit, in which he compared the Chernobyl disaster to the risks posed by attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi noted that trade between Tehran and Minsk rose 14 percent last year and urged the removal of visa requirements and drafting of a joint strategic document to elevate relations.

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, also highlight-

ed tourism opportunities, suggesting direct flights and visa waivers to boost travel in both directions.

Pezeshkian closed by stressing that the current trade volume between Iran and Belarus is "negligible compared to capacities" and pledged to personally oversee the implementation of the new agreements: "Relations between our two nations must be built on a deeper and more sustainable foundation."

Pezeshkian arrived in the Belarusian capital on Wednesday following a visit to Armenia. His two-day state visit is focused on bolstering political, economic, and cultural ties.

Iran launches major naval drills, drawing on lessons from Israel war



From page 1 ► and will be carried out on Thursday. "A region in the southern-most borders of Iran, located in the northern Indian Ocean and the Sea of Oman, will be the location of the drills," he told the Tehran Times. "We carry out drills on a routine basis every year. The scenarios we practice come from higher bodies." The vice admiral did not elaborate on which bodies had drawn up the combat scenarios for the new drills. However, the newly-established Defense Council (a subsidiary of the Supreme National Security Council), formed after the recent war with Israel, may be one of them.

"Today, we reviewed the scenarios. They include both defensive and offensive tactics. From sinking a warship to intercepting enemy missiles, the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be getting ready to respond to any threat."

Various naval units will take part

in the exercise, including underwater, aerial, and combat units. Coastal-to-sea missile sites and sea-based missile platforms will be in use, with short-range, mid-range, and long-range projectiles ready to be tested.

"We have no limits on the number and types of missiles and drones we will use. Whatever the scenarios require, we will put to use. That's

because our arsenals are full of every kind of weapon needed to prepare for future threats," Hasani said. "I can tell you, however, that a diverse array of precision-guided cruise missiles with short, medium, and long ranges has been selected to target and destroy surface objectives."

The vice admiral explained the exercise has two main goals: cre-

ating deterrence and assuring the Iranian people that the nation's armed forces are ready and vigilant.

"Iran is never the aggressor. Our military power is always used to defend our land and people, and that's why we see fighting the enemy as sacred. The Iranian people must know that the Artesh will fight to the last drop of its blood for the safety and prosperity of Iran."

Iran's military officials and political leaders have repeatedly stressed in recent weeks that the 12-day war fought with Israel in June could resume at any moment, and that the armed forces have taken note of that possibility. Reports indicate Iran has moved to repair and strengthen its defense systems and plans to deploy its newer generation of weapons should Israel decide to launch another war.

Iran used its older generation of missiles during recent war with Israel, says defense minister

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics has declared that the country possesses advanced missile systems with significantly greater capabilities than those deployed during the recent 12-day war against Israel, cautioning that Tehran will not hesitate to use them in response to any new hostilities.

Speaking on the sidelines of a meeting with foreign military attachés in Tehran held to mark "Defense Industry Day," Brigadier General Azizi Nasirzadeh emphasized that the missiles used in the conflict were developed several years ago but still proved effective in striking key targets.

"In the 12-day war, we faced an adversary that was fully supported," Nasirzadeh told reporters. "The Islamic Republic of Iran was not only confronting the Zionist regime, but also the full logistical, intelligence, and operational support of the United States."

According to the defense minister, Iran's armed forces relied exclusively on domestically produced weaponry throughout the conflict. "Everything employed in the war was the product of our own defense industries," he said. "The world witnessed how our missiles struck their targets and inflicted heavy losses on the Zionist enemy."

Nasirzadeh also accused Israel of imposing

tight media censorship to conceal the extent of the damage. Nevertheless, he said, information that gradually emerged confirmed the precision and destructive power of Iranian missile strikes. "Our missile capabilities today are far more advanced than those used in the war," he added. "We have stronger weapons that have not yet been employed. If the Zionist enemy chooses adventurism again, we will certainly use them."

The minister highlighted that Israel deployed some of its most advanced U.S.-backed defense systems during the fighting—including THAAD, Patriot, Iron Dome, and Arrow batteries. Yet, in his words, those defenses failed to prevent Iran's missiles from reaching their targets.

Iran's top military command praises the readiness of the Armed Forces

Separately, the Commander of Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters affirmed that Iranian forces remain on full alert and continue to closely monitor enemy movements.

The commander made the remarks during a meeting with Hojjatoleslam Pourkhaghan, head of Iran's Armed Forces Judiciary Organization on Wednesday.

Pourkhaghan expressed confidence that any renewed aggression would trigger an even harsher response. The commander of Khatam

al-Anbiya echoed this, stating that Iran's forces remain fully prepared to counter future threats: "If they miscalculate again and attempt to encroach on our sacred soil, they will face a more crushing response."

Iran's missile advances were highlighted during the retaliatory attacks on the occupied territories following the regime's unprovoked assault on the Iranian soil on June 13 which led to the martyrdom of many civilians across Iran, senior commanders and nuclear scientists.

During the 12-day conflict, one of Iran's missiles used was the Kheibarshekan, which is part of the third generation of the IRGC's long-range missile arsenal, and uses solid fuel and can maneuver during reentry to evade missile defenses.

Its optimized design reduced its weight by one-third compared to earlier models and cut preparation and launch time by nearly 85 percent.

The missile is 10.5 meters long, 80 centimeters in diameter, weighs 4.5 tons, and carries a 500-kilogram high-explosive warhead with a range of 1,400 kilometers.

During the conflict, the Kheibarshekan demonstrated both its destructive power and its ability to overcome advanced U.S. and Israeli defense systems.

US pursuit of ‘zero enrichment’ derailed nuclear diplomacy: Araghchi

From Page 1 ► In a detailed interview with Iranian media, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi explained that American negotiators, influenced by hardline advisors, became fixated on the concept of “zero enrichment” as the only way to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

This ultimatum, he said, was a primary point of contention that Tehran could never accept.

“The core of their position was that Iran must never have the capability to develop a nuclear weapon,” Araghchi stated. “They were persuaded that any enrichment activity, however limited, inherently preserved that potential.

This led them to make a total cessation of enrichment their non-negotiable demand—a line we firmly rejected.”

Araghchi reiterated Iran’s official stance, pointing to a religious decree from Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei that bans nuclear weapons.

He emphasized that the nation’s nuclear ambitions are strictly peaceful.

“Our policy is not and has never been to acquire nuclear arms,” he said.



Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi during an interview with Iranian media

“What we insist upon is our sovereign right to nuclear technology for peaceful energy purposes and to safeguard the scientific advancements we have made ourselves.”

The diplomat revealed that several practical solutions were discussed during indirect talks mediated by Oman. These plans aimed to find a middle ground that allowed for monitored enrichment while ensuring non-proliferation.

“Operational plans that balanced both sides’ concerns were

on the table and seriously considered,” Araghchi noted.

“However, the American delegation would consistently backtrack upon returning to Washington, where political pressure groups convinced them to hold the uncompromising line of zero enrichment.”

Despite the setback that led to military conflict, Araghchi defended the use of diplomacy as a vital tool of statecraft.

He dismissed the simplistic view that negotiation with the

West is inherently wrong while war is noble.

“This is a false dichotomy. Both war and diplomacy are instruments a state uses to pursue its goals,” he argued.

“Diplomacy is often the less costly and risky path, though sometimes it fails. Neither is intrinsically good nor evil; their value depends entirely on the context and how they are employed.”

Araghchi also credited Iran’s regional diplomatic outreach and, crucially, its demonstrated military strength for ultimately deterring a broader war.

He suggested that while diplomacy created off-ramps from conflict, it was the nation’s preparedness and powerful response that convinced its adversaries to de-escalate. “The strength and authoritative response of the Islamic Republic were ultimately what discouraged the enemy from continuing its aggression,” he said.

Reports suggest Iran and the U.S. may engage in indirect talks again in the future. Analysts, however, say diplomacy cannot bear fruit if Americans do not seek a win-win outcome.

The next Iran-Israel conflict could be a more intense ‘shadow war’

By Mohammadreza Mohammadi

TEHRAN – In recent decades, the confrontation between Iran and Israel has evolved into a battleground of overt and covert hostilities—sometimes erupting into full-scale warfare, other times unfolding through discreet yet impactful operations.

Iran and Israel fought an all-out military confrontation between June 13 and June 24. Since the fighting halted, analysts have been trying to guess how and when the two sides would directly target each other with bombs and missiles again.

But it also appears that the Iran-Israel conflict could once again revert to its previous pattern: the “shadow war.” This model, dominant over the past two decades, has been defined by intelligence operations, sabotage, targeted assassinations, lobbying, diplomatic pressure, and proxy warfare.

In the early hours of June 13, 2025, after years of attempting to destabilize the Islamic Republic through internal unrest, intensified economic pressure, and lobbying for crippling sanctions, Israel launched a direct military strike against Iran, citing concerns over its nuclear program. Although the initial days of the war favored Tel Aviv, the tide began to shift once Iran regained its military footing—damaged earlier by the assassination of key commanders. Iran’s widespread missile retaliation, tactical shifts in its offensive strategy, domestic intelligence breakthroughs that exposed Mossad-linked groups, and the strain on Israel’s missile defense reserves helped recalibrate the balance of power.

This dynamic continued until Iran deployed its newer-generation missiles, prompting Tel Aviv to request a ceasefire.

More than two months after

the end of the 12-day war, while the possibility of renewed conflict cannot be ruled out, a return to the old pattern of confrontation—the “shadow war”—is emerging as a likely scenario.

The war has effectively disproven a long-standing notion dating back to the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq: that “regime change” in Iran could be achieved through military intervention.

This idea, long circulated in American military circles, has now been decisively discredited. Western media analyses suggest that the Iran-Israel war not only failed to incite domestic unrest in Iran but also validated Zbigniew Brzezinski’s 2004 warning: “If Iran is subjected to external pressure or military attack, Iranian nationalism will fuse with Shiite beliefs, creating an explosive force.” This phenomenon was clearly observable throughout the 12-day conflict.

Israel had three primary objec-

Tel Aviv now understands that an open conflict with Iran could spiral into an irreversible crisis for itself

tives in launching its offensive against Iran: inflicting extensive damage on nuclear and military infrastructure, assassinating high-ranking Iranian officials, and steering the country toward chaos—ultimately aiming for regime change. While it managed to damage some nuclear facilities with U.S. support, Iran’s military capabilities and social cohesion remained largely intact. On the other hand, Iran’s strategic use of missile tactics and deployment of its advanced arsenal helped restore a degree of military balance



Aftermath of an Iranian attack on Tel Aviv

and inflicted significant damage on Israel.

It’s also crucial to remember that surprise has always been a cornerstone of warfare. Yet today, Iran’s enhanced military preparedness and reconstruction of its defense systems—including air defense—have dramatically increased the cost of any direct Israeli attack.

Recent changes in the structure of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council further signal Tehran’s commitment to crisis management and strategic planning in the face of future threats. Meanwhile, Israel has not succeeded in halting Iran’s nuclear program; by its own admission, it has only managed to delay it by a few years. This reality, coupled with the protracted and inconclusive conflict in Gaza—now nearing two years—has drained Tel Aviv’s military and political stamina, making any extended campaign against Iran increasingly difficult.

One must also consider the economic dimension. Economies are driven by the decisions of people—consumers and businesses. Anything that undermines consumer confidence or what John Maynard Keynes called “animal spirits” leads to higher costs and reduced investment. Rising tensions in the region make both citizens and investors more cautious.

If everyone becomes cautious at once, the economy falters. While this may not be a critical issue for Iran, which has long endured Western sanctions and diminished foreign investment, it poses a serious threat to Israel.

Another enduring feature of the global economy is that when the world feels dangerous, investors flock to U.S. Treasury bonds. As we’ve seen, concerns over West Asia tensions are likely to temper recent increases in Treasury yields—and may even push them lower.

Any Israeli military strike on Iran has always been costly and risky due to geographic distance and Tehran’s deterrent capabilities.

Now, with Israel fatigued from its prolonged war in Gaza, having failed to achieve strategic goals and facing mounting internal and international pressure, it seems poised to return to the lower-cost, potentially more effective model of the “shadow war.”

In this model, assassinations, covert operations, economic warfare, and disruptive diplomacy replace direct confrontation. This return is not driven by preference, but by necessity—because Tel Aviv knows that open conflict with Iran will not yield a swift victory and could spiral into an irreversible crisis for itself.

He expressed confidence that these efforts will allow Iran to capture 44.5 million cubic meters of gas daily.

The minister described these projects as crucial for reducing pollution, conserving resources, increasing the oil industry’s productivity, and advancing the nation’s economic objectives.

Oil minister says Iran has no unsold oil waiting at sea

TEHRAN – Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad has stated that the country has no unsold oil waiting at sea, clarifying that all current shipments are strategically managed in line with market demand.

The minister made these comments on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting, alongside the announcement of a new \$1.6 billion gas collection project in Ilam Province.

He reported that this project is expected to generate an additional \$700 million in annual revenue.

This initiative is a key part of a larger government plan to completely eliminate the practice of gas flaring within three years.

Paknejad also noted that a similar project, MGL-3200, is progressing in the West Karoon and Khuzestan regions.

Iran to face Kazakhstan in 2025 FIVB U21 World Championship opener

TEHRAN – Defending U21 men’s volleyball world champions and title-holders of the three most recent AVC Asian U20 Men’s Championships Iran, whose team also claimed the U19 world silver two years ago, will play Kazakhstan in Pool B in one of the three opening matches at the upcoming 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship in China on Thursday.

At the same time, in the other two opening games of the championship at the Jiangmen Sports Center, 2024 NORCECA junior continental champions United States will take on Thailand in a Pool A fixture, while 2024 European U20 runners-up Bulgaria will meet Cuba in the Pool C opening match, hoping to build upon the bronze medals the southern European U21 team earned two years ago.

Iran defeated France 3-1 and Brazil 3-0 in two friendly matches ahead of the competition.

“Our players performed well in physical conditioning, technique, and tactics in these warm-up matches. I’m satisfied with the players’ performances. Although results in warm-ups aren’t the main focus, we won both games, which is important for boosting the players’ confidence,” he said.

Tournament hosts China will get their Pool A campaign underway with a game against Turkey. At the same time in Pool C, multiple and reigning South American junior champions Brazil will face Japan, and Poland will go against Puerto Rico.

In the third time slot, South American runners-up Colombia will start against Czech Republic in another Pool C fixture, African runners-up Egypt will lock horns with fellow North Africans Morocco in Pool A, and Asian runners-up Korea will take on NORCECA runners-up Canada in Pool B.

The last time slot on opening day, will be all about Pool D. 2023 U19 world champions and 2024 U20 European champions France will open their quest for another title with a match against African junior champions Tunisia. Meanwhile, Italy, silver medalists of the U21 World Championship two years ago, will be challenged by Indonesia, and Argentina will cross swords with Ukraine.

The same four time slots, with three matches each, will apply on all pool-stage competition days. The pool stage will continue through Aug. 26, with a rest day on Aug. 24. The three courts will always be engaged by Pool A, B and C action in the first three time slots, while all Pool D matches will start and run concurrently on each competition day, including what is probably the most anticipated clash of the first phase of the competition between France and Italy on August 23, volleyballworld.com reported.

The top four teams in the final standings of each six-team pool will continue their quest for world honors in the elimination rounds leading up to the medal matches on Aug. 31. The rest will continue their participation in the playoffs for the distribution of the places from 17th to 24th.

All 24 teams will go through the respective number of playoff rounds (direct up-or-down matches) to fill all the places from first to 24th in the final competition standings.

Shocking upsets and strong starts set tone

TEHRAN – The first week of the Iran’s Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) unfolded with intense matches on Monday and Tuesday, delivering unexpected results and early signs of fierce competition in the 25th season.

In the headline clash, defending champions Tractor suffered a surprising home defeat against Esteghlal, a match made even tougher as Tractor played without their fans due to a stadium ban.

Ricardo Sapinto’s Esteghlal, seemingly learning from their recent Super Cup loss, expertly neutralized Tractor’s attacking threats, blending youthful energy and experience to control the midfield and score a beautifully tactical goal. This victory signals Esteghlal’s strong intent to bounce back from last season’s disappointing league form.

Tractor’s midfield creativity, however, was notably affected by the absence of Portuguese

midfielder Ricardo Alves. This loss of playmaking ability raises questions about Tractor’s ability to sustain offensive threats in the coming matches.

Persepolis, the most decorated team in PGPL history, had a shaky start against newly promoted Fajr Sepasi. It was only a late, skillful strike by Ali Alipour in the dying moments that saved Persepolis from defeat, ending the game in a 1-1 draw.

Coach Vahid Hashemian fielded a squad that struggled against a motivated and organized Fajr Sepasi side, casting doubts on Persepolis’ early title challenge prospects, though it’s still too early for definitive judgments.

Sepahan, another title contenders, also dropped points, settling for a 1-1 draw away at Malavan after a lackluster performance. Following their recent playoff loss to Al Duhail in the AFC Champions League Elite preliminary stage, Sepahan’s inconsistent form have drawn criticism from coach Moharram Navidkia toward his players.

One of the week’s biggest surprises was Foolad’s defeat to Chadormalou, signaling that Yahya Golmohammadi’s side still face hurdles before challenging for the title. The highest-scoring match of the week saw Mehdi Rahmati’s Kheybar stage an incredible comeback against Mes Rafsanjan, overturning a 2-0 deficit to win 3-2.

Firsts of the season

Majid Eydi of Gol Gohar scored the league’s first goal with a stunning long-range shot against Aluminum in the 14th minute. Meanwhile, Saman Nariman Jahan from Mes Rafsanjan received the first yellow card, and Abolfazl Soleimani of Foolad was the league’s first player to be sent off.

Overall, PGPL’s opening week has set an unpredictable and exciting tone, promising a thrilling season ahead.

Persepolis, Saeid Mehri Part Ways:

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club parted company with its midfielder Saeid Mehri.

The 27-year-old player joined Persepolis on a two-year deal last season but left the team by mutual consent on Wednesday.

Mehri has been reportedly linked with a move to Esteghlal.

He has previously worked with Esteghlal head coach Ricardo Sa Pinto in Cypriot team APOEL.

Persepolis was held to a 1-1 draw against Fajr Sepasi in its opening match in the 2025-26 Iran Professional League (IPL).

Oenning named Persepolis coach

TEHRAN – German coach Michael Oenning has been named Persepolis football club’s new assistant coach.

The 60-year-old will work alongside head coach Vahid Hashemian at the Iranian giants

Oenning began his managerial career with FC Nürnberg in 2008 and has previously served as head coach of Hamburger SV for a brief period, succeeding Armin Veh.

He also led Austrian side Wacker Innsbruck in 2022.

Persepolis were held to a 1-1 draw by newly promoted Fajr Sepasi in their opening match of the 2025/26 Iran Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL).

Iran pair wins 10m air pistol mixed bronze in 2025 Asian Championship

TEHRAN – Iran’s Haniyeh Rostamiyan and Vahid Golkhandan claimed a bronze medal at the 10m air pistol mixed team event at the 2025 Asian Shooting Championship on Wednesday.

The Iranian pair defeated Vietnamese duo 16-8 in the bronze medal match.

China’s Qianke Ma and Yifan Zhang defeated South Korean side Hyunyoung Yoo and Wonho Lee 16-12 in the final match.

The 2025 Asian Shooting Championships is being held at Shymkent Shooting Plaza, Shymkent, Kazakhstan from Aug. 16 to 30.

IEA says Iran boosts oil output by 200,000 barrels a day in July

TEHRAN – Iran’s crude oil production rose by about 200,000 barrels per day (bpd) in July, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), which reported the country’s output reached 3.27 million bpd.

In its latest monthly short-term energy outlook, the IEA said Iran’s July output increased from 3.08 million bpd in June, marking a gain of 190,000 bpd.

The report showed total oil production by the 12 members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) slipped to 28.21 million bpd in July, down 210,000 bpd from June’s 28.42 million bpd.

Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad told reporters on July 15 that he would not comment on exact production or export figures, but insisted Iran’s crude output and shipments continue as usual.

“The situation in this sector is favorable and without problems,” he said.

Separately, the latest OPEC Statistical Bulletin highlighted Iran’s strong year-on-year growth. The data showed that in 2024, Iran recorded the highest annual increase in



crude output globally, with production up 13 percent compared with 2023.

Iran’s average daily crude output rose by 374,000 bpd, climbing from 2.88 million bpd in 2023 to 3.26 million bpd this year, the OPEC bulletin said.

The rise comes as Iran seeks to consolidate its position within OPEC and expand its exports despite ongoing Western sanctions that have limited its access to global markets. Analysts say Tehran has increasingly turned to Asian buyers, including China, to sustain and grow exports.

Iran, Pakistan sign 2 agricultural cooperation agreements

TEHRAN – Iran and Pakistan signed two agreements on agricultural cooperation, focusing on the creation of a joint agriculture committee and collaboration in plant protection and quarantine.

The signing ceremony took place in Tehran with Iran’s Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleji and Pakistan’s Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain in attendance.

Nouri said the agreements were the outcome of a three-day visit by a Pakistani delegation and joint meetings between the two sides.

One memorandum of understanding establishes the first Iran-Pakistan Joint Agriculture Committee, while the other outlines cooperation on plant health and quarantine measures.

Nouri said the two countries, given their agricultural capacities and food security needs, have a strong basis for expanding cooperation.

The minister added that the initiative follows up on Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian’s recent trip to Pakistan, where both sides agreed to pursue food security and agricultural trade more actively.

He said the deals are aimed at removing barriers in exports and imports of key commodities.

Nouri predicted that bilateral trade in food and essential goods, currently about \$1.3 billion a year, could grow to \$3.0 billion within two years.

He said Pakistan has committed to sourcing part of its food and agricultural needs from Iran, while Tehran will import essential goods from Pakistan. He added that barter trade could help accelerate the exchange.

Pakistan’s food security minister Hussain said the agreements were part of instructions from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to advance commitments made during Pezeshkian’s visit to Islamabad.

He confirmed that two cooperation documents, covering both technical and broader agricultural areas, had been finalized.

Hussain stressed that Islamabad is ready to cooperate in meeting agricultural and food requirements of both countries.

He also invited Nouri to visit Pakistan in the near future.

TEDPIX loses almost 19,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 18,915 points to 2.475 million on Wednesday, which is the fifth day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

On July 27, the head of Iran’s Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) said that the capital market has entered a phase of stabilizing equilibrium.

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

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

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

employees.”

The SEO head further emphasized that there is no place for the market to be 100 percent green, and that a market with 50 percent green and red is balanced, adding: “In the post-war situation, publishers helped, the Central Bank intervened, and investment funds contributed greatly to the market balance. Now, the fourth stage, which is stabilization, is underway, and we will soon enter the fifth stage of the market, which is the boom stage.”

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

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

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

Belarus views industrial cooperation with Iran as promising

TEHRAN- Belarusian Industry Ministry places great importance on the development of mutually beneficial cooperation between Belarus and Iran, Belarusian Industry Minister and Co-chair of the Belarusian-Iranian Inter-governmental Commission on Economic Cooperation Andrei Kuznetsov told BelTA on the sidelines of the high-level talks between Belarus and Iran at the Palace of Independence in Minsk on August 20.

“We highly value the achieved level of interaction and see significant potential for further expansion of bilateral ties. The Industry Ministry is ready to offer Iranian partners a wide spectrum of opportunities for deepening our industrial partnership,” Andrei Kuznetsov said.

The minister highlighted specific areas of joint work that demonstrate a commitment to long-term and productive interaction between the two states.

For instance, the establishment of assembly production for Belarusian harvesters would integrate the technologies of the Belarusian mechanical engineering industry into Iran’s economy and create a local enterprise for assembling high-quality agricultural machinery. This would reduce logistics costs and provide



the local market with access to the advanced technologies of the Belarusian agricultural industrial complex. The minister noted that work in this direction has already begun.

Belarus eyes access to open seas through Iran’s free trade zones

Belarus could gain access to open waters via Iran’s free trade zones, officials from the two countries said during talks on expanding investment and transit cooperation.

Alena Perminova, head of Belarus’s National Agency of Investment and Privatization, met Reza Masrour, secretary of Iran’s Free and Special Economic Zones High Council, to discuss new ave-

nues for collaboration.

Perminova said a cooperation agreement signed between her agency and Iran’s free zone secretariat was aimed at boosting joint projects.

She stressed Belarus’s interest in building partnerships with Iran’s free zones, saying the two countries could meet many of each other’s needs through investment and re-exporting goods. “We are committed to implementing the framework of this agreement and creating more opportunities for cooperation,” she said.

Perminova noted that Belarus’s free trade zones were established to stimulate provincial development and commercial

dynamism, and added that Minsk was ready to pursue serious joint projects with Tehran.

Masrour said Belarus could use Iran’s ports to bypass its landlocked geography and sanctions-related restrictions.

He cited the Caspian route from Makhachkala in Russia to Iran’s Caspian Port as a corridor that could provide Belarus with maritime access. In return, he said Belarus could enhance Iran’s entry into the Eurasian Economic Union’s 180-million-strong market.

“Both Iran and Belarus face unjust economic sanctions,” Masrour said, adding that the measures had restricted Belarus’s traditional access to Baltic ports in Lithuania and Latvia. “Iranian ports can serve as an alternative.”

The official also pointed to Iran’s role in the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), saying Belarus could secure vital export routes for its potash fertilizers, agricultural products and other goods to Arab countries, Africa and beyond via Iranian free zones.

The talks also covered cooperation in tourism, high-tech industries, the digital economy, logistics, and organizing joint investment exhibitions.

Iran, Armenia slash tariffs as trade pact deepens under Eurasia framework

TEHRAN – Iran’s industry, mining and trade minister said tariffs on 87 percent of goods traded between Iran and Armenia have been eliminated, as Tehran presses ahead with efforts to expand a preferential trade pact with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Minister Seyed Mohammad Atabak said Iran has been formally recognized as a permanent observer in the EAEU, a status that allows the country to broaden ties with member states.

He noted that in recent years Tehran has sought to strengthen commercial links with neighbors, particularly Armenia, which he described as Iran’s gateway to the Eurasian market.

Atabak said the preferential trade agreement that came into effect in May marked a significant milestone, reducing tariffs on the majority of goods traded with Armenia to zero. “This development has already spurred an upward trend in trade volumes with Armenia and other EAEU members,” he said, adding that negotiations to expand the pact to cover other sectors are continuing.

The announcement coincided with President Masoud Pezeshkian’s official visit to Yerevan, where he was received by senior Armenian officials.

He also called for a revision of the roughly \$330 disparity in tariffs between the two countries and stressed that new transit routes should avoid geopolitical disruptions.

Sadeh described the reopening of the Jolfa–Yerevan–Georgia rail link as a major step in boosting regional transit and characterized President Pezeshkian’s visit as a turning point in Tehran–Yerevan transport and logistics relations.

Hovhannisyan thanked Iran for its support, particularly following the 2024 earthquake, praised Iranian contractors’ performance, announced a tender for a new segment of the north–south route, and confirmed the formation of a joint working group to address tariff discrepancies for Iranian vehicles.

In the economic arena, Iranian Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Seyed Mohammad Atabak met with Armenian Minister of Economy Gevorg Papoyan and announced a target to increase bilateral trade to \$3.0 billion.

Both ministers proposed establishing a joint working group, including their deputies, to expedite agreements and facilitate commerce in industrial and trade sectors, highlighting the broader aim of deepening Iran–Armenia economic cooperation.

In another meeting, Mohammad Reza Bahrman, deputy head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), met with the deputy head of Armenia’s State Revenue Committee to propose the creation of a joint four-party committee, including Iran and Armenia’s chambers of commerce and customs authorities.

The committee aims to resolve issues related to certificates of origin and other border and customs matters while fostering private-sector cooperation.

Bahrman emphasized that transparent border procedures benefit both Iranian traders and their Armenian counterparts.

He invited the Armenian delegation to visit

Iran for joint events to further explore investment opportunities and strengthen relations.

In parallel, Hamid Asgari, ICCIMA’s international deputy, noted that Iran expects to leverage “green corridor” mechanisms, particularly for perishable goods, and stressed the importance of digitalizing customs processes to accelerate information flow and certificates of origin issuance.

Armenia’s State Revenue Committee deputy, Rafael Gorkian, confirmed that Armenia has increased investment in border infrastructure, including awarding a contract for a new border road to an Iranian company. He emphasized that illegal crossings will be strictly prevented and expressed hope that these measures will enhance bilateral economic cooperation.

In mid-July, Iran’s ambassador to Yerevan said that bilateral trade between Iran and Armenia has reached nearly \$1.0 billion, reflecting deepening economic ties between the two neighbors.

Speaking to Armenian state television, Ambassador Mehdi Sobhani said trade volume between the two countries has grown steadily and is now approaching the \$1.0 billion mark.

Data from Armenia’s official statistics agency, Armstat, shows that bilateral trade reached \$737.4 million in 2024, a 6.5 percent increase compared with 2023. Trade in the first five months of 2025 totaled \$278.7 million, up four percent year-on-year.

Earlier this year, Sobhani said Tehran aims to boost annual trade with Yerevan to \$1.0 billion by 2025, a goal that now appears within reach.

The ambassador also highlighted growing tourism flows between the two countries.

“In the first 11 months of last year, around 276,000 Armenian citizens visited Iran, while 176,000 Iranian tourists traveled to Armenia during the same period,” he said, calling the trend a “natural process” amid expanding ties.

In the first 11 months of 2024, the number of Iranian visitors to Armenia rose 20 percent compared with 2023, according to the Armenian Tourism Committee. Iranians accounted for eight percent of Armenia’s 691,900 tourist arrivals in the first five months of this year — the third-largest group after visitors from Russia (37 percent) and Georgia (15 percent).

Iran and Armenia have been strengthening energy, transport, and trade cooperation in recent years, with joint infrastructure projects including a nearly complete electricity transmission line and expanded border crossings. The two sides have also committed to removing obstacles to deeper integration, especially in light of Armenia’s strategic shift toward alternative trade routes following tensions with Azerbaijan.

What lessons can Europe learn from “daddy” school?

By staff writer

TEHRAN - US President Donald Trump's recent meeting with European leaders appears to have left them with egg on their faces.

On Monday, Trump hosted British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, French President Emmanuel Macron, Finnish President Alexander Stubb, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte at the White House. The meeting was intended to demonstrate unity among Western leaders in a push to end the war between Russia and Ukraine. Ahead of the talks, Secretary of State Marco Rubio described the European leaders as Washington's “friends and allies.”

However, photos from the meeting suggest a very different dynamic. Images showing Trump seated at the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office with the European leaders opposite him have been criticized as an “embarrassing” display of power. Social media users noted that the setup made Trump appear as if he were hosting a group of “unruly schoolchild-



New pictures showing Donald Trump sitting in the Oval Office in front of European leaders have been widely shared.

dren,” a point highlighted by The Independent in its coverage of the White House meeting.

The Daily Mail cited American commentator and YouTuber Benny Johnson, who posted the picture on X: “The single most powerful image of 2025: President Trump at the Resolute Desk with world leaders crowding around him, just listening. Nothing else comes close.” The British tabloid also quoted Ashok Swain, a Swedish professor of peace and conflict research: “Europe's ‘most powerful’ leaders sat like obedient pupils as Donald Trump held court in the Oval Office. Does this look Eu-

rope to Europeans?”

On social media, many questioned how the European leaders—who came to Washington D.C. as equals—allowed themselves to be placed in such a belittling position. One account called the scene a humiliation, referring to the leaders as “vassals at the court of the Mad Emperor.”

Trump's apparent humiliation of European leaders is not unprecedented. The viral photos prompted comparisons to a 2018 image in which former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other world leaders stood over a seated Trump,

arms crossed—a snapshot some analysts said reflected the shifting dynamics of international relations.

Meanwhile, despite showing apparent disdain for European leaders, Trump greeted Russian President Vladimir Putin with a warm welcome and a red carpet in Alaska on Friday.

These meetings were meant to address Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which began in February 2022.

European leaders have already heaped praise on Trump. In June this year, the NATO chief referred to Trump as ‘daddy’ as he hailed the US president over the Israel-Iran ceasefire.

The episode underscores a broader point: the United States, even in dealings with close allies, often prioritizes displays of hegemony and superiority. Monday's meeting highlighted how European leaders can be treated as inferiors on the global stage. The encounter not only humiliated them but also revealed the stark realities of US-European relations. European leaders may need to reassess their strategies and expectations in dealings with Washington.

‘Stab in the hearts’: Israel’s Gaza City plan sparks outrage

TEHRAN – Israel has approved a plan to seize control of Gaza City, despite mounting domestic and international backlash and renewed calls for a ceasefire.

Defense Minister Israel Katz authorized the takeover, which includes calling up 60,000 reservists for the expanded military operation and extending the service of an additional 20,000, the Israeli military said.

The assault is expected to force thousands of Palestinians in northern Gaza to the south, where the population is facing a worsening hunger crisis due to Israel's military offensive and aid restrictions. Since launching its war on Gaza in October 2023, Israel has killed more than 62,000 Palestinians. Nearly 270 people—

including over 100 children—have died due to starvation and lack of humanitarian access in the enclave.

The military escalation has sparked global outrage and widespread protests in Israel. Israelis are demanding an end to the offensive, criticizing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's handling of the Gaza campaign.

On Wednesday, relatives of Israelis held captive in Gaza condemned the government's plan to advance in Gaza City, warning it could endanger the lives of those still captive.

The Hostages and Missing Persons Families Forum described the move as a “stab in the hearts of the families and the public in Israel.”

The forum accused Netanyahu of ignoring

a potential deal to secure the captives' release and achieve a ceasefire.

Hundreds of thousands joined demonstrations and a general strike last weekend, partly fueled by fears that the Gaza City assault could endanger remaining captives.

The announcement of the expanded military operation comes after Israel appeared to dismiss reports that Hamas had agreed to a ceasefire based on a proposal by U.S. Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff, which included releasing some captives. Under the proposal, some of the remaining 50 hostages—about 20 of whom are believed to be alive—would be freed, with further negotiations planned for a lasting ceasefire and the return of the rest.

Israeli military vehicles blown up in Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Palestinian resistance forces have destroyed Israeli military vehicles in Gaza City, inflicting casualties among the occupation regime's soldiers.

A majority of the latest resistance operations have taken place in the Zeitoun neighborhood in the southern part of Gaza City.

These operations are part of efforts to push back against attempted incursions by the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) into northern Gaza City.

According to Israeli media, the IOF says the preparation stages for the assault, codenamed “Gideon's Chariots B”, have already begun in parallel with an ongoing offensive on the outskirts of Gaza City.

The IOF's Nahal infantry brigade and the 7th armored brigade operated in the Zeitoun neighborhood, while the Givati infantry brigade launched a new operation in the Jabalia area north of the city.

The Al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Movement, announced they destroyed an IOF military vehicle using a pre-planted, high-powered shaped explosive device in Zeitoun.

The resistance movement reported another successful operation in the same neighborhood. A second Israeli military vehicle was destroyed by a similarly shaped explosive device in the al-Maslaba area of Zeitoun. Fighters observed the evacuation of IOF soldiers from the scene.

The Al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, confirmed that its resistance fighters destroyed an IOF D9 bulldozer in the al-Manasrah field, also in southern Zeitoun.

In a related development, the al-Quds Brigades have released footage of their resistance fighters launching rocket attacks on the Israeli settlements of Be'eri and Shokeda near the Gaza border.

Additionally, the al-Nasser Salah al-Din Brigades have published footage of a rocket attack targeting a concentration of IOF soldiers and military vehicles east of al-Qarara, north of Khan Younis, using a 107mm rocket.

Earlier, the al-Nasser Salah al-Din Brigades launched a 107mm rocket strike on gatherings of

IOF soldiers and vehicles east of al-Qarara in retaliation to the ongoing Israeli occupation regime's massacres in the Gaza Strip.

Also, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades shelled IOF military positions in the eastern part of the al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City, using standard 60mm mortar shells.

Hebrew media reported on Wednesday of another “security incident” in Rafah, southern Gaza. Reports also indicated military helicopters evacuated IOF casualties after resistance forces ambushed a ‘Kfir’ Brigade outpost in Khan Younis. Hebrew media has also published a photo of the remains of a destroyed IOF Namer armored personnel carrier in Gaza.

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

Saudi media keep inciting sectarian strife in Lebanon!

From page 1 ► Al-Rahi also claimed: “The Shiite sect is tired of war and wants to live in peace,” adding, “There is no objection to peace with Israel in the future when the circumstances are appropriate.”

In response, Jaafari Mufti Sheikh Ahmad Qabalan said, “The Shiites of Lebanon defeated the most formidable Israeli-NATO army on the border, despite the highly advanced arsenal and the absolute support of all of Israel's allies... so that Lebanon remains a free and sovereign country for its people, Muslims and Christians.”

He added, “As a reminder, Iran is the one that crushed the Middle East project and shattered the hopes of Washington and Tel Aviv, which thrive on terrorism, occupation, and destruction. Iran is the one that deprived Washington and Tel Aviv of the dream of Greater Israel.”

According to a recent study conducted by Al-Akhbar newspaper, 230+ articles about Hezbollah were monitored in five major Saudi newspapers (between April 9 and August 11, 2025).

Saudi columnists repeatedly emphasized

the “necessity” the Lebanese state to take “decisive action”, adopt “radical approach,” and “disarm,” the Resistance, saying that Lebanon is a powerless state and a “hostage” to Hezbollah.

According to Al-Akhbar's study, this Saudi incitement indicates that Riyadh is sensing a golden opportunity to corner Hezbollah, and even accusing all Lebanese of complicity if they fail to act.

Among the points identified by the study are:

- Depicting Hezbollah's weapons as illegitimate and threatening the state's existence;
- Holding the Lebanese army responsible for disarming them;
- Threatening that economic aid will not be granted to Lebanon unless the Resistance disarms and severing ties with Iran;
- Threatening that failure to obey, Saudi orders will expel Lebanon once again from the “Arab fold.”

The study concluded that Riyadh is determined to push the Lebanese army into a confrontation with the Resistance, pointing to the

recent leaked statement by Saudi envoy Yazid bin Farhan, when discussing that his pressure on Lebanon could push Lebanon into civil war. He responded: “Let it be [civil war]!”

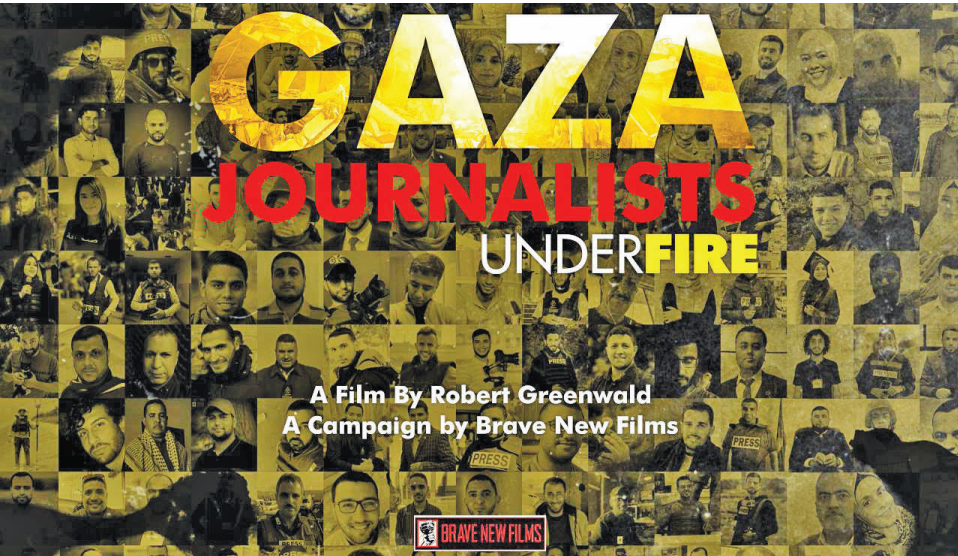
With the deadline for the army to submit its plan to take possession of Hezbollah's arms, as well as the renewal of UNIFIL's mandate, the visit of the American envoys, Thomas Barrack and Morgan Ortagus, to Beirut will be followed by other exploratory visits by senators from Congress to push Lebanon toward more escalatory options.

During his meeting with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, the senior parliamentarian told Barrack: “You previously stressed the need for Lebanon to take action, but you offered us nothing. You neither succeeded in stopping the aggression, nor were you able to impose the two-week truce you proposed. Now, you say you have no mandate to pressure Israel. In other words, you are informing us in advance that everything we have done or will do will be useless. This will lead to the failure of your mission.”

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

Exclusive: American filmmaker exposes Israel’s war on Palestinian journalists

Robert Greenwald says wearing press vests in Gaza does not protest journalists but make them targets



By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN - In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, American filmmaker Robert Greenwald sheds light on the untold stories of Palestinian journalists who have been systematically silenced during Israel's ongoing war on Gaza.

Greenwald, a Jewish filmmaker based in New York and founder of Brave New Films, has dedicated his latest documentary to humanizing the lives of three slain journalists—Bilal Jadalah, Hiba al-Abadbadal, and Ismail al-Ghul—whose stories embody both the resilience and vulnerability of Gaza's press under relentless Israeli bombardment.

Greenwald explains that his project was born out of a dual realization: that numbers alone cannot convey the human cost of war, and that journalism itself has become one of Israel's battlegrounds.

Since October 2023, more than 240 journalists have been killed, many while wearing clearly marked press vests or sheltering with their families.

For Greenwald, such killings are not accidents but part of a broader effort to eliminate voices that contradict Israel's narrative and to sever Gaza from the global flow of information.

By combining personal archives, social media footage, and split-screen contrasts between Gaza's vibrant past and its devastated present, Greenwald's documentary underscores the moral imperative of defending press freedom. He insists that while governments may turn a blind eye, independent filmmaking can break the silence and mobilize global action.

The text of the interview is as follows:

As a Jewish filmmaker from New York who has long taken on controversial subjects, what personal conflicts or revelations led you to humanize the stories of Palestinian journalists in Gaza?

I was seeing and reading more and more commentary from the brave people in Gaza, and I was increasingly upset and concerned and motivated to try to do something and tell the stories. Now the question is, what could I do, what could we at Brave New Films, as a very small U.S.-based non-profit, do? And I realized that the haters—the people who hate Palestinians, the people who are racist around the issue of Palestinians—we were never going to reach them, and we were never going to convert them. But in the United States there are millions of people who hadn't paid attention to the issue, didn't care about the issue, and so I decided on a two-fold approach.

One is journalists, and my assumption was that even people who were not focused on the issue would not be in favor of killing journalists.

Number two, rather than limiting it to numbers, which are abstract, I thought—and I believed, and it's consistent with the other work we've done at Brave New Films—that if we could humanize these journalists, if we could bring them to life even though they had been killed, using social media, using video, we could impact an audience in a way that they were not impacted only by putting up a horrible number of journalists who have been killed.

Those two factors came together, and then an additional element—overlay, if you will—was the fact that I felt a deep responsibility as a person raised in New York, a person who culturally is Jewish, and who personally felt this

is a deeply moral issue. And so all those things came together, and the result was months and months of artwork and the film, which is now available for free to anybody all around the world.

By focusing on these three journalists—Bilal Jadala, Hiba al-Abadbadal, and Ismail al-Ghul—you put a face on policy. How did you choose these stories to humanize the Gaza crisis, and what impact do you hope they have in light of recent journalist deaths?

Well, in terms of the impact, when you work in the world I do, which is social justice using film, and it's both the full film as well as social media—we're on all the platforms.

We reach about a million people regularly between all of the platforms. My own personal platforms that I'm on, and Brave New Films is on many platforms. A combination reaches about a million people regularly, and the belief was that our impact would be longer term, even though I wish I could stop the killing today.

That's not the case. The goal is to affect people's opinion, to inspire them to take action, and to move the many people in the United States to connect to their elected officials and get their elected officials to stop funding the war. If the United States were to stop funding the war, I believe it would be over almost immediately.

So that's the hope. In terms of the impact, it's hard to know exactly. What we do know—there are polls in the United States that have shown an extraordinary shift in a relatively short period of time, going from “100% Israel could do no wrong, everything they do is right” to now a radical reduction in that support—and it will continue.

The work is not over. It's an effort to reach people. By the way, not just in the United States—we're working to reach people all over the world.

We've had screenings in Israel; I hope we'll be having more screenings there. In terms of the first part of your question—how did we choose these three? It was a long and challenging process, because so many journalists have been killed.

The Committee to Protect Journalists, or CPJ as they're known, have an extraordinarily effective website which lists each of the journalists who have been killed, which provides background information about each of them. So we started with their website, which had at the time maybe 130–140 people, and we started looking for the stories which had a variety of people doing a variety of tasks.

Some were on camera, some were researching, some were think tanks, and then most critically, in order to bring them to life through social media, was a deep dive into each of the possible people's personal videos that were publicly available. And that was key for us, because if she or he had not been active in social media, if there weren't videos of family, friends, colleagues, children, then we wouldn't be able to bring them alive.

So that became the final and determining factor, and it's what you see in the film—which is human beings, children having birthday parties, families being torn apart, workplaces being destroyed, but again, over and over again, how to make the people as individually human as possible through the accurate telling of their lives and their stories.

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

Iran, Belarus agree to launch direct flights, ease visa rules

TEHRAN – Iran and Belarus have agreed to launch direct flights and expand tourism exchanges during President Masoud Pezeshkian’s visit to Minsk, Iran’s tourism minister said on Wednesday.

Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri said the two countries reached an agreement “to launch three direct flights” and strengthen cooperation in the tourism sector.

He added that the presidents of Iran and Belarus had also agreed to take steps toward easing visa requirements. According to Salehi-Amiri, Tehran is seeking to make travel to Belarus visa-free for Iranian nationals under a potential agreement.

“The main obstacle in the path of tourism cooperation has been the visa issue, which was discussed today by the two presidents,” the minister said in remarks carried by Iranian media.

Pezeshkian, who met with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk on Wednesday, said that Iran attaches great



importance to developing relations with Belarus.

“I will personally follow up on the agreements between the two countries. The current volume of trade exchanges is insignificant compared to the existing potential, and that must be improved. The relations between the two nations must be deeper and be based on a more sustainable foundation,” Pezeshkian was quoted as saying.

Lukashenko formally welcomed the Iranian president at the presidential palace before the talks.

Ardabil Friday Mosque under restoration with credit worth over \$333,000

TEHRAN--The restoration of the Friday Mosque of Ardabil in northwest of Iran has been realized after years of waiting, and this valuable historical mosque was placed in the hands of restorers with a credit of 300 billion rials (\$333,333), said the deputy head of Ardabil Cultural Heritage Department.

Alireza Dabbagh Abdollahi also said that this historical mosque was last restored during the Ilkhanid era, ILNA reported.

Ardabil Friday Mosque is one of the oldest monuments of the province. According to cultural heritage experts, the building is considered one of the most important historical monuments in northwest Iran due to its various historical layers and its inspiration from the architecture and art of the Seljuk, Ilkhanid, and Safavid eras.

Dabbagh Abdollahi added: “Last year, with the establishment of the Ardabil Friday Mosque base, this mosque was added to the list of national bases of the country, and this year, with the signing of a contract worth 300 billion rials, we began restoration activities for this very valuable historical monument.”

This contract is separate from landscaping and is allocated for the restoration of the porch of this mosque, which is a very noble work, he pointed out. Currently, the experts are restoring the monument, he added.

“I hope that in the next one or two years we will be able to restore its porch and organize the precincts of the Ardabil Friday Mosque.”

Currently, the Ardabil Friday Mosque, known as ‘Friday Mosque of Ardabil’, is located in the northeast of the city of Ardabil, between the neighborhoods of Pir Shamsuddin and Abdullah Shah, on a high hill. This valu-

Family tourism route focuses on Tehran’s historical monuments

TEHRAN—Family tourism route with focus on historical and cultural monuments, creates the possibility of easy visit for all ages and boosts promoting tourism sector of Municipal District 12 of Tehran, said Mayer of Tehran’s District 12 Mohammad Ayini.

He explained that this tourism route has been designed for the first time in Tehran and will start from Ferdowsi Square and continue to Tehran Bazaar, the Young Journalists Club reported.

Ayini continued: “The route is designed in three parts and we have considered stations for tourists to rest. This tourism package starts from Imam Khomeini Square and continues to Golestan Palace.”

He stated that this route was designed by taking advantage of the facilities and capacities available in the historical context, saying

that valuable buildings, old neighborhoods and cultural spaces have been designed in a way that allows easy travel and visits for all ages.

Regarding the timing of the family tourism route, the mayor of District 12 noted: “The implementation of the elements and preparation of the route is underway. We anticipate that this route will be put into operation within the next one or two months. This plan will definitely be ready by the upcoming Nowruz and will probably be officially unveiled during Tehran Cultural Week or Tourism Week in October.”

Finally, referring to the tourist routes of District 12, he stated that this region alone hosts 53 percent of the city’s tourist routes and currently has 16 active routes. With the implementation of the new plan, this capacity will reach more than 70 percent, he added.

6,000-year-old fishing village reveals ancient maritime diet and fishing technology in Iran’s Makran

TEHRAN – Archaeologists working at the Koupal site in Dashtyari county, southeast Iran, have uncovered remarkable evidence of a 6,000-year-old fishing settlement, providing detailed insights into ancient maritime subsistence strategies.

The excavation, led by Dr.Mor-taza?Hessari, uncovered 41 well?preserved aquatic bone fragments together with fishing implements. Based on associated pottery, these finds date to the 4th?millennium?BC and belong to the broader Chalcolithic culture known from the Makran (aka Makkoran) and Baluchestan regions.

The bone remains, showing clear butchering marks from meat processing, demonstrate that these coastal inhabitants relied heavily on marine resources, with three main fish species identified as dietary staples: trevallies (Carangidae), groupers (Serranidae), and possibly tuna (Scombridae). Particularly significant is the discovery of fishing hooks and net weights, which



provide concrete evidence that organized fishing activities were well established in this region by at least 4000 BCE, and may date back even earlier to Neolithic times.

Hessari added that the types of marine species found at the site suggest these ancient people possessed more advanced maritime technology than previously thought.

The presence of true offshore fish species indicates they had the capability for boat-based

fishing, moving beyond simple shoreline gathering.

This finding places the Koupal settlement among the earliest known examples of sophisticated maritime adaptation in the region, contemporary with other early coastal human occupation emerging around the Persian Gulf and Makran Sea. The archaeological team has recognized the significance of these discoveries for understanding the evolution of early fishing technologies and maritime subsistence practices

in ancient Iran.

Hessari also emphasized the crucial support provided by local authorities, particularly Governor Abdolaziz Miaei of Dashtyari county and the Chabahar Cultural Heritage Department, in facilitating this important research.

Looking to the future, the researchers hope these findings will lead to the establishment of a dedicated Makran Cultural Heritage Studies Center to further investigate and preserve the region’s rich coastal heritage.

As excavations continue at Koupal, archaeologists anticipate uncovering more evidence about the daily lives and maritime practices of these ancient coastal dwellers. The breadth of finds already recovered promises to significantly enhance our understanding of how early human societies adapted to and exploited marine environments along Iran’s Makran coast during the crucial transition to settled coastal living.

Opportunity available for 1m pilgrims to reside in holy city of Mashhad: deputy minister

TEHRAN—Deputy Tourism Minister Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpei gave news of the possibility of providing accommodation for one million people in the holy city of Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province, during the last days of the month of Safar, which coincides with the anniversary of the demise of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the martyrdom of Imam Hassan (AS), and the martyrdom of Imam Reza (AS).

Addressing the meeting of representatives of the member agencies of the Central Headquarters for the Coordination of Travel Services and the online presence of the secretaries of the executive headquarters of travel services, which was held with the theme of brainstorming and planning to provide better services to travelers and also the well-being of pilgrims during the mourning holidays at the end of Safar at the Secretariat of the Central Headquarters for the Coordination of Travel Services in the Persian Gulf Hall of the Tourism Department, he said:

“During the upcoming holidays, pilgrims will travel to the holy city of Mashhad and the provinces along the route, including Semnan, Golestan, North Khorasan, South Khorasan, and Sistan-Baluchestan, and due to the coincidence of the holidays, the northern provinces will also enjoy a high volume of travel,” Mehr news agency reported.

Emphasizing the activation of the administrative headquarters of travel services, especially in the provinces along the route of pilgrims to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), he said that fortunately, in addition to the extensive activity of the executive headquarters and the establishment of interaction and consensus among departments, as well as according to reports received from relevant administrative institutions, there is no shortage of required items and fuel, and by meeting the extensive needs in various fields, the dignity of pilgrims and travelers has been taken into account.

According to the head of the Central Headquarters for the Coordination of Travel Services, there is full readiness to carry out safe, peaceful and secure trips to the intended destinations.

Mohseni Bandpei also emphasized: “Our estimate is to provide accommodation for one million people in the holy city of Mashhad on a day-to-day basis. Approximately, the beds in official residences, including hotels and hotel apartments are about 273,000.

Also, 375,000 beds in government units, including schools and pilgrimage centers, have been taken over, to which ecotourism accommodation units will also be added, he said.

Active eco-lodges in the six provinces of Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, South Khorasan, Semnan, Golestan, and Sistan-Baluchestan have announced their readiness to cooperate fully in rendering discounts as well as hosting and accepting pilgrims.

Sheila R. Canby, who shaped the study of Islamic art, dies at 76



TEHRAN – The world of Islamic art history mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished figures, Sheila R. Canby, who passed away this week.

As a pioneering curator, prolific author, and dedicated scholar,

Canby’s work profoundly shaped the understanding and appreciation of Persian and Islamic art for both academic audiences and the public.

Canby’s remarkable career was defined by her leadership at two of the world’s most prestigious cultural institutions. She served as a curator of Islamic art and antiquities at the British Museum in London and later as the Patti Cadby Birch Curator in Charge of the Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, where she eventually retired as Curator Emerita. A fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, her expertise was built on a formidable academic foundation, with degrees from Vassar College and a Master’s and Ph.D.

from Harvard University.

Her scholarly focus was particularly sharp on the arts of the Safavid period and Persian miniature painting. This deep knowledge was best exemplified in her award-winning book, “The Golden Age of Persian Art 1501-1722,” for which she was honored with the International Farabi Festival Award—a testament to the significant respect her work commanded within Iran itself.

Her numerous other publications, including seminal works like Persian Painting, Shah ‘Abbas: The Remaking of Iran, and the magnificent The Shahnama of Shah Tahmasp, remain essential reading in the field.

In a statement expressing his

condolences to the communities of art history and archaeology, particularly specialists of Iran’s Islamic period, Jebrael Nokandeh, the Director General of the National Museum of Iran, noted that Dr. Canby had enjoyed a fruitful and beneficial collaboration with the museum in the past. He highlighted that her articles had been published in several of the museum’s exhibition catalogues and books, most notably for the celebrated “Iran: Cradle of Civilization” exhibition. He concluded by stating, “Her passing is a great loss, but her immense contribution ensures that her name and legacy will forever be enshrined in the cultural memory of both the Islamic world and global art history.”

Iran to host intl. Lut Desert tourism conference focused on investment, sustainability

TEHRAN – An international conference on tourism in Iran’s Lut Desert will be held with a focus on investment and sustainable development, a provincial tourism official said on Wednesday.

Seyyed Ahmad Barabadi, director-general of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of South Khorasan province, said the event aims to turn the challenges of desert conditions into opportunities for attracting investors.

“The main goal of this conference is to create a platform to introduce the capacities of the Lut Desert to domestic and foreign investors,” Barabadi told a meeting of the conference’s policy-making council on Wednesday.

Barabadi described the Lut as one of the world’s largest and most unique deserts,

highlighting its potential both as a natural ecosystem and as an economic and tourism opportunity. He said targeted investments in nature-based tourism, ecotourism, and related industries could help transform environmental threats into drivers of economic growth.

He added that sustainable tourism development in the desert would not only boost the local economy but also support the preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage in the region.

“The Lut Desert, with its remarkable landscapes and unique features, can become an international tourism destination if we concentrate investment and expertise in a focused way,” Barabadi said.

The UNESCO-listed Lut Desert, spanning

parts of southeastern Iran, is known for its sweeping dunes, rugged terrain and striking geological formations, attracting scientists, adventurers, and photographers from around the world.

Lut holds the record for one of the hottest places on Earth, with recorded temperatures reaching a scorching 70.7 degrees Celsius. Beyond its barren appearance, the property is a haven for a surprising array of plant and animal life that has adapted uniquely to survive these harsh conditions.

Moreover, the scorching desert is one of the top areas in the world for finding meteorites, thanks to its unique parameters. In recent years, significant findings have been made with the efforts of national and international teams of researchers.

Comprehensive plan for combating SDSs approved

TEHRAN – The national specialized working group on sand and dust storms (SDSs), in cooperation with other governmental bodies, has approved a comprehensive plan to address SDSs, which will be used as a national reference document to enhance the country's resilience against one of the most acute environmental threats.

At the 29th meeting of the national specialized working group on SDSs management, held on Tuesday, the 150-page comprehensive plan was developed with cross-sectoral collaboration of 15 executive agencies and government bodies including the Department of Environment (DOE), the ministries of agriculture, health, energy, and transport, as well as Natural Resources Organization, Crisis Management Organization, and Meteorological Organization, IRNA reported.

The plan involves ten key strategies, hundreds of specific actions, performance indicators, an implementation timeline, and institutional labor division among responsible agencies.

In July, President Masoud Pezeshkian issued an order calling for the establishment of a specialized working group to address SDSs, which have turned into a significant public health concern in the country.

During a meeting held on July 13, the DOE presented a report on the hazards of SDSs as a comprehensive



and growing threat, and enumerated the national plans and strategies to mitigate the impacts of SDSs, IRNA reported.

Highlighting the significance of preserving the environment, as a critical issue of the country, the president ordered the establishment of a working group, consisting of experts, academics, representatives of ministries and executive agencies, to prepare and implement operational plans to combat the dust phenomenon, drawing on successful international experiences.

Dust storms are major environmental challenges that adversely impact food security, human health, and the sustainable development process at national and regional levels.

Iran's initiatives in combating SDSs

Being located in an arid and semi-arid area, Iran has been negatively impacted by climate change.

The rise in temperatures, drop in precipitation, intensified droughts, and frequent SDSs have not only threatened the ecosystem and biodiversity but also jeopardized the country's food security by exacerbating soil erosion, expanding desertification, and declining agricultural productivity, according to the DOE.

Here are the steps taken by the country to mitigate the harmful impacts of SDSs.

Recognizing that sand and dust storms and their negative impacts at different scales are issues of international concern, the United Nations General Assembly, at Iran's initiative, proclaimed July 12 as the

Also, the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6), which was held from February 26 to March 1, approved a resolution adopted at the international summit on dealing with sand and dust storms held in Tehran in September 2023.

Close cooperation with specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), as well as adopting other programs focusing on forecasting, and early warning, boosting national capacities, and developing innovative strategies to enhance resilience on the top agenda of the country, are among other measures taken.

With an increase in the frequency and intensity of sand and dust storms in different provinces of the country, Iranian researchers have been utilizing indigenized technologies to mitigate and control SDS impacts.

The following are some approaches adopted to cope with SDSs, which have a significant impact on public health, ISNA reported.

Development of non-oil and eco-friendly mulches, nano and polymer mulches, indigenized early warning systems, air pollution warning apps, restoring water resources and wetlands employing new technologies, green belt plan, and urban air purifiers.

Despite international sanctions and restrictions, Iran has been able to take steps in areas such as satellite monitoring, bio-mulches, and scientific desertification. However, to be able to pursue the path, sustained financial support, widespread implementation, and regional cooperation with neighboring countries are required.

Six Iranian universities in Shanghai ranking 2025

TEHRAN – Shanghai University ranking 2025 has placed six Iranian universities among the top 1,000 institutions worldwide, down from 9 in 2024.

ShanghaiRanking Consultancy has released the 2025 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). Since 2003, ARWU has been presenting the world's top universities annually based on transparent methodology and objective third-party data.

It has been recognized as the precursor of global university rankings and the most trustworthy one. This year, more than 2,500 institutions were scrutinized, and the best 1,000 universities in the world are published.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences and University of Tehran are among the top 500 universities in the world, ranking 401–500 globally. Tarbiat Modares University ranks 701–800.

Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences and Sharif University of Technology rank 801–900. Iran University of Medical Sciences ranks 901–1000.

ARWU uses six objective indicators to rank world universities, including the number of alumni and staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, number of highly cited researchers selected by Clarivate, number of articles published in journals of Nature and Science, number of articles indexed in Science Citation Index Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index in the Web of Science, and per capita performance of a university.

Harvard University tops the ranking list for the 23rd year, followed by Stanford and MIT. Other Top 10 universities are Cambridge (4th), Berkeley (5th), Oxford (6th), Princeton (7th), Columbia (8th), Caltech (9th), and Chicago (10th).

Recent rankings

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Iran urges Afghanistan to resume talks on Hamoun wetlands

Iran and Afghanistan should resume negotiations on the water rights of Hamoun wetlands, YJC quoted Masoud Tajrishi, deputy chief of the Department of Environment, as saying on Friday.

Commenting on Afghanistan's injudicious dam construction on its tributaries Tajrishi also noted that low precipitation levels in the region has added insult to the injury.

"Iran and Afghanistan should reopen talks over the remaining water in Helmand River and discuss the water rights of the wetlands in Iran."

He further underscored the importance of reaching a formal agreement with Afghanistan as the exposed lake bed is the main hotspot for debilitating sand and dust storms which cause great discomfort both for Iranians and Afghans as well.

افغانستان برای دادن حقابه هامون باید به میز مذاکره بازگردد

به گزارش روز جمعه باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان مسعود تجریشی معاون محیط زیست انسانی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: ایران و افغانستان برای دادن حقابه هامون باید به میز مذاکره بازگردند.

تجریشی با اشاره به سیاست های مسئولان افغانستان برای سد سازی در بالادست تالاب اظهار کرد: متأسفانه وضعیت بارش ها در منطقه در شرایط مطلوبی نبود و به همین علت شرایط وخیم تر شده است. ایران و افغانستان برای حل مشکل آب باید به میز مذاکره بازگردند تا برای آب باقی مانده در رود هیرمند مذاکره کنند.

وی ادامه داد: ما باید پیگیر این آب باشیم و به یک تفاهمی برسیم چرا که این گرد و غباری که در سیستان و بلوچستان وجود دارد، حتی مردم افغانستان را نیز تحت تاثیر قرار می دهد .

Iran among top five countries in DOAJ-indexed journals

TEHRAN – According to the latest Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) data, Iran, with a total of 1,003 indexed journals, is one of the top five countries among 138 countries publishing the most open-access journals.

DOAJ is a unique and extensive index of diverse open-access journals from around the world, driven by a growing community. It is committed to ensuring quality content is openly available online for everyone.

DOAJ's mission is to increase the visibility, accessibility, reputation, usage, and impact of quality, peer-reviewed, open access scholarly research journals globally, regardless of discipline, geography, or language. It is committed to being 100 percent independent and maintaining all of its primary services and metadata as open to everyone.

The country's progress over the past decade has been noticeable, rising from 95 indexed journals in 2015 to 506 in 2022. The trend continued to grow, reaching 931 in 2024 and 1003 in 2025, msrt.ir reported.

Out of 1,003 indexed journals, 584 and 480 journals are in Persian and English, respectively. Six journals are in Arabic, two in French, and two others are in Russian language. There is a journal in the Avestan language, and one in the Kurdish language. Overall, Iran, with 591 Persian journals, ranked ninth among 80 other languages.

According to the DOAJ data, Indonesia, with 2511 indexed journals, is placed first, followed by the United Kingdom (2202), Brazil (1533), and the United States (1248).

Iran articles among the tops worldwide

China, the U.S., and India, with 86,924, 14,473, and 11,194 articles, respectively, are

Intl. Conference on Persian Gulf oceanography slated for January

TEHRAN – The sixth international conference on the Persian Gulf oceanography is scheduled to be held on January 27 and 28, 2026.

Held every four years, the Iran Meteorological Organization will host the conference this year in Bandar Abbas, a port city bounded by the Persian Gulf. It will bring together local and global experts and researchers in different fields, including meteorology, atmospheric sciences, oceanography, climatology, Physics, Geography, and remote sensing, IRIB reported.

The event serves as a great platform for sharing knowledge, latest scientific achievements, as well as strengthening national and global cooperation in oceanography and the marine environment sectors.

It is centered around marine meteorology, physical oceanography, climate change, and its effects on coastal areas, marine and oceanic science, utilization of marine resources, marine environment, as well as culture, history, and economy of the sea.

Development of applied research, sustainable exploitation of marine resources, coastal environment protection, and sustainable sea-based development are among the main goals of the conference, IRIB quoted Farah Mohammadi, an official with the Meteorological Organization, as saying.

Highlighting the significance of benefiting from modern technologies, including artificial intelligence, and remote sensing in protecting the Persian Gulf and enhancing the resilience of local communities, the official said scientific findings of the sixth conference will help pave the way for making main decisions and adopting best strategies for marine management, and will contribute to sustainable sea-based development. These findings will be applicable in various maritime sectors, not just the maritime geography of the Persian Gulf.

The 5th International Conference on Persian Gulf Oceanography kicked off in Tehran in January 2022. The two-day conference was attended by representatives from Belarus, Finland, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Ukraine, Pakistan, and Russia, as well as officials related to marine and port development.

DOAJ DIRECTORY OF OPEN ACCESS JOURNALS

the top three countries. Iran is atop England (4,360), Japan (4,022), and Spain (3,830) in the ranking, ISNA reported. The Q1 journal index is used to categorize scientific journals based on their impact; it is most commonly used in databases like Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) and Journal Citation Reports (JCR).

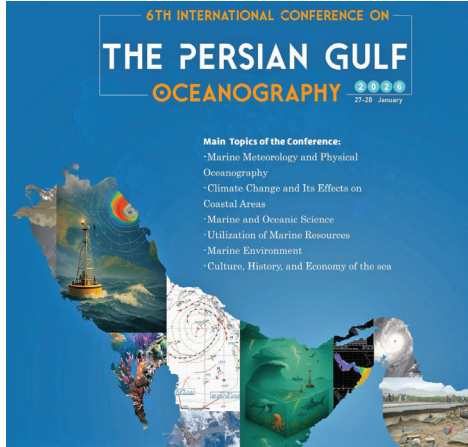
Q1 journal ranking is based on Impact factors, SJR, H-index, and the number of citations, ISNA reported.

Introduced by physicist Jorge Hirsch, the h-index is an important metric for measuring the scientific impact of a researcher, journal, or university. It was introduced by physicist Jorge Hirsch. It measures the number of scientific publications (many articles), scientific impact (high number of citations), and a combination of quantity and quality of research.

Although from 2011 on, the country has undergone a downward trend in patenting nanotechnology, it is placed among the top 30 countries in patenting nanotechnology, ranking 27th in 2024.

It is worth noting that the percentage of granted patents increased from 19 percent in 2023 to 25 percent in 2024. Similarly, the number of published and granted patents slightly rose from 17 percent in 2023 to 19 percent in 2024.

By the end of 2024, Iran had published 364 nanotechnology-related patents in the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). 25 percent of Iran's USPTO-registered patents fall within the nanotechnology sector.



Precious marine environment

The Persian Gulf is a valuable water body in terms of ecosystem and biodiversity, but has been affected severely due to different depleting factors, including oil pollution, extraction, and transportation.

The Persian Gulf has an area of about 241,000 square kilometers. Its length is some 990 km, and its width varies from a maximum of about 340 km to a minimum of 55 km in the Strait of Hormuz.

It has its own environmental characteristics, as it is a semi-closed sea, aging 15,000 years, with an average depth of 35 meters, while being highly salty with severe heat fluctuations, and an annual evaporation rate of 140 cm.

There are 2 species of dolphins and whales in the area, in addition to 1,100 species of fish and 5 species of turtles. The Persian Gulf also hosts the second largest population of manatees, 232 seaweed species, and 4 million migratory birds annually, but today 240 important species and many habitats are under threat.

Out of the 21 largest oil spills in the world, 7 cases occurred in this water body, which is threatening the aquatic ecosystem.

Hassan Mohammadi, the coordinator of the Regional Organization for the Protection of Marine Environment (ROPME), said in December 2019 that studies show that as the current environmental issues continue, by the end of the century, about 20 percent of native species in the Persian Gulf will be extinct and 10 percent of new species that might be invasive will replace them.



AUGUST 21, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do not wish to be like anyone except in two cases. The first is a person, whom Allah has given wealth & he spends it righteously; (the second is) the one whom Allah has given wisdom and he acts according to it and teaches it to others.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:07 Evening: 19:05 Dawn: 3:59 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:29 (tomorrow)

Kafka's letters to his sister, parents published in Persian

TEHRAN – The Persian translation of the book “Letters to Ottla and the Family,” which is a collection of Franz Kafka's letters to his sister Ottla as well as some letters to his parents Julie and Hermann Kafka, has been released in the Iranian bookstores.

Nasser Ghiasi has translated the book from the original German text and Now Publication has brought it out in 241 pages, ILNA reported.

Written by the author of “The Metamorphosis” and “The Trial,” these letters offer a unique insight into the workings of the Kafka family, their relationship with the Prague Jewish community, and Kafka's own feelings about his parents and siblings.

A gracious but shy woman, and a silent rebel against the bourgeois society in which she lived, Ottla Kafka was the sibling to whom Kafka felt closest. He had a special affection for her simplicity, her integrity, her ability to listen, and her pride in his work.

Ottla was deported to Theresienstadt during World War II, and volunteered to accompany a transport of children to Auschwitz in 1943. She did not survive the war, but her husband and daughters did, and preserved her brother's letters to her. They were published in the original German in 1974, and in English in 1982.

Franz Kafka (1883-1924) was a German-language Jewish Czech writer and novelist born in Prague, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Widely regarded as a major figure of 20th-century literature, his work fuses elements of realism and the fantastique, and typically features isolated protagonists facing bizarre or surreal predicaments and incomprehensible socio-bureaucratic powers. The term Kafkaesque has entered the lexicon to describe situations like those depicted in his writings.

Writing of Kafka attracted little attention before his death. During his lifetime, he published only a few short stories and never finished any of his novels except the very short “The Metamorphosis.”

At the time of his death, Kafka's works were probably known only to a small circle of Czech and German writers. Kafka left his work, both published and unpublished, to his friend and literary executor Max Brod with explicit instructions that it should be destroyed on Kafka's death.

However, Brod ignored his request and published the novels and collected works between 1925 and 1935. Brod defended his action by claiming that he had told Kafka, “I shall not carry out your wishes,” and that “Franz should have appointed another executor if he had been absolutely determined that his instructions should stand.”

Though the novels and short stories that Kafka wrote are typically invoked in his précis, he is also celebrated for his brief fables and aphorisms. Like his longer fiction, these sketches may be brutal in some aspects, but their dreadfulness is frequently funny.

Kafka's impact is evident in the frequent reception of his writing as a form of prophetic or premonitory vision, anticipating the character of a totalitarian future in the nightmarish logic of his presentation of the lived-present. These perceptions appear in the way that he renders the world inhabited by his characters and in his commentaries written in diaries, letters and aphorisms.

Kafka's work has influenced numerous artists, composers, film-makers, historians, religious scholars, cultural theorists, and philosophers.

TEHRAN – The documentary “Cutting Through Rocks,” directed by Iranian filmmakers Sara Khaki and Mohammadreza Eyni will compete in the 17th DMZ International Documentary Film Festival, set to be held from September 11 to 17 in Gyeonggi, South Korea, where Iranian film critic, screenwriter, and editor Pouya Aghelizadeh will serve as a juror as well.

“Cutting Through Rocks” will have its Asian premiere in the International Competition section of the festival and Aghelizadeh will be in the jury for the FIPRESCI Prize, Mehr reported.

This film follows Sara Shah-verdi, the first woman elected to a village council in rural Iran. As she teaches teenage girls to ride motorcycles and campaigns against child marriage, she faces fierce community resistance. Threading through bureaucracy, landscapes, and cultural friction, Sara's journey unfolds with warmth, humor, and a sharp political instinct. This instinct translates into the tangible practice of creating space for women, showing how one individual's quiet courage can spark collective transformation.



Pouya Aghelizadeh to serve as a juror for the FIPRESCI Prize



A joint production of Iran, Germany, the U.S., Qatar, the Netherlands, Chile, and Canada, the 95-minute movie was the winner of the World Cinema Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the World Cinema Documentary Competition of the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year. It also won Gryphon Award in the Gex Doc documentary section of the 55th edition of the Giffoni Film Festival in Italy last month.

In “Cutting Through Rocks,”



A scene from “Cutting Through Rocks”

Khaki and Eyni deliver a deeply intimate and quietly defiant portrait of resistance and resilience. At the heart of the film lies Shah-verdi herself, the first elected councilwoman in a rural Iranian village, as she attempts to dis-mantle deeply rooted patriarchal structures and empower young women to imagine a future of freedom, education, and autonomy.

engineering, and take control of their lives, her vision becomes a glimmer of hope in an otherwise suffocating social landscape. Yet her journey is far from smooth. Suspicion and resentment surround her. When allegations surface questioning her intentions with the young girls she mentors, Sara's own identity is scrutinized and eventually attacked.

The score, used sparingly and with subtlety, enhances rather than overwhelms the emotional arc. The cinematography, rough-edged and organic, resists beautification, echoing the rawness of the terrain and the social tensions that run through it.

Ultimately, the documentary stands as both a testament to individual courage and a sobering wake-up call.

Pouya Aghelizadeh holds a master's degree in dramatic literature. He is one of the six Iranian members of FIPRESCI.

In Iran, he has been an active movie session holder and festival director for more than 10 years. He is also a cinema teacher and holds workshops about the “Theory of Acting in Cinema” and “Art of Editing” all around the world.

His movie analysis articles are focused on modern cinema and the theory of Lacan's “Gaze” in cinema, which include articles about great filmmakers like Bergman, Buñuel, Antonioni, Tar-

kovsky, Andrei Zvyagintsev, etc.

Aghelizadeh has been active as a critic at international festivals like Busan International Film Festival, Berlinale, Helsinki, etc. He has also served as a consultant in many documentary films about the prominent characters of the history of Iran and some English documentaries.

DMZ International Documentary Film Festival, also known as DMZ Docs, is a South Korean film festival for documentary films.

Launched in 2009, it is held annually for seven days in September/October less than 20 kilometers from the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that divides the two Koreas, and showcases films dealing with global issues like war, climate change, migration, refugees, gender and human rights, coexistence and reconciliation, and peace.

“Through this film festival, we deliberated on how to overcome the issues of violence and hatred that the global society has yet to solve,” Chang Hae-rang, the festival director, said during a press conference in Seoul on Tuesday.

Chang said the festival's theme this year is “A Day We Wish to Live.” Under this slogan, 143 carefully selected films from 50 countries will be screened to solidify its status as a leading international documentary film festival in Asia.

Cartoon of Day



GAZA GENOCIDE

Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

Charity concert “Together for Palestine” to be held in England

“Together for Palestine” will combine a concert with a charity event. Taking place on September 17, the event will be held at OVO Arena Wembley. Now, the line-up has been announced, and it is set to be spectacular.

The “Together for Palestine” concert brings an extraordinary line-up of talent to the stage, uniting some of the most influential voices in music. Bastille will showcase their arena-filling anthems fresh from their fifteenth anniversary tour, while Damon Albarn adds his signature genre-spanning energy, drawing from Blur and Gorillaz. Hot Chip promise stage euphoria, James Blake delivers his soulful electronic ballads, and Jamie xx brings club-ready soundscapes from his acclaimed “In Waves,” Fact London reported.

Rising pop star Mabel joins the bill with her sharp, heartfelt hooks, alongside Paloma Faith whose theatrical flair now extends to her candid explorations of identity and motherhood. Sampha's soulful lyricism, Pink-Pantheress' razor-sharp Gen-Z beats, and Riz Ahmed's politically charged artistry add further weight to a night of music that blends celebration with solidarity.

Adnan Joubbran, Brian Eno, Cat Burns, Faraj Suleiman, Greentea Peng, King Krule, Nai Barghouti, Obongjayar, Rachel Chinouriri, and Rina Sawayama will also perform. Together, this diverse roster of performers embodies the power of art as resistance, making the concert not just an event, but a collective statement in support of Palestine.

The gig will see Eno, Khaled Ziada, Khalid Abdalla, and Tracey Seaward act as executive

producers. They will be supported by performances from artists, musicians who support Palestine – all while raising funds for families in Gaza.

Brian Eno has worked with some of the world's biggest musicians including Coldplay, David Bowie and U2. He explained: “I've had the good fortune to work with some of the world's most remarkable artists for over 50 years. But I regret that during that time so many of us have remained silent about Palestine. Often that silence has come from fear – real fear – that speaking out could provoke a backlash, close doors or end a career.

“But that's now changing – partly because some artists and activists have lit the path, but mostly because the truth of what's going on has become impossible to ignore. When dozens of non-partisan organizations like Amnesty International and Doctors Without Borders describe it as genocide, the moral line is clear. We can't remain silent. Which is why I'm helping to organize Together for Palestine,” he added.

“My sincere belief is that this evening can become a moment of courage where artists come together to speak the truth in their hearts – which is what we trust artists to do. Whether on stage or by video from around the world, this is a chance for us to stand together and say: this can't continue, the artist asserted.

“Together we can raise millions in urgently needed aid for families in Gaza. Every penny donated will go to Palestinian partners through Choose Love, a UK charity support-

ing local humanitarians in conflict zones,” Eho noted.

“But this is about more than just money. It's about sending a message of love and solidarity to the people of Palestine – that they haven't been forgotten. We see them, we hear them, and though we may be far away, we're deeply connected – as we are to all humanity,” he stated.

At least 62,064 Palestinians have been killed and over 156,500 injured in Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip since October 2023, the Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

Rescue efforts remain severely hindered in Gaza as many victims are still trapped under rubble or lying on the streets, with emergency teams unable to reach them due to relentless Israeli bombardment and lack of equipment. Meanwhile, Israeli forces are still targeting Palestinians trying to access humanitarian aid.

The full blockade of Gaza, in place since early March, has pushed the enclave's 2.4 million residents to the brink of collapse, amid widespread famine, disease outbreaks, and the destruction of essential infrastructure.

Last November, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

Israel also faces a genocide case at the International Court of Justice over its ongoing assault on the enclave.