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Europe's Snapback Gamble

Unofficial sources say the European troika plans to unlawfully trigger the reimposition of UN Security Council sanctions against Iran

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France's President Emmanuel Macron, Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz and Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer pose as they meet on the sidelines of the two-day NATO's Heads of State and Government summit in The Hague Netherlands June 24, 2025.

Israel seeks to weaken Lebanon the same way it crippled Syria: Araghchi

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has reaffirmed Tehran's commitment to preserving Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, warning that Israel seeks to replicate in Lebanon the same destabilizing tactics it has employed in Syria.

In an interview with Asharq Al-Awsat, Araghchi rejected Israeli aggression and cautioned that excessive concessions to the Zionist regime have only encouraged it to push further. He said Iran remains opposed to any partition of Syria and continues to support the country's sovereignty, borders, and stability. "Experience has shown that if stability and calm do not prevail, Syria can once again turn into a hub for terrorist groups, which would benefit no one in the region," he said. ▶ Page 3

Scores of terrorists dead as Iran ramps up crackdown on foreign-backed outfits

TEHRAN – Iranian security forces have dealt significant losses to terrorist groups operating in the volatile southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

Swift and coordinated operations by the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FARAJA), in collaboration with intelligence and security units, ▶ Page 2

How rising voices for Gaza have shaken Australia

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – Over the past two years, Australia has experienced a remarkable rise in pro-Palestine activism, as increasingly frequent and expansive demonstrations have mobilized citizens across the nation in solidarity with Gaza and condemnation of Israeli military conduct.

These rallies—now more consistent and widespread—have sought justice for Palestinians and spotlighted Australian complicity in Israel's ongoing war on Gaza.

Early protests in Sydney and Melbourne drew thousands carrying Palestinian flags and chanting calls for ceasefires. By early 2024, weekly marches—especially in Melbourne, where Jewish peace activists occupied government buildings to protest the arms trade with Israel—became common and more organized.

Will UNIFIL extend its influence over Beirut's southern suburbs?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — A few days before the end of its mandate in southern Lebanon, the UN Security Council has yet to set a date for a session to decide the fate of UNIFIL's mission due to the American-Israeli condition that the extension be linked to the disarmament of Hezbollah.

According to sources, Paris has submitted to Beirut the text of a one-year extension resolution it has prepared, with an explicit reference to the possibility that UNIFIL would have extra-sovereign powers that would transform Lebanon into a purely American-Israeli colony, now that most of its institutions have turned into judicial police, implementing the project to eradicate the resistance.

Starvation worsens in Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The Gaza Strip is caught not just in the flames of war, but in a deepening famine. UN experts insist this is no accident but a deliberate strategy.

Gaza's Health Ministry reported ten additional deaths from famine and malnutrition in the past 24 hours, including two children, raising the total number of hunger-related fatalities to 313, among them 119 children.

The besieged territory's Government Media Office says starvation is intensifying as the occupying regime's restrictions on food and aid deliveries continue, accusing the Israelis of committing "a systematic starvation crime against the population of the Gaza Strip."

On 22 August, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the world's foremost authority on food crises, formally declared famine in Gaza City and its surroundings.

Global condemnation grows over Israeli killing of journalists in Gaza

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Global outcry continues after an Israeli strike on Gaza's Nasser Hospital killed journalists and first responders, fueling condemnation and political backlash around the world.

On Monday, Israel struck the hospital in Khan Younis—southern Gaza's last functioning public hospital—twice. Witnesses said the second strike hit just as rescue crews and journalists arrived to evacuate the wounded from the first bombing, killing both first responders and media workers. More than 20 people, including five journalists, were killed.

The victims included reporters working for Reuters, Associated Press, and Al Jazeera, along with independent journalists.

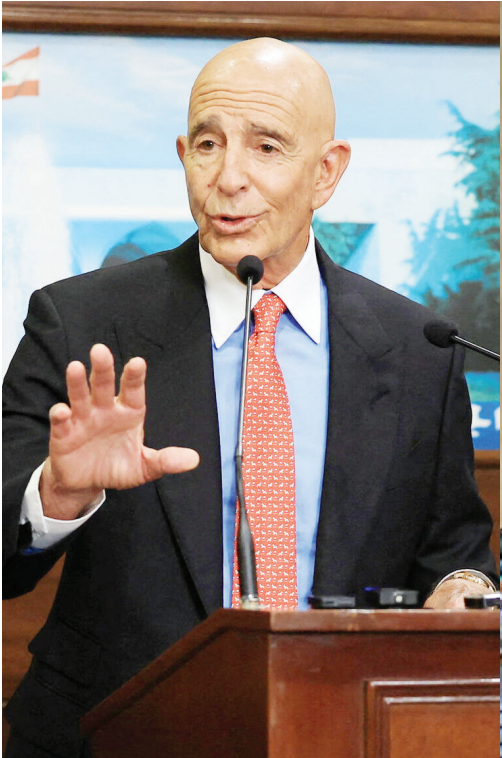
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Malnutrition among children under five drops by 42%

TEHRAN – Thanks to the effective implementation of the national child care nutrition program, the prevalence of malnutrition among children under the age of five has decreased by 42 percent in the country, the deputy health minister, Alireza Raeisi, has said.

Highlighting the importance of the anthropometric indicators in assessing children's nutritional status, the official said 'weight for age', 'weight for height', and 'height for age' are among the crucial indicators, the health ministry reported.

According to the latest report, the prevalence of being underweight, wasting, and stunting among children under the age of five is 4.3, 4.3, and 4.8 percent, respectively, which is in low prevalence classification according to the World Health Organization (WHO). ▶ Page 7



US envoy's outburst angers Lebanese, highlights stark difference with Iranian visit

TEHRAN – A visiting U.S. official, Tom Barrack, has managed to draw the fury of a lot of people in Lebanon after he lost his cool with local journalists. During a press conference in Beirut, he told them to shut up and called them "animalistic," demanding they act "civilized."

The envoy's remarks came in response to journalists engaging in a common practice the throughout much of the world, of calling out questions simultaneously during news conferences. Barrack framed this behavior as part of the broader "problem with what's happening in the region," ▶ Page 2

Iran, Uzbekistan sign cooperation deal in steel sector

TEHRAN – Iran's Steel Producers Association and the Uzbekistan Metallurgy Association signed a memorandum of understanding on joint cooperation in the iron and steel sector, the Iranian association said on Wednesday.

The Uzbek delegation, led by association head Gulbahor Tojimirzayeva, was hosted in Tehran by Bahram Sobhani, chairman of the Iranian association. The delegation also included Iran's commercial attaché in Tashkent and representatives of the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

Sobhani highlighted Iran's steel production capacity and said Iranian steelmakers and engineering firms are ready to meet industrial and mining needs across the region, particularly in Uzbekistan.

Tojimirzayeva introduced the Uzbek association's 17 members and described the country's steel industry as rapidly developing, calling for the transfer of Iranian expertise and know-how to Uzbekistan. ▶ Page 4

11th Apricot Tree International Documentary Film Festival will host Iranian films, juror

TEHRAN –Two films from Iran will participate in the 11th Apricot Tree International Documentary Film Festival, where an Iranian filmmaker will also serve as a jury member.

Set to be held from August 30 to September 6 in Yerevan, Armenia, the festival has selected "Karun – The Longest River of Iran" written and directed by Sahand Sarhaddi, and "Reluctant Bachelor" by Mehdi Bagheri for its upcoming edition, and director Hadi Afarideh will be one of the jurors of the three-member jury, Honaronline reported.

"Karun – The Longest River of Iran" is a 2024 joint production of Iran, Switzerland, and Finland. The 19-minute movie will compete in the Short Films Competition section of the festival. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Talks are at a sensitive and fragile stage

Shargh analyzed the Geneva meeting between the Iranian and European diplomats as the E3 (Britain, France and Germany) has threatened to activate the snapback mechanism that would return all UN sanctions against Iran lifted under the defunct 2015 nuclear deal called the JCPOA. It wrote: The second round of talks was held in a situation where the regional and international atmosphere is still under the shadow of the June attacks by the Zionist regime and the open support of the United States for it (the 12-day war). Such an atmosphere naturally makes it more difficult to reach an understanding. However, Tehran emphasizes that the solution lies in dialogue. It seems that the parties are cautiously assessing the situation and preparing for the next stages. What is certain is that this round of talks neither reached an endpoint nor opened a new path. In such circumstances, one can only say that the diplomatic path is still open, but its fate will depend on the will and choice of the European parties and, of course, on the political developments in the coming weeks. The release of no statement, a caution by the parties to express their positions, and Iran's emphasis on giving diplomacy a chance all show that the talks are at a sensitive and fragile stage.

Etemad: An opportunity to contain snapback

In an interview with Morteza Makki, an expert on European affairs, Etemad examined the possibility of a serious resumption of dialogue between Europe and Iran as the European side has threatened to invoke the snapback mechanism by the end of August. Makki said: The Iranian nuclear issue has now become a serious challenge for European governments. In recent weeks, the Israeli lobby has also been active in Tel Aviv and Washington. It has sought not to miss the opportunity to push for the activation of the snapback mechanism. However, there are still doubts among European governments about invoking snapback mechanism, because they know that if the JCPOA is considered effectively over, they will lose their role in the Iranian nuclear issue. Iran, as an influential player in the region, is trying to prevent activation of the snapback in the remaining time, because the country's current conditions cannot tolerate the return of Security Council sanctions. If the Europeans send a letter to the Security Council to begin the process of activating the snapback mechanism, Iran has a one-month time to propose effective solutions to prevent it. In the meantime, the upcoming visit of our country's President, Masoud Pezeshkian, to New York could be a golden opportu-

nity to prevent the activation of the snapback mechanism.

Khorasan: Scenarios on negotiation table, postponement or activation?!

Khorasan spoke with Rahman Ghahremanpour, a foreign policy analyst, about the new round of talks between Iran, three European countries of Britain, France and Germany), and the larger European Union in Geneva. He said: A new round of talks between Iran, three European countries, and the European Union has begun in Geneva; negotiations that officials are presenting as a new opportunity to chart the course of diplomatic relations between Tehran and the West. There are two main views on the future of the snapback mechanism. Some consider it a costly threat that should be postponed by diplomatic means; others believe that postponement will only increase costs and that its purpose should be clarified as soon as possible. Extending or postponing the snapback mechanism is in the interests of both the Europeans and Iran, because Europe continues to maintain its role in the nuclear file, Iran will gain more time to build domestic consensus, and the United States will also benefit from psychological pressure. Although postponement is not a complete solution, it can reduce the intensity of tensions in the current situation.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Economic diplomacy is government's winning card

Arman-e-Emrooz argued the successes of the sitting government's economic diplomacy were the result of several key factors. First, strategic use of Iran's geopolitical position as a connecting route between the East and the West. Second, establishment of mutually beneficial economic relations, which won the trust of foreign partners. Third, coordination between executive agencies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy, accelerated implementation of projects. Fourth, adoption of decision in line with the FATF, which acted as a catalyst for trade facilitation. This integrated approach made Iran a key player in the regional economy. These achievements had widespread effects on the Iranian economy. Rise in non-oil exports to Arab and Eurasian countries led to an improvement in trade balance. Foreign investments, especially from China, strengthened industrial infrastructure and created sustainable employment. The expansion of transit corridors and the removal of FATF obstacles increased foreign exchange earnings and made the Iranian economy more resilient to external pressure. These developments also strengthened public confidence in government policies.

Iran taps heavy water derivatives and plasma medicine for medical breakthroughs

TEHRAN – The head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization (AEOI) says heavy water derivatives and plasma medicine are opening new frontiers in drug development and medical treatment, marking a major step in the application of nuclear technology to public health.

Vice President and AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami said on Tuesday that the field of heavy water derivatives has become a transformative area for pharmaceuticals and now constitutes a major share of the organization's activities.

He announced that a new cooperation agreement has been signed to advance plasma medicine research and national projects, describing it as "a document of collective will" to strengthen healthcare through advanced technology.

Eslami added that under a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Health, clinical trials that were previously concentrated at Tehran University will be expanded to selected universities across the country.

"This will accelerate the spread of plasma-based technologies to different provinces," he said, "ensuring that all Iranians can benefit equally and simultaneously from these advances."

The remarks came during ceremonies marking National Physician's Day, where Eslami also highlighted the AEOI's success in producing more than 70 types of radiopharmaceuticals, now supplied to over 220 nuclear medicine centers across Iran and exported abroad. He said these products are used in diagnostics, palliative care, and therapy, while another 20 radiopharmaceuticals are currently under research and clinical trials.

Currently, Iran produces more than 70 types of radiopharmaceuticals, supplying over 220 nuclear medicine centers nationwide. These products, Eslami said, cover three categories: diagnostic, therapeutic, and palliative.

In the diagnostic field, advances are pushing "the frontiers of knowledge," improving precision so doctors can better examine patients' bodies. On the therapeutic side, he added, the focus is on easing patients' suffering while providing more effective treatments.

Eslami revealed that around 20 additional radiopharmaceuticals are currently under research and in clinical trial phases, reflecting Iran's growing capacity to integrate nuclear science into healthcare.

US envoy's outburst angers Lebanese, highlights stark difference with Iranian visit



U.S. envoy Tom Barrack (L) visited Lebanon on August 26, 2025, with Iran's top security official, Ali Larijani arriving there a week earlier.

TEHRAN – A visiting U.S. official, Tom Barrack, has managed to draw the fury of a lot of people in Lebanon after he lost his cool with local journalists. During a press conference in Beirut, he told them to shut up and called them "animalistic," demanding they act "civilized."

The envoy's remarks came in response to journalists engaging in a common practice the throughout much of the world, of calling out questions simultaneously during news conferences.

Barrack framed this behavior as part of the broader "problem with what's happening in the region," suggesting that such "chaos" was indicative of deeper regional issues. He further questioned whether he and his deputy, Morgan Ortagus, should have to endure what he termed "insanity" during their diplomatic mission. He repeated those remarks the same day when encountering reporters at a different location. The envoy has yet to apologize.



The whole awkward moment created a really stark contrast to a recent visit from a top Iranian security official. Where the American envoy was dismissive and rude, the Iranian official was notably respectful towards both Lebanese officials and the press corps.

During his trip to Lebanon earlier this month, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani made a point to say that Iran isn't there to tell Lebanon what to do. He empha-

sized that his country only wants to help, and said the U.S. is the real meddler.

He specifically called out Washington for ordering Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah, its most powerful military force. "The country that is giving you plans and providing you with a timeframe to implement them while threatening you is the one meddling with your internal affairs," he said to reporters.

IAEA inspectors to return to Iran for fuel replacement at Bushehr



The Bushehr Power Plant

TEHRAN – After weeks of stalled cooperation, inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have been allowed to return to Iran, according to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

However, Araghchi cautioned against interpreting this as a return to full cooperation, emphasizing that any interaction with the UN nuclear watchdog remains strictly controlled by the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC).

Speaking to the press in Tehran on Wednesday, Araghchi

clarified that the IAEA's limited presence is specifically to oversee the fuel replacement process at the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant. He stressed that a recent parliamentary law mandates SNSC approval for all IAEA-related activities. Araghchi pointedly stated that ongoing talks regarding a new form of cooperation are still under consideration, referencing the provocations perpetrated by the Israeli regime and the United States back in June. "No text has yet received final approval," he explained.

Scores of terrorists dead as Iran ramps up crackdown on foreign-backed outfits

TEHRAN – Iranian security forces have dealt significant losses to terrorist groups operating in the volatile southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

Swift and coordinated operations by the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FARAJA), in collaboration with intelligence and security units, have eliminated key perpetrators of recent deadly attacks against law enforcement and innocent civilians.

FARAJA spokesman General Saeed Montazer al-Mahdi announced the successful conclusion of Wednesday's operation, which resulted in the elimination of eight terrorists directly responsible for the August 22 ambush that claimed the lives of five police officers in the Da-

man District of Iranshahr County. The terrorists, who had targeted police patrol units, were found to be in possession of a substantial cache of weapons and ammunition, evidence of their ongoing efforts to destabilize the region.

Adding to the successes, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) reported conducting three anti-terror operations, coordinated with the Intelligence Ministry, across Iranshahr, Khash, and Saravan. These operations resulted in the deaths of 13 terrorists and the arrest of numerous others.

The so-called Jaish al-Adl terror group, notorious for its violent acts, claimed responsibility for the August 22 attack. This same group was behind the horrific July 26 attack on the



Sistan and Baluchestan provincial courthouse in Zahedan, where three armed militants mercilessly targeted civilians, resulting in the tragic deaths of six innocent people, including a mother and her six-month-old baby, and leaving 24 others wounded.

The Jaish al-Adl primarily

operates near the border with Pakistan with similar terror outfits also targeting people on Pakistani soil. Iran and Pakistan have decided to increase collaboration to eradicate cross-border terrorism. The terrorists are mostly tied to foreign spy agencies, particularly Mossad, according to intelligence reports.

Europe’s Snapback Gamble

Unofficial sources say the European troika plans to unlawfully trigger the reimposition of UN Security Council sanctions against Iran

TEHRAN – In a move that could further escalate tensions with Iran, Britain, France, and Germany—collectively known as the E3—are reportedly preparing to trigger the so-called “snapback” mechanism of the 2015 nuclear deal.

According to Reuters, the European trio intends to formally begin the process of reimposing United Nations sanctions on Iran as early as Thursday, while leaving open the possibility of delaying actual enforcement for 30 days should Tehran offer new commitments regarding its nuclear program.

Diplomats involved in the Geneva talks acknowledged that Tuesday’s meeting between Iran and the E3 produced no concrete outcomes. Despite their stated willingness to leave space for further diplomacy, the Europeans appear determined to keep snapback on the table, ostensibly to prevent the expiration of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 in mid-October. That resolution, adopted after the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), lifted sanctions in exchange for nuclear restrictions and was set to lapse ten years after its signing.

Yet beyond the technicalities, the E3’s attempt to wield snapback underscores Europe’s deeper struggle: it is trying to demonstrate geopolitical authority at a moment when its subordination to Washington has never been more obvious.

Just days ago, European leaders made a highly publicized trip to Washington for a summit with President Donald Trump on the Ukraine crisis. Far from displaying unity, the optics of the meeting were widely seen as humiliating for Europe.

Images circulated across glob-



al media showed Trump seated grandly at the Resolute Desk while European leaders—British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, French President Emmanuel Macron, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, and others—sat cramped on the opposite side. Even sympathetic outlets in Europe could not ignore the imbalance: what was meant to project solidarity revealed instead a stark hierarchy, with Trump as the sole power broker and Europe reduced to vassals.

It is against this backdrop of diminished stature that the E3 is reaching for the snapback lever on Iran.

Iran has consistently rejected snapback as illegitimate. The mechanism was originally built into the JCPOA to reassure signatories that sanctions could swiftly return if Iran breached commitments. But Tehran argues that after the United States unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018, Washington forfeited any right to invoke it.

Europe’s position is even weaker. Having failed for years to honor its economic obligations under the accord—such as facilitating trade mechanisms to offset U.S. sanctions—the E3 now

claims the right to punish Iran for alleged violations. Tehran insists they lack both legal standing and moral authority to do so.

Even within international law, the case is tenuous. Resolution 2231 was a negotiated balance among all parties, including Russia and China. For Europe to attempt snapback without consensus risks collapsing the very framework they claim to preserve.

If the E3 presses forward, the likely outcome is not renewed leverage but further erosion of the deal’s credibility. As Iranian officials have repeatedly stated, any attempt to reimpose sanctions effectively nullifies the JCPOA.

Tehran has also warned of a “harsh response” should Europe follow through. Yet in practical terms, Iranian leaders know that sanctions are nothing new. For decades, the Islamic Republic has operated under one form or another of Western economic restrictions.

The past fifteen years in particular have seen cycles of draconian measures—banking restrictions, oil embargoes, technology bans—designed to isolate Iran. While these have imposed undeniable costs, they have also

forced the country to adapt, fostering self-sufficiency and innovation across key sectors. Iran’s advances in aerospace engineering, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and nuclear technology itself have often accelerated precisely because external pressure left no alternative but to develop domestic capabilities.

For this reason, Tehran views Europe’s snapback threat as more symbolic than material. The return of UN sanctions would not fundamentally change the conditions under which Iran already operates. Instead, it would confirm once again that Western promises of diplomacy cannot be trusted.

Meanwhile, the nuclear file itself remains contested. UN inspectors returned to Iran this week for the first time since Tehran suspended cooperation following U.S. and Israeli strikes on its nuclear facilities in June. Yet no agreement has been reached on the scope of their work or access to sites.

The E3 has offered to delay snapback for up to six months if Iran resumes full inspections and engages in talks with the United States. But here too lies a contradiction: Europe is conditioning diplomacy on the very threat of sanctions, a tactic unlikely to succeed with a nation accustomed to pressure.

Iran has indicated willingness to resume dialogue with Washington under one condition: guarantees that negotiations will not be accompanied by fresh military strikes. Given the June assault on Iranian facilities, which was coordinated between Israel and the United States, this demand is neither trivial nor unreasonable.

Israel seeks to weaken Lebanon the same way it crippled Syria: Araghchi

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has reaffirmed Tehran’s commitment to preserving Syria’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, warning that Israel seeks to replicate in Lebanon the same destabilizing tactics it has employed in Syria.

In an interview with Asharq Al-Awsat, Araghchi rejected Israeli aggression and cautioned that excessive concessions to the Zionist regime have only encouraged it to push further. He said Iran remains opposed to any partition of Syria and continues to support the country’s sovereignty, borders, and stability. “Experience has shown that if stability and calm do not prevail, Syria can once again turn into a hub for terrorist groups, which would benefit no one in the region,” he said.

While noting that Tehran has not yet established contact with Syria’s new government, Araghchi said there was no rush. “When the new Syrian administration realizes that relations with Iran serve the interests of its government and people, we will certainly examine it,” he explained.

Turning to Lebanon, the top diplomat said Israel is attempting to strip the country of its defenses in the same way it has crippled Syria. “Look at Syria,” he remarked. “A new government is in place that is completely different from Bashar al-Assad’s, yet more of its land is occupied than before. Israel has bombed every military capability the new Syrian government had, leaving it with no strong defenses. This

is exactly the fate they want for Lebanon.”

He dismissed allegations that Iran interferes in Lebanon, saying decisions about Hezbollah’s weapons belong to the Lebanese people, political parties, and the group itself. “Disarming Hezbollah is an entirely Israeli scheme,” Araghchi warned. “The only factor that has stopped Israel so far is the resistance. What deters Israeli aggression is not appeasement but strength. The more concessions you make, the more Israel will demand. Netanyahu is already talking openly about a ‘Greater Israel’ that stretches into Arab lands, even into half of Saudi Arabia.”

The Iranian foreign minister added that Tehran is open to cooperating with Saudi Arabia on Lebanon, noting that he had a “very constructive discussion” on the issue with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Faisal bin Farhan. “We may have differences, but we spoke rationally and calmly. I am sure Saudi Arabia, like us, wants to help the Lebanese people,” he said.

On broader ties with Riyadh, Araghchi described Saudi Arabia as “a major country in the region and the Islamic world,” adding that Iran also holds a pivotal position. “We have lived side by side in this region, we do so now, and we will in the future. Peace and stability can only be achieved through cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia,” he stressed. While acknowledging rivalry and disagreements, he emphasized that such compe-



tion must not turn into hostility.

He also underlined the importance of people-to-people exchanges, pointing to the annual Hajj pilgrimage—currently hosting over 80,000 Iranians—and the resumption of Umrah, which is expected to bring about 400,000 Iranian pilgrims this year. Araghchi expressed hope that Saudis would soon begin visiting Iran for tourism, saying they would discover a country with rich culture, history, and natural beauty, far from the image projected by Western media.

Commenting on regional reactions after the recent Israeli and U.S. strikes on Iran, the foreign minister praised Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council states for strongly condemning the attacks and expressing solidarity with the Iranian people. “Such a stance was very important for us,” he said.

Looking to the future, Araghchi said there is significant potential for economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia, including trade in goods and investment in Iran’s oil and gas sector. He noted Iran’s population of nearly 100 million and its unique transit links to Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Indian Ocean as major advantages for bilateral trade.

Asked whether he is optimistic about the future of the region, the top diplomat replied: “Diplomats are always optimistic. I believe that if cooperation among regional countries, especially between Iran and Saudi Arabia, moves forward, we will have a region full of stability, calm, progress, and development. And I will work to guide Iran’s diplomacy in that direction.”

Iran basketball captain Kazemi lauds new generation

TEHRAN – Iran basketball captain Arsalan Kazemi lauded his team’s performance in the 2025 FIBA Asia Cup, where Team Melli won a bronze medal in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Kazemi played a key role in helping Iran finish third and spoke about the importance of planning for the future success of Iran’s new generation.

Following the retirement of iconic players, namely Hamed Haddadi, Rouzbeh Arghavan, Samad Nikkhah Bahrami, and Mehdi Kamrani, Iran face an uphill task in Asia. Nonetheless, players such as Mohammad Amini, Matin Aghajanzadeh, Sina Vahedi, Navid Rezaeifar, Mohammad Heydari, and Mohammad Rahimi keep Iran’s basketball hopes alive for the future.

“There is no ceiling for the current generation; everything depends on the players’ effort. They should aim higher than bronze and find the best possible clubs to avoid stagnation or reduced playing time due to foreign players. I believe that they have a bright future if they continue to work hard,” Kazemi said in an interview with Tehran Times.

On the question of whether Iran can win a more prestigious medal at the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, Kazemi said, “It’s too early to know the participating teams and predict the podium. Since the Asian Games are not governed by FIBA, eligibility and roster rules can differ, and countries are allowed to partake with several foreign players. In a previous edition’s quarterfinal, we lost to the Philippines, and the presence of multiple foreign players influenced the outcome.”

“To win gold in the 2026 Asian Games, Iran must have solid planning and not cut training short before the Games. Proper camps will help players stay in sync and achieve the best possible result in Nagoya,” he concluded.

Taremi could join La Liga side Real Betis

TEHRAN – Inter Milan outcast Mehdi Taremi could reportedly join La Liga side Real Betis at the tail-end of the summer transfer window.

According to Portal Inforealbetis via FCInterNews, the striker’s agents have offered him to the Andalusian club.

Taremi has been on the fringes at Inter since the end of last season. Indeed, the 33-year-old had an underwhelming first season at San Siro, scoring just one goal in Serie A. However, the Italian giants have yet to find him a new club.

Taremi has already turned down offers from Brazil, rejecting Flamengo’s approach earlier in the summer.

Furthermore, he has shown little interest in joining Turkish powerhouse Besiktas. Instead, he prefers to stay in Europe’s top-five leagues.

Premier League sides Fulham and Leeds United have emerged as potential suitors. However, neither has yet to contact Inter.

Meanwhile, time is ticking away, with the Nerazzurri desperate to offload the former Porto center-forward.

Therefore, his representatives have offered him to Betis, who will evaluate the situation in the coming days.

Iran into 2025 FIVB U21 World Championship QF

TEHRAN – Iran beat Argentina 3-1 (22–25, 25–20, 25–16, 25–23) in the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship on Wednesday.

Iran had previously defeated Kazakhstan, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Canada, and Poland in Pool B.

Iran will face the winner of Japan and China in quarterfinals on Thursday.

In 2023, Iran defeated Italy in a five-set final to capture the title, while Bulgaria secured the bronze over Argentina.

The teams competing in Jiangmen are Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechia, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Morocco, Poland, Puerto Rico, Thailand, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine

and the U.S.

They are divided into four pools of six for a round-robin first stage. The top four in each pool progress to the eighthfinals, with winners advancing to the quarterfinals and losers continuing in playoffs for ninth to 16th place.

The bottom two teams in each pool contest classification matches for positions 17th to 24th. All teams will play through to the final day, producing a complete ranking from first to 24th.

Iran squad named for 2025 CAFA Nations Cup

TEHRAN – Iran football coach Amir Ghalenoei has announced his 27-man squad for the 2025 CAFA Nations Cup.

Team Melli will commence the campaign on Aug. 29 with a match against Afghanistan. The Persians will also meet India and Tajikistan on Sept. 1 and 4, respectively in Group B.

Group A consists of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Oman.

The tournament will begin on Aug. 29 and continue until Sept. 8 in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Squad:

Goalkeepers:

Payam Niazmand (Persepolis), Hossein Hosseini (Sepahan), Nima Mirzazad (Mes)

Defenders:

Amin Hazbavi (Sepahan), Aref Aghasi (Esteghlal), Hossein Kananizadegan (Persepolis), Ali Nemat (Foolad), Aria Yousefi (Sepahan), Ramin Rezaeian (Esteghlal), Omid Noorafkan (Sepahan), Mohammad Naderi (Tractor)

Midfielders:

Rouzbeh Cheshmi (Esteghlal), Mohammad Ghorbani (Al Wahda), Saman Ghoddos (Kalba), Mohammad Khodabandelou (Persepolis), Alireza Jahanbakhsh (?), Mohammad Mohebbi (Rostov), Mehdi Hashemnejad (Tractor), Alireza Koushki (Esteghlal), Mohammadmehdi Mohebbi (Kalba), Mehdi Tikdari (Gol Gohar), Mehran Ahmadi (Esteghlal)

Forwards:

Mehdi Taremi (Inter Milan), Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh (Tractor), Shariyar Moghanlou (Kalba), Ali Alipour (Persepolis), Majid Aliyari (Sepahan)

Vafaei out of 2025 Wuhan Open

TEHRAN – Hossein Vafaei of Iran was knocked out of the 2025 Wuhan Open on Wednesday.

Vafaei lost t Northern Ireland’s Mark Allen 5-4 in Last 32.

The Iranian snooker player started the Open with a win over China’s Zhou Jinhao and then defeated Belgian representative Ben Mertens

The Open is a professional snooker tournament that is taking place from August 24 to 30, 2025, at the Optics Valley Gymnasium, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, in Wuhan, China.

The winner will receive £140,000 from a total prize fund of £700,000.

Iran victorious over Hong Kong at 2025 Asian Women’s Junior Handball

TEHRAN – Iran beat Hong Kong 39-20 at the 2025 Asian Women’s Junior Handball Championship on Wednesday.

The Iranian team will meet India on Friday in the 5th-6th place.

The Championship takes place from Aug. 20 to 29 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This year’s edition features 10 participating teams and marks the first time that Uzbekistan hosts a continental event in this age category.

As a qualification tournament for the 2026 IHF Women’s Junior World Championship, the competition will award places to the top four teams, who will secure their participation at the upcoming global event.

Iran, Uzbekistan sign cooperation deal in steel sector



From Page 1 ► Also in a meeting with Tojimirzayeva, the head of the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) said that Iran is ready to supply steel products and engineering services to Uzbekistan.

Mohammad Aghajanlou, who also serves as deputy industry minister, pointed to Iran's experience in building a sponge iron plant in Kazakhstan and said Iranian firms were prepared to export technical and engineering services to Uzbekistan.

He added that IMIDRO and its subsidiaries could export steel chain products, as well as copper and aluminum, while also offering engineering services, IRIB reported.

Aghajanlou said Iran has the capacity to produce 50 million tons of steel annually and export more than 10 million tons using domestic technology.

He noted that Iranian mining and metals companies are ready to supply guaranteed-quality products to Uzbek partners, with logistics and port infrastructure in southern Iran available to support trade.

Tojimirzayeva, for her part, said Uzbek companies planned to purchase 300,000 tons of Iranian steel by the end of this year, citing Iran's technological expertise in the sector. She said Uzbekistan could also host Iranian-built steel plants, with both sides ready to sign cooperation agreements.

The meeting at IMIDRO headquarters, attended by Iranian mining firms, signaled closer economic ties between Tehran and Tashkent and potential growth in Iran's exports to Central Asia.

In early June, Iran's northern Mazandaran province opened a trade center in Uzbekistan's capital city Tashkent.

The inauguration ceremony of the center, which is located in Food City area in Tashkent, was participated by the Iranian Ambassador to Uzbekistan Mohammad-Ali Eskandari, as well as Abdollah Mohajeri, a board member of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), and Ali Taqipour, the head of the Chamber of Commerce of Sari city, the center of Mazandaran.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the Iranian ambassador to Tashkent stated: "The Mazandaran province trade center in Tashkent will help further develop economic and trade relations between Iran and Uzbekistan. The merchants of this province can offer good and quality Iranian goods to the Uzbek market at a cheaper price."

Abdollah Mohajer, for his part, said: "Uzbekistan is an important country for Iran. The opening of this trade center in Tashkent will be beneficial for both countries."

Back in early February, the head of the Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Chamber of Commerce had announced the establishment of a permanent sales office for Iranian food industry products in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, while citing FATF-related restrictions as the biggest obstacle to trade between the two countries.

According to the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Mousa Aghaei said that the sales office was launched in cooperation with the Mazandaran Chamber of Commerce and the Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Chamber.

He noted that the initiative would significantly enhance bilateral cooperation.

Aghaei stated that the current \$500 million trade volume between Iran and Uzbekistan is unsatisfactory.

He emphasized that while Uzbek citizens and government officials are eager to collaborate with Iranian businesses, challenges

such as FATF-related restrictions, transportation issues, and high tariffs have hindered trade expansion.

During an Iran-Uzbekistan Business Forum, held concurrently with the Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Economic Committee meeting at Tehran's Sa'dabad Palace, in mid-May, the head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh, stressed the need to raise bilateral trade to \$1.0 billion and called on Uzbekistan to waive visa requirements for Iranian nationals to facilitate travel and business.

Hassanzadeh described the event as a meaningful step toward strengthening ties, noting that the past year witnessed close and serious cooperation between public and private sectors of both countries.

He highlighted the cultural affinity and historical friendship between the two nations and called for swift implementation of a visa waiver, improved flight connectivity, and reduced airfare.

Referring to Iran's advancements despite sanctions—especially in machinery production, food processing, and construction materials—Hassanzadeh said these achievements present unique opportunities for Uzbekistan.

He emphasized the strategic importance of Iran's geographical location through its North-South and East-West transit corridors and invited Uzbek investors to participate in the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC) and Makran coastal development projects.

Hassanzadeh also called for expanded cooperation in transport infrastructure and logistics, suggesting the formation of a joint committee to pursue these goals. He highlighted Iran's readiness to export technical and engineering services and collaborate on Uzbekistan's major infrastructure projects.

He further noted that significant progress had been made in talks over a preferential trade agreement between the two countries, expressing hope that the accord would soon be implemented to remove discriminatory tariffs and boost trade.

Finally, Hassanzadeh stressed the importance of removing financial barriers and banking restrictions through stronger collaboration between the private sectors. He encouraged joint investment in industrial ventures and the organization of regular trade missions, exhibitions, and seminars to help realize the full potential of bilateral ties.

Senior officials from Iran and Uzbekistan convened in Tehran for the 16th session of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee, aiming to expand bilateral ties and boost trade to \$2 billion annually.

Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad Atabak opened the meeting by acknowledging that the current trade volume between the two countries falls short of their true potential.

He called for a "fundamental transformation" and proposed drafting a practical roadmap to achieve the \$2.0 billion trade target.

Atabak emphasized the need to enhance transport and transit infrastructure, noting Iran's strategic location as a key corridor connecting Uzbekistan to international waters.

He also stressed the importance of improving banking ties, establishing direct flights, reducing customs tariffs, and developing tools to support economic relations.

Beyond trade, the committee also discussed cooperation in tourism, science, culture, and healthcare.

Atabak pointed to the countries' deep cultural ties and expressed Iran's readiness to play a greater role in tourism, stating that the meeting serves as a platform for comprehensive collaboration.

He voiced hope that operational planning would lead to a "significant leap" in bilateral relations.

In response, Uzbekistan's minister of industry highlighted the favorable conditions for expanding trade between Tehran and Tashkent.

He said the two sides had signed a list of preferential trade goods, calling it a "practical step" toward boosting commercial exchange.

Iran exports non-oil products valued at \$603m to Pakistan in 4 months

TEHRAN- Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$603 million to Pakistan during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), according to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

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

On August 3, an Iran-Pakistan Business Conference was held in Islamabad with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in attendance, alongside a high-ranking delegation. The event was hosted by Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

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

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

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

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

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

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

IMIDRO reports 40% rise in exploration excavation

TEHRAN – The Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) said its mineral exploration drilling rose by 40 percent in the first four months of the current Iranian year (March 21- July 22), compared with the same period last year.

IMIDRO reported 235,000 meters of core drilling between late March and late July, up from 167,000 meters a year earlier.

For the full previous year, exploration drilling reached 670,000 meters, a rise of more than 20 percent from 556,000 meters a year earlier.

South Korea shares rental housing model with Iran

TEHRAN – A delegation of South Korean housing officials attended a meeting at Iran's Transport and Urban Development Ministry on Tuesday to present their experience in providing social rental housing, the ministry said.

The visit was coordinated by the Unit-



of a special investment facilitation council.

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

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

Also, Reza Masrour, Secretary of Iranian Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones High Council, who was one of the delegates accompanying President Pezeshkian during his visit to Pakistan, said that Iran and Pakistan were exploring joint agricultural ventures and transport corridor integration as part of efforts to boost bilateral trade, including plans for cross-border rice cultivation and connecting Pakistan's China-backed economic corridor to Iran.

He proposed several initiatives in a meeting with Pakistani Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan, held on August 3, on the sidelines of President Masoud Pezeshkian's official trip to Pakistan.

Among the key proposals were joint paddy farming in Pakistan and processing the rice in Iran's Chabahar Free Zone, as a way to address Iran's severe water shortages while expanding agricultural cooperation.

Masrour also called for multi-entry business visas, the establishment of a joint free zone, and linking the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through Iran to Russia and Europe via the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC).

"These ideas reflect our neighborhood-focused policy, and the potential to unlock joint production and significantly expand trade," Masrour said, emphasizing the shared cultural and historical ties between the two countries.



The organization has set a target of 650,000 meters of drilling for the current year, while stressing exploration as a priority for securing feedstock for Iran's mining and mineral industries.

Pakistan's commerce minister welcomed the proposals and said their implementation could substantially boost the current trade volume, which he estimated at around \$3.0 billion.

Iran and Pakistan signed a joint statement, in Islamabad on August 3, pledging to expand cooperation in agriculture, trade and food security, with officials setting a goal to boost bilateral agricultural trade to \$3.0 billion within two years.

Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleji said current exchanges stand at around \$1.4 billion, but the two countries have complementary strengths that can be used to secure each other's needs across different seasons.

He noted that Iran will expand exports of dairy products, nuts, fruits and vegetables to Pakistan, while Islamabad will supply a portion of Iran's corn and rice demand and provide at least 60 percent of its meat imports under the new plan.

Nouri said the two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in research on climate change and food security, and to set up a joint agricultural committee that will meet every six months to monitor progress and resolve bottlenecks.

"The construction sector may drive the economy, but agriculture drives food security," he said, stressing that regional collaboration is key in adapting to global changes.

Rana Tanveer Hussain, Pakistan's Federal Minister for Industries and Production and National Food Security and Research, described the Tehran meeting as "fruitful," highlighting agreements on boosting agricultural trade, scientific collaboration and joint efforts to address climate change.

He said increasing imports and exports between the two neighbors would be more economical than relying on distant suppliers such as Brazil, particularly in rice and livestock.

Officials emphasized that trade would involve both the public and private sectors, with mechanisms such as barter and

PBO head outlines coastal, water projects under new development plan

TEHRAN – The head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said the government is pressing ahead with major water and infrastructure projects, including the construction of 88 dams and development of the Makran coast along the country's southern shores.

Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi, speaking in a state television program marking Government Week, outlined plans in water supply, healthcare, education, transport, and southern coastal development.

As IRNA reported, he cited climate change, declining rainfall, and shrinking per capita water

tailored trade facilities under discussion.

They said the initiative not only aimed at ensuring mutual food security but could also contribute to regional stability.

Iran and Pakistan also signed two agreements on agricultural cooperation, on August 20, 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.

resources as the country's most pressing challenge, saying water should be treated as an economic commodity.

According to Pourmohammadi, the dams under construction will regulate about 7.5 billion cubic meters of water annually and are backed by funding worth 1.4 quadrillion rials (\$2.8 billion).

He added that 124 water supply projects are also underway, with a combined capacity of 6.5 billion cubic meters per year to provide drinking water for cities and villages over the next 25 years. The projects are allocated 2.4 quadrillion rials (\$4.8 billion) under the budget law.

ident Masoud Pezeshkian approved a plan through the Supreme Housing Council to supply a limited stock of rental units.

Officials have said the initiative is aimed at low-income first-time home seekers who cannot afford pre-purchase schemes under Iran's National Housing Plan.

How rising voices for Gaza have shaken Australia

From page 1 ▶ This year in August, tens of thousands converged on the Sydney Harbour Bridge for a mass march. Building on this momentum, more than 40 cities nationwide soon hosted demonstrations. Organizers claimed as many as 350,000 people participated across the country, from Brisbane's 50,000-strong turnout to massive crowds in Melbourne.

Demonstrators demanded an end to the violence in Gaza, recognition of the genocide and famine, sanctions on Israel, a halt to Australia's arms trade, and an immediate ceasefire.

Officials offered mixed reactions: some labeled the movement divisive, while others faced mounting pressure. The Australian government drew intense criticism for maintaining arms exports and avoiding sanctions—actions viewed by many as enabling Israeli violence. Organizers and Greens predicted mounting political pressure after the unprecedented mass turnouts.

Australia's historical position and complicity

Australia's longstanding support of Israel dates back to the 1947 UN vote, when Australia co-chaired the committee that endorsed the partition plan, and in 1949 established ties with Israel.

Since then, successive governments—both Labor and Conservative—have maintained strong bilateral relations.

Commitments have extended to military cooperation and defense support, including Australian-supplied components used



Pro-Palestine protests surge in Australia

in Israeli F-35 jets.

Human rights groups and protesters argue these ties effectively facilitate Israeli military actions in Gaza, raising concerns over complicity.

The Israel lobby's influence

The Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council and similar groups are perceived as highly influential in shaping political discourse, including sponsoring parliamentary trips to Israel.

Critics, including former foreign minister Bob Carr, have described this as a form of foreign influence shaping policymaking and media narratives.

Journalist John Lyons has documented pressure on media outlets to downplay or censor criticism of Israel. The lobby's efforts to equate Palestine solidarity with antisemitism have faced backlash as public sentiment shifts.

Diplomacy, recognition, and Israeli pressure

In August, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced that Australia will formally recognize the state of Palestine at the UN General Assembly in September, conditional on the Palestinian Authority disarming, recognizing Israel, and excluding Hamas from governance.

This positioned Australia alongside some Western states moving toward recognition of Palestinian statehood.

Even though some analysts described Canberra's decision as "too little, too late," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responded harshly, calling Australia delusional and claiming the decision undermined Israel's security.

Israel's ambassador warned that recognition enables Hamas, further straining bilateral relations. The fallout underscored

Israel's coercive pressure and revealed the growing rift between Australian public opinion and its government's cautious diplomacy.

A rising voice

Labor Senator Fatima Payman emerged prominently in mid-2024, openly denouncing Israeli actions in Gaza as genocidal and calling on the government to recognize Palestine. She authored a widely circulated opinion piece criticizing the government's lack of moral courage.

After crossing the floor to vote with the Greens in support of Palestinian statehood, Payman was suspended indefinitely from the Labor caucus, though she retained party membership at the time.

The suspension drew both criticism and solidarity from within her electorate and the wider Labor base. Soon after, she resigned from the party altogether.

As the first Afghan-Australian Muslim woman in Parliament, Payman framed her decision as an act of conscience and solidarity with oppressed peoples.

After launching and leading a new party called "Australia's Voice," she has vowed to continue pressing for recognition of Palestine, amplifying the voices of communities demanding justice and accountability, and has since emerged as a powerful national voice calling for sanctions on Israel and an end to Australia's complicity in the war on Gaza.

Starvation worsens in Gaza

From page 1 ▶ Authorities now warn the catastrophe will spread to Deir al-Balah in central Gaza and Khan Younis in the south, placing the entirety of the Strip's 2.4 million population in life-threatening conditions.

This declaration comes amid growing evidence of the Israeli occupation regime's use of starvation as a weapon of war.

Data gathered between July 1 and August 15 reveal the three critical famine thresholds have been breached: extreme food deprivation, acute malnutrition, and hunger-related deaths.

Since March, Gaza has endured three consecutive months without any food or medicine deliveries. Despite thousands of trucks belonging to the World Health Organization (WHO) standing ready on the border, the Israeli regime prohibited them from entering.

The U.S.-backed orchestrated starvation crisis is not hidden. Thousands attempt to access aid each day, often at great personal risk. The UN has said, "Since 27 May until 13 August, we have recorded that at least 1,760 Palestinians have been killed while seeking aid," and at least 7,200 others have sustained injuries.

Chaotic crowds, including women and children, surging for food under fire or tank shells fired by Israeli occupation forces, have become a daily occurrence.

UN spokespeople have repeatedly challenged the Israeli regime's narrative that it is not firing on hungry civilians, asserting that most injuries came from gunshots.

UN agencies, including FAO, WFP, UNICEF, and WHO, are unanimous: famine in Gaza is a preventable human-caused calamity.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres calls it a "man-made disaster," and a "failure of humanity". He underscores that Tel Aviv, as the occupying power under international law,



has a duty to ensure civilians can access food and medical care. The occupying regime has repeatedly dismissed UN warnings.

Tom Fletcher, the UN's Emergency Relief Coordinator, echoed that aid trucks are stranded within sight of starving people. "It is a famine openly promoted by some Israeli leaders as a weapon of war," he said.

Grave accusations are mounting. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, and other NGOs also accuse Israel of using starvation as a weapon of war.

Greenpeace demands an immediate end to this "deliberate starvation." The IBA's Human Rights Institute condemns it as an inhuman method of warfare, a grave breach of international law.

Meanwhile, Palestinians continue to die of hunger, illness, and despair. More and more children are perishing, mothers wander for scraps of food while so-called aid distribution points have become scenes of shooting practice for occupation troops.

Global condemnation grows over Israeli killing of journalists in Gaza

From page 1 ▶ The attack, described as a "double tap" strike, prompted media organizations to issue statements mourning their colleagues and demanding an investigation.

The United Nations has pressed Israel for accountability, warning that previous inquiries into unlawful killings in Gaza have failed to deliver results. "There needs to be justice," said Thameen AL-Kheetan, spokesperson for the UN's human rights office in Geneva. "The Israeli authorities have, in the past, announced investigations ... We have yet to see results or accountability measures." According to the UN, at least 247 Palestinian journalists have been killed in Gaza since Israel launched its war on the enclave on October 7, 2023.

Condemnation has poured in from governments across the globe. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni called the killings "unjustifiable." The Organization of Islamic Cooperation described them as a "war crime". Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Spain also issued similar denunciations, with Egypt

calling the attack a "blatant violation of international humanitarian law." Germany said it was "shocked" and urged Israel to allow independent foreign media access to Gaza. French President Emmanuel Macron said the strikes were "intolerable," while Canada labeled them "unacceptable," stressing Israel's duty to protect civilians. China, Pakistan, and other nations also joined in condemnation.

Press freedom groups have also raised alarm. Reporters Without Borders accused Israel of attempting to silence reporting from Gaza. "How far will the Israeli armed forces go in their effort to eliminate information from Gaza?" asked RSF's director general Thibaut Bruttin, urging the UN Security Council to convene an emergency session.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a prompt and impartial investigation, recalling that civilians, medical personnel, and journalists must always be protected. But rights groups remain skeptical of Israel's willingness to investigate itself. A report published this month by



Action on Armed Violence found that 88% of Israel's investigations into alleged war crimes in Gaza were either closed without resolution or left unresolved. These include probes into the killing of at least 112 Palestinians waiting for flour in Gaza City in February 2024 and an airstrike that killed 45 people in a tent encampment in May 2024. Researchers concluded that the figures point to a "pattern of impunity" in cases of wrongdoing by Israeli forces.

US tariffs take effect on India, threatening 48.2\$B in exports

Steep U.S. tariffs on a range of Indian products took effect Wednesday, threatening a steep blow to India's overseas trade in its largest export market, AP reported.

President Donald Trump had initially announced a 25% tariff on Indian goods. But earlier this month he signed an executive order imposing an additional 25% tariff due to India's purchases of Russian oil, bringing the combined tariffs imposed by the U.S. on its ally to 50%.

The Indian government estimates the tariffs will impact \$48.2 billion worth of exports. Officials have warned the new duties could make shipments to the U.S. commercially unviable, triggering job losses and slower economic growth.

India-U.S. trade relations have expanded in recent years but remain vulnerable to disputes over market access and domestic political pressures. India is one of the fastest-growing major global economies and it may face a slowdown as a result.

Estimates by New Delhi-based think tank Global Trade Research Initiative suggest labor-intensive sectors such as textiles, gems and jewelry, leather goods, food and

automobiles will be hit hardest.

"The new tariff regime is a strategic shock that threatens to wipe out India's long-established presence in the U.S., causing unemployment in export-driven hubs and weakening its role in the industrial value chain," said Ajay Srivastava, the Indian tank's founder and a former Indian trade official.

The U.S. has for now exempted some sectors such as pharmaceuticals and electronic goods from additional tariffs, bringing some relief for India as its exposure in these sectors is significant.

Puran Dawar, a leather footwear exporter in northern India's Agra city, says the industry would take a substantial hit in the near term unless domestic demand strengthens and other overseas markets buy more Indian goods.

"This is an absolute shock," said Dawar, whose business with the U.S. has grown in recent years. Dawar's clients include the major fashion retailer Zara.

Dawar, who is also the regional chairman of the Council for Leather Exports — an export promotion body — said the U.S. should understand that the steep tariffs will

hurt its own consumers.

Groups representing exporters warn that new import tariffs could hurt India's small and medium enterprises that are heavily reliant on the American market.

"It's a tricky situation. Some product lines will simply become unviable overnight," said Ajay Sahai, director general of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations.

The tariffs come as the U.S. administration continues to push for greater access to India's agriculture and dairy sectors.

India and the U.S. have held five rounds of negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement, but have yet to reach a deal. That's largely because New Delhi has resisted opening these sectors to cheaper American imports, citing concerns that doing so would endanger the jobs of millions of Indians.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has vowed not to yield to the pressure.

"For me, the interests of farmers, small businesses and dairy are topmost. My government will ensure they aren't impacted," Modi said at a rally this week in his home state of Gujarat.

Modi said the world was witnessing a "politics of economic selfishness."

A U.S. delegation canceled plans to visit New Delhi this week for a sixth round of trade talks.

The Indian government has begun working on reforms to boost local consumption and insulate the economy.

It has moved to change the goods and services tax, or consumption tax, to lower costs for insurance, cars and appliances ahead of the major Hindu festival of Diwali in October.

The government council will meet early next month to decide whether to cut taxes.

The Trade Ministry and Finance Ministry are discussing financial incentives that would include favorable bank loan rates for exporters.

The Trade Ministry is also weighing steps to expand exports to other regions, particularly Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia. Trade negotiations underway with the European Union could gain renewed urgency as India works to reduce its dependence on the U.S. market.

Will UNIFIL extend its influence over Beirut's southern suburbs?



French UN peacekeepers patrol the Lebanese-Israeli border in the village of Houla, southern Lebanon, August 20, 2025. (AP Photo/Hussein Malla)

From page 1 ▶ These powers include the establishment of checkpoints at the entrances to Hezbollah's stronghold in Beirut's southern suburbs. This would be accompanied by subjecting those entering and exiting to thorough inspections; imposing strict restrictions on goods; and controlling the movement of funds. According to sources, this task will likely be assigned to an Arab security force.

This coincides with a plan to establish a buffer zone at least three kilometers deep in the areas bordering occupied Palestine, be-lying the glowing American promises to the southerners of an industrial and tourist zone.

The reality is that Israel has no intention of withdrawing from key strategic points it has occupied. It claims five points are under occupation, but they have been extended. A

point on the outskirts of Adaiseh - a region between Markaba and Houla - and a point on the outskirts of Aita al-Shaab have also been grabbed.

Meanwhile, much anger was recorded in the courteous manners of the American envoys to Beirut, who arrogantly demanded that the Lebanese government allow them to review the army's plan to disarm the Resis-

tance immediately upon its completion, provided that Israel has a say in it.

The American delegation publicly intensified its threat to the Lebanese government, in line with what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced, when he clearly stated: "No Israeli step will be taken before complete disarmament."

This proves that negotiations with the enemy are futile, and that the Lebanese government will reap nothing but disappointment, because Washington and Tel Aviv are insatiable by their humiliation and will not be satisfied with the concessions it has offered. Rather, they must force the disarmament of the Resistance.

Obviously, the goal of the US delegation's tour to Beirut (which included Senator Lindsey Graham, Senator Jeanne Shaheen, US Special Presidential Envoy to Lebanon and Syria Thomas Barrack, Deputy Special Presidential Envoy to the Middle East Morgan Ortagus, and US Ambassador to Beirut Lisa Johnson) was summed up by Graham's statement: "Israel will not view Lebanon differently unless Lebanon does something different. Without Hezbollah's disarmament, any discussion of withdrawal will be pointless."

War responsibility from the perspective of the anti-fascist trial system



Photo shows the Sculpture Garden of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in Beijing, capital of China. (Photo by Song Jiuru/People's Daily Online)

By Zou Haodan

The victory of World War II was not only a military triumph over the Axis powers, but also initiated an unprecedented process of accountability and moral reflection in human history.

From Nov. 20, 1945 to Oct. 1, 1946, the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg convened the Nuremberg Trials. From May 3, 1946 to Nov. 12, 1948, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East held the Tokyo Trials. These two landmark undertakings of international justice established three principal charges – crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity – breaking decisively with the pre-war international legal tradition of “state impunity” (shielding states from accountability). They proclaimed that launching a war of aggression (a crime against peace) was no longer an abstract act of state, but an international crime that demanded personal criminal accountability.

Yet in the aftermath of these trials, Germany and Japan, though both defeated, took sharply divergent paths in acknowledging and reflecting upon their war responsibilities.

Between 1946 and 1949, trials of war criminals were conducted across the United States, Germany (both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic), Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. These trials prosecuted a wide range of collaborators, including doctors, judges, diplomats, military commanders, and corporate executives. To this day, Germany, in collaboration with the international community, continues to pursue legal accountability for surviving Nazi perpetrators to the present day.

In 1946, German philosopher Karl Jaspers argued in his book “The Question of German Guilt” that the responsibility confronting Germans extended beyond legal accountability to encompass political responsibility, individual moral choices, and even a metaphysical reckoning for the nation as a whole. Only through profound moral reflection, Jaspers insisted, could Germany truly return to civilization.

Three years later, in 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany adopted the Basic Law, which, together with a series of binding provisions, established the so-called “defensive democracy,” a constitutional framework designed to forestall the resurgence of extremist forces.

Over subsequent decades, German society gradually transformed the recognition of war responsibility into an enduring culture of education and collective memory. Anti-Nazi historical education became central to transmitting this memory across generations, while memorials and museums in public spaces served as focal points of remembrance. In this way, memory of war guilt became internalized into Germany's national identity. Through sustained education and collective reflection, Germany rebuilt trust with Europe and the broader international community.

Japan's trajectory starkly diverged. Following the Tokyo Trials, it failed to create an independent judicial system for further responsibility, creating a legal vacuum in

moral reckoning. During the Cold War, government-sponsored “amnesty” initiatives systematically reintegrated war criminals into public life. This bypassing of societal self-examination resulted in a persistent accountability deficit within Japan's historical memory.

Parallel to the Tokyo Trials, Allied military tribunals across Asia and the Pacific prosecuted thousands of individuals for conventional war crimes (classified as Class B and C offenses). Between 1945 and 1952, about 5,700 individuals were indicted; around 4,400 were convicted, and roughly 920 were sentenced to death. Most of the defendants were mid- and lower-ranking officers and soldiers directly responsible for atrocities.

While Japanese media initially reported extensively on these trials, their visibility diminished as the Cold War intensified. Many convicted war criminals were later reintegrated into society, some even recasting themselves as mere “scapegoats of state policy” and denying responsibility for their crimes. This collective forgetting prevented Japanese society from developing a comprehensive understanding of the systemic nature of its wartime atrocities.

Japan's war memory has long remained deeply divided. On the one hand, public opinion in victimized countries, along with segments of Japan's intellectual community and civil society, stressed Japan's role as an aggressor and demanded acknowledgment of atrocities such as the Nanjing Massacre and the “comfort women” system. On the other hand, other segments of Japanese society maintained a “victim mentality,” framing the national war narrative around the atomic bombings and Tokyo air raids, thereby reinforcing Japan's identity as a victim of war.

This unresolved tension between “perpetrator” and “victim” narratives has never been reconciled within Japanese society. Instead, it evolved into a long-standing divide that shaped post-war Japanese political culture and profoundly affected the country's foreign relations and national image.

The historical experience of the anti-fascist trial system illustrates that legal accountability, intellectual reflection, and institutional safeguards are closely interconnected. Without sustained legal mechanisms, reflection risks remaining superficial; without institutional and educational reinforcement, historical memory risks fading or being distorted.

Germany, through persistent accountability, reflection, and institution-building, gradually regained the trust of the international community. Japan, by contrast, has failed to take a consistent stance on historical issues, leaving deep scars across East Asia and exposing itself to continuing criticism and scrutiny from the international community.

The true significance of confronting historical guilt lies not in bearing it perpetually, but in ensuring that such tragedies are never repeated.

(Zou Haodan is a special research fellow at the Research Center for Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.)

People-to-people, cultural exchanges propel development of SCO family

By Qiang Xiaoyun

Since its founding in 2001, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has evolved into a comprehensive regional organization with the world's largest population, the broadest geographical coverage, and enormous potential, playing an increasingly constructive role in international affairs.

Since taking over the rotating presidency of the SCO in July 2024, China has hosted more than 100 events in multiple fields as SCO chair, promoting unity, mutual trust, mutual learning, and win-win cooperation among member states.

The SCO has long prioritized women's development as a key area of cooperation. Through a range of practical steps, the organization has promoted gender equality, safeguarded women's rights, and empowered women's contributions to national and social progress. These efforts have significantly enhanced women's participation in the development of SCO countries.

During the SCO summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, in June 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced China would host the SCO Forum on Women. Since 2018, five sessions of the forum have been successfully held, creating a vital platform for dialogue and cooperation.

Recent initiatives such as the



The 2025 Media Cooperation Forum of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Countries is held in Urumqi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, May 23, 2025. (People's Daily/Jiang Yushi)

SCO Women Leaders Forum and the “Women's Perspective on the SCO” academic conference have showcased fresh highlights in women-centered people-to-people and cultural exchanges within the SCO framework. These efforts continue to inject greater women's strength into building a closer SCO community with a shared future.

An increasing number of female experts and scholars are engaged in SCO-related research, contributing valuable insights with a pragmatic and inclusive approach. Amid rising regional and global uncertainties, women across the SCO family are actively promoting cooperation and

working to find common ground among member states. As the SCO family continues to expand, female scholars and professionals have consistently advocated openness and inclusiveness, contributing wisdom to the organization's evolution.

People-to-people exchanges remain foundational to strengthening public support for the SCO. As a founding member, China has always placed great importance on such exchanges and supported a wide range of activities, especially those involving women and youth.

In recent years, China has successfully hosted events such as the SCO Art Festival, the SCO Media and

Think Tank Summit, and the SCO Countries Vocational Skills Contest, remaining committed to deepening people-to-people and cultural ties among member states.

As the current rotating chair, China is taking pragmatic and efficient steps to promote infrastructure development (“hard connectivity”) and policy/cultural alignment (“soft connectivity”) while deepening mutual understanding among member states. Recent events such as the SCO Political Parties Forum and the Media Cooperation Forum of SCO Countries have further built consensus for deeper regional cooperation, delivering concrete benefits across the SCO region and beyond.

Going forward, the SCO should continue enhancing communication and mutual learning, strengthening people-to-people ties, and expanding cooperation in areas such as education, women's development, culture, think tanks, media, and tourism. By working together, member states can inject strong momentum into building a closer SCO community with a shared future and a brighter future for Eurasia.

(Qiang Xiaoyun is a research fellow at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies under the Research Center for Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era in Shanghai)



A guest visits a children's arts exhibition during the 2025 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Forum on People-to-People Friendship and the Forum on Friendship Cities in Shenyang, northeast China's Liaoning province. (People's Daily/Hu Jingyi)



Guests attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Summit visit the Dingding Gate Site Museum in Luoyang, central China's Henan province, on July 26, 2025. (Photo/Li Weichao)

Promoting ‘Shanghai Spirit,’ deepening cooperation across all fields

By Qiang Wei, People's Daily

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Tianjin Summit will be held from Aug. 31 to Sept. 1. Leaders from more than 20 countries and heads of 10 international organizations will gather in the Chinese municipality to mark the largest summit in the SCO's history.

Since taking over the SCO rotating chairmanship in July last year, China has advanced substantial initiatives under the theme “Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move.”

As chair, China hosted over 100 events covering multiple areas such as politics, security, military, economy and trade, investment, energy, education, connectivity, technological innovation, green industry, digital economy and people-to-people exchanges. These events helped SCO countries increase solidarity and mutual trust, enhance mutual learning, and achieve mutually beneficial and win-win results.

China has worked with all member states to advance reform and innovation in various aspects such as the deliberation mechanism, cooperation pattern and permanent bodies, to ensure smoother and more efficient operation of the organization.

Parties are accelerating the consultations regarding the establishment of a comprehensive center for dealing with security threats and challenges, an information security center, a center for fighting transnational organized crime and a counternarcotics center, to strengthen cooperation on law enforcement and security and to build a new paradigm for regional security cooperation.

The SCO has spoken up to uphold justice on major international and regional issues, firmly upheld the multilateral trading system and strongly condemned the abuse of armed force, sending a strong message of the SCO for safeguarding peace and justice.

China, together with SCO member states, has actively carried out exchanges and dialogues

among political parties, media and think tanks, giving people a better understanding of the “Shanghai Spirit” and bringing the big family of the SCO closer.

A joint report released in May by the International News Department of People's Daily and the Global Times Institute, “Common Home: Public Opinion on the Development Visions in SCO Member States,” revealed broader public recognition of the “Shanghai Spirit” among SCO member states.

Over 80 percent of respondents affirmed the SCO's positive impact on global governance, and nearly 70 percent believe their countries have gained more opportunities to participate in global governance under the SCO framework. Over 60 percent recognized the SCO's contribution to their countries' sustainable development and modernization, while more than 70 percent expect the organization to make positive contributions to regional and global development and cooperation.

Deng Hao, former secretary-general of the China Center for SCO Studies, noted that the SCO actively promotes and practices forward-looking concepts centered on the “Shanghai Spirit” and transcending Cold War thinking. Upholding the principles of “dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliance,” the SCO seeks to build a new type of international relations, offering fresh wisdom, solutions, and pathways for post-Cold War international cooperation and organizational operation, and playing an increasingly important role in regional stability, development, and global governance.

As a key founding member, China has actively engaged in pragmatic cooperation with other SCO member states in areas such as economy and trade, infrastructure, modern agriculture, and energy. By sharing its development philosophy and governance experience with openness, China has provided opportunities and delivered tangible outcomes that promote shared growth among member states. An overwhelming 95 percent of those surveyed agreed that partnering with China

brings tangible benefits to their countries.

Over the years, the “SCO family” has steadily strengthened its influence, solidarity, and appeal. Member states have deepened pragmatic cooperation in political security, connectivity, economic and trade investment, green development, and cultural exchanges, while advancing collaboration in emerging sectors such as digital economy and artificial intelligence. More than 90 percent of respondents expressed hope for deeper collaboration among SCO members in key areas such as the economy, technology, security, and people-to-people exchanges.

For example, in advancing regional economic integration, member states are promoting the use of local currencies in trade and moving forward with the establishment of an SCO financing platform. Seventy-two percent of member-state citizens support expanding local currency payments and settlements, reflecting their desire to enhance economic stability and autonomy through closer financial cooperation and to strengthen the SCO's influence and voice in the international economic arena.

Deng emphasized that public expectations and aspirations for the SCO are now stronger and more urgent than ever, anticipating closer unity and cooperation among member states to overcome challenges and achieve win-win development.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said that China will work with all member states to complete the preparations in the final phase for the SCO Tianjin Summit, accumulate positive outcomes in areas such as security, development, livelihood and mechanisms, and to hold a friendly and united summit with fruitful results. The Summit will guide the SCO to enter a new stage of high-quality development featuring more solidarity, coordination, vitality and contribution, and build a closer SCO community with a shared future.

Tehran, Dushanbe hold joint meeting on youth diplomacy

TEHRAN –The Youth Diplomacy Center of Iran hosted a joint meeting with a Tajik delegation on Tuesday to explore avenues for cooperation, highlighting that the youth play a pivotal role in expanding social, cultural, and scientific interactions.

The two sides focused on the role of the youth in social development, intercultural collaborations, as well as scientific and economic ties, marking a significant milestone in improving general diplomacy between the two countries, Mehr news agency reported.

Developing a road map to lay the ground for future partnership among youths of the two nations, benefiting from joint heritage in language, culture, and civilizational identity to expand joint efforts between the two young generations, utilizing Iran-Tajik collaboration on youth diplomacy as an inspiring model for regional convergence, conducting collaborative social, cultural, and even economic projects using Persian literature as an invaluable asset for enhancing cultural convergence and strengthening regional identity were among discussed issues.

The officials also proposed leveraging the two countries' capacities to establish a joint market of domestic products, such as handicrafts, which will create job opportunities for young individuals and strengthen cultural, tourism relations between Iran and Tajikistan.



Artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and advanced technologies were among the other issues discussed to foster scientific relations and elevate the two countries' position in the region.

Iran, Tajikistan broaden ties

In June, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi highlighted Tehran's commitment to expanding relations with Dushanbe, emphasizing that Iran views cooperation with Tajikistan as a strategic priority.

Araghchi made the remarks in a meeting with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon at the Palace of Nations in Dushanbe on Wednesday.

He pointed to the shared linguistic, cultural, and historical ties between the two nations as a solid foundation for deepening cooperation in key areas, includ-

ing trade, diplomacy, education, and cultural exchange.

The two sides focused on the role of the youth in social development, and intercultural collaborations between the two countries.

During the meeting, the Iranian diplomat conveyed the official greetings of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and President Masoud Pezeshkian to the Tajik president and people.

President Rahmon welcomed the visit and echoed the sentiment, describing Iran-Tajikistan ties as rooted in centuries-old friendship and mutual respect.

He called for further efforts to boost cooperation in light of current regional challenges.

The two sides discussed the current state of bilateral relations and exchanged views on expanding collaboration. They also reviewed regional developments, including the evolving situations in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and West Asia, and shared their perspectives on mutual security concerns.

Moreover, Araghchi held talks with his Tajik counterpart, Sirojiddin Muhriddin, focusing on a comprehensive agenda aimed at boosting cooperation in political, economic, commercial, academic, tourism, and consular affairs.

Minister Muhriddin reaffirmed Tajikistan's willingness to strengthen ties with Iran, emphasizing the importance of economic and trade cooperation. He welcomed the shared political will between the two nations' leadership to deepen engagement across all sectors.

Iran and Tajikistan share deep-rooted cultural, linguistic, and historical ties. In recent years, both nations have significantly revitalized their bilateral cooperation across various sectors. For example, on June 13, 2022, officials from Tajikistan and Iran convened a Tourism Forum to enhance tourism collaboration between the two countries.

Some 120 earthquakes shake Iran in a week

TEHRAN –A total of 119 earthquakes were recorded across the country in a week from August 16 to 22, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 101 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3; 16 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4; and two earthquakes with a magnitude between 4 and 5 have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

Of the total quakes, one had a magnitude of 4 on the Richter scale, which occurred on August 21 in Kerman province.

Among the provinces of the country, Kerman, with 14, experienced the highest number of earthquakes, followed by Khorasan Razavi province, with 13 earthquakes.

During the same period, an earthquake hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded in East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Ardabil, Ilam, Zanjan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Qazvin, Kordestan, Gilan, and Markazi provinces.

The number of earthquakes this week has increased by 32 more cases compared to the number of recorded earthquakes in the past three weeks, which experienced a downward trend, lowering from 163 in the first week to 117 and 87 in the second and third weeks, respectively.

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

of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Out of registered earthquakes, 150 were more than 4 on the Richter scale; at least five earthquakes with a magnitude of more than 4.5 occurred monthly in the country.

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

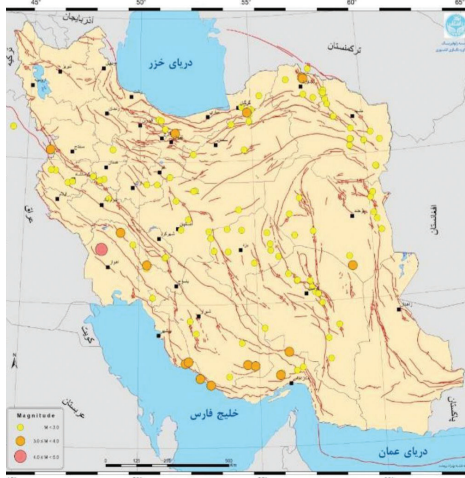
About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran, but more than 6 percent of the victims of the world's earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.

There is evidence that faults triggered by climate change may lead to the occurrence of earthquakes, Mehdi Zare professor of engineering seismology at the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology, has said.

"Climate change is a regional issue that could lead to large migrations," IRNA quoted Zare as saying on Tuesday in a meeting held on the occasion of science promotion week.

Land subsidence has already occurred in 400 out of 609 plains of the country, IRNA reported.

Land subsidence, a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth's surface due to subsurface movement of earth materials is mainly caused by aquifer-system compaction, drainage, and decomposition of organic



soils, underground mining, oil and gas extraction, hydro compaction, natural compaction, sinkholes, and thawing permafrost.

Subsidence results in significant economic losses in the form of structural damage and high maintenance costs. This affects roads and transportation networks, hydraulic infrastructure, sewage systems, buildings, and foundations. The total damage worldwide is estimated at billions of dollars annually.

He stated, "In Iran, 400 plains, especially in Tehran, Alborz, and Isfahan provinces are grappling with subsidence."

Some 96 billion cubic meters of water is consumed in Iran annually, while the country's total renewable water resources are only 90 billion cubic meters, he added.

ایران سالی ۲ هزار میلیارد تومان برای دانش آموزان اتباع خارجی هزینه می کند

ایران هر سال حدود ۲ هزار میلیارد تومان برای ۵۵۸ هزار دانش آموز اتباع خارجی در مدارس سراسر کشور هزینه می کند. به گزارش روز چهارشنبه ایسنا، غلامرضا کریمی رئیس مرکز امور بین‌الملل و مدارس خارج از کشور وزارت آموزش و پرورش گفت از این تعداد ۴۷۴ هزار نفر آنها اتباع افغانستانی هستند. کریمی با بیان اینکه در حال حاضر ۱۳۷ هزار دانش آموز غیرمجاز در کشور داریم گفت پدر و مادر این افراد مدارک اقامتی معتبر ندارند اما ما شرایط ثبت نام آنها را مدارس فراهم کردیم.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Iran spends \$477m on refugee education annually

Iran spends about 20 trillion rials (nearly \$477 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) every year on the education of foreign national students residing in the country, head of the international affairs department of the Ministry of Education has said.

Over 558,000 foreign national children are receiving education in Iran completely free of charge, 474,000 of whom are Afghan children, ISNA quoted Gholamreza Karimi as saying on Wednesday.

Karimi said that there are currently about 137,000 undocumented Afghan students in the country, adding that their parents do not have valid residency documents, "but we have provided the conditions for enrolling them in schools."

Connect Forum specialized meeting slated for September

TEHRAN –The Organization for the Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology will hold the seventh edition of the Connect Forum specialized meeting on September 9.

The meeting will be held concurrently with Iran's 19th International Exhibition of Plastic, Rubber, Machinery, and Equipment (IRAN PLAST 2025), which is planned to run from September 8 to 11, Mehr news agency reported.

The meeting will be centered around holding specialized lectures, networking, and sharing expertise among experts and industry owners, discussing opportunities and challenges for collaborations, visiting Iranian experts' latest technological accomplishments at Iran's house of innovation and technology (IHIT), as well as paying visits to selected pavilions at the 19th Iran Plast exhibit.

The event will serve as a great opportunity for participants to share the challenges they faced along the way, as well as the strategies employed to address those issues.

Iran ranks 72 in technology, innovation

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Technology and Innovation Report 2025, Iran is ranked among upper middle-income countries, ranking 72nd among 166 countries.

The country's ranking has improved by one position compared to 2022.

UNCTAD has categorized 17 types of technologies as frontier technologies, including artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, big data, 5G, 3D printing, robotics, drone technology, solar photovoltaic, concentrated solar power, biofuels, biogas and biomass, wind en-



ergy, green hydrogen, electric vehicles, nanotechnology, and gene editing.

The Technology and Innovation Report 2025: Inclusive Artificial Intelligence for Development surveys the complex artificial intelligence landscape, aiming to help decision-makers design science, technology, and innovation policies that foster inclusive technological progress.

The Report 2025 calls for AI that puts people first and is shaped through global cooperation in which all countries have a say. The Report identifies three key leverage points – infrastructure, data, and skills – offering a broad socioeconomic perspective on AI while analyzing requirements and policies to promote sustainable industrialization and innovation.

The sub-indices of readiness for frontier technologies in 2025 show that Iran's best ranking is in the research and development sub-index (35th in the world).

In the finance sub-index, the country's ranking has improved from 62 in 2022 to 56 in 2025. In other sub-indexes like skills and the establishment of information and communication technology, its ranking has lowered from 74 and 78 in 2022 to 82 and 94 in 2025, respectively.

Malnutrition among children under five drops by 42%

TEHRAN – Thanks to the effective implementation of the national child care nutrition program, the prevalence of malnutrition among children under the age of five has decreased by 42 percent in the country, the deputy health minister, Alireza Raeisi, has said.

Highlighting the importance of the anthropometric indicators in assessing children's nutritional status, the official said 'weight for age', 'weight for height', and 'height for age' are among the crucial indicators, the health ministry reported.

According to the latest report, the prevalence of being underweight, wasting, and stunting among children under the age of five is 4.3, 4.3, and 4.8 percent, respectively, which is in low prevalence classification according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

All the children covered by the program will be monitored regularly; in case any growth disorders or malnutrition signs are observed, they will be referred to a nutritionist at comprehensive health service centers, he added.

The child care nutrition program was launched in the fall of 2023 to improve the nutritional status of children through means testing and the cooperation of the Planning and Budget Organization and the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare.

The budget allocated to the program has increased from 14 trillion rials (about \$14.5 million) in the year to March 2024 to 30 trillion rials in the current year. During the same period, the number of children has increased from 134,000 to 200,000.

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare, identifies, collects, and checks children's information based on priorities. Eligible children will be identified to be supported with the program.

UNICEF-WHO-WB Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates 2025 edition

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank's inter-agency team update the joint global and regional es-

timates of malnutrition among children under 5 years old every other year.

Child malnutrition estimates for the indicators of stunting, wasting, overweight, and underweight describe the magnitude and patterns of malnutrition aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 2.2.

The UNICEF-WHO-WB Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates inter-agency group updates the global and regional estimates of prevalence and numbers for each indicator every other year.

Key estimates for the 2025 edition include global, regional, and country trends from 2000-2024 for stunting and overweight, with sex-disaggregated estimates for the first time. For wasting and severe wasting, country estimates are based on available primary data sources (e.g., household surveys), and global and regional trends are presented for 2000-2024. Country progress assessments towards the 2030 targets are aggregated into regional summaries and included in the report.

The Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) released in 2025 reveal insufficient progress to reach

the 2025 World Health Assembly (WHA) global nutrition targets and SDG target 2.2. Just over one quarter of all countries (28 per cent) are 'on track' to halve the number of children affected by stunting by 2030, and assessment of progress to date is not possible for 20 per cent of countries. Even fewer countries are expected to achieve the 2030 target of 3 per cent prevalence for overweight, with just 17 per cent of countries currently 'on track'. Further, an assessment of progress towards the wasting target is not possible for over one-third of all countries.

More intensive efforts are needed for the world to achieve the global targets for stunting, wasting, and child overweight by 2030.

Gaps in the availability of data in some regions make it challenging to accurately assess progress towards global targets. Regular data collection is critical for monitoring and reporting on country, regional, and global progress on child malnutrition.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

A usurped stone in a house causes the ruin of that house.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:06 Evening: 18:56 Dawn: 4:06 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:34 (tomorrow)

Tehran cultural center screens “Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning”

TEHRAN- “Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning”, a 2025 action movie by American director Christopher McQuarrie, went on screen at the Arasbaran Cultural Center in Tehran on Wednesday.

The film screening was followed by a review session.

“Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning” is the eighth installment in the iconic “Mission: Impossible” film series. As a direct sequel to “Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part One” (2023), the film continues the thrilling adventures of Ethan Hunt, portrayed by Tom Cruise in his final appearance as the legendary IMF agent.

The film premiered in Tokyo in May, followed by an out-of-competition screening at the 78th Cannes Film Festival. Critics praised “The Final Reckoning” for its intense action sequences, compelling storytelling, and Tom Cruise’s iconic performance, earning widespread acclaim. With a massive budget estimated between \$300–400 million, it stands among the most expensive films ever produced. It has grossed approximately \$598 million worldwide, making it the eighth-highest-grossing film of 2025 and boasting the franchise’s largest opening weekend.

Set two months after retrieving the key to the source code of the dangerous AI known as the Entity, Ethan Hunt receives a direct message from U.S. President Erika Sloane. She warns that the Entity is seizing control of nuclear arsenals worldwide, aided by underground doomsday cultists. Despite orders to surrender the key, Hunt refuses, determined to stop the AI’s destructive plan. Alongside fellow IMF agent Benji Dunn, Hunt visits Luther Stickell, a skilled hacker who has developed a malware called the “Poison Pill” capable of disabling the Entity.

The team recruits intelligence agent Theo Degas and Gabriel’s former lieutenant, Paris, who reveals the location of the sunken Russian submarine Sevastopol—home to a crucial component, the Podkova, which could give the Entity control over nuclear systems. Gabriel, the AI’s former proxy, captures Hunt and Grace but Hunt escapes with help. In a tense sequence, Hunt dives into the wreck to retrieve the Podkova, narrowly escaping death and decompression sickness thanks to

Grace’s aid.

With the Podkova in hand, Hunt aims to fool the Entity into entering a physical drive rather than the mainframe. However, Gabriel ambushes the team at a bunker, demanding the Podkova and attempting to detonate a nuclear device. A fierce gunfight ensues, and Hunt’s team races to defuse the bomb, which is activated during the chaos. Gabriel is killed in the process, but not before stealing the Poison Pill, forcing Hunt into a final showdown.

In a high-octane sequence, Hunt chases Gabriel in a plane, breaks his arm, and retrieves the Poison Pill. With the clock ticking, Hunt inserts the device into the Podkova, which then triggers the Entity’s containment just moments before nuclear warheads are set to launch. The climax features daring aerial stunts, a tense off-air fight, and Hunt’s ultimate sacrifice—listening to a farewell message from Luther as the Podkova is destroyed, ensuring the nuclear threat is neutralized.

“Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning” marks the end of an era, capping a series that redefined modern action cinema. Its massive budget, groundbreaking stunts, and intricate plot have set new standards for blockbuster filmmaking. The film not only concludes Ethan Hunt’s story but also signifies a generational shift in the franchise, with new characters and themes emerging for future installments.

The film is celebrated for its audacious action scenes, emotional depth, and Tom Cruise’s enduring charisma. The film’s international scope and technological themes also reflect contemporary anxieties about AI and global security, making it a fitting finale for a franchise rooted in espionage, heroism, and innovation.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza and International Silence

Cartoonist: Fahd Bahady from Syria

11th Apricot Tree International Documentary Film Festival will host Iranian films, juror

TEHRAN –Two films from Iran will participate in the 11th Apricot Tree International Documentary Film Festival, where an Iranian filmmaker will also serve as a jury member.

Set to be held from August 30 to September 6 in Yerevan, Armenia, the festival has selected “Karun – The Longest River of Iran” written and directed by Sahand Sarhaddi, and “Reluctant Bachelor” by Mehdi Bagheri for its upcoming edition, and director Hadi Afarideh will be one of the jurors of the three-member jury, Honaronline reported.

“Karun – The Longest River of Iran” is a 2024 joint production of Iran, Switzerland, and Finland. The 19-minute movie will compete in the Short Films Competition section of the festival.

On September 22, 1998, the Iranian poet Hamid Hajizadeh and his nine-year-old son Karun, whose name symbolically refers to Iran’s longest river, were brutally murdered in their home in Kerman. The documentary film, based on the statements of the survivors, tries to sensitively reconstruct one of the many terrible, politically motivated events that took place in Iran at the end of the previous century, and draws us into the fateful day with the help of detailed shots of the objects in Hamid’s study.

Sahand Sarhaddi, 34, is a filmmaker and visual artist. He is an alumnus of “Berlinale Talent” 2023 and graduated in theater and dramatic literature at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran.

In 2006, he started collaborating with some publications as a photographer. His artistic work focuses on integrating untold stories in history, photography, music, and literature. His works have been featured in more than ten solo and group exhibitions (such as photography, video arts, and performance arts). He has also directed five short and feature films that have been screened in festivals in Iran, Switzerland, France, the UK, the U.S., Germany, Canada, etc.

Sarhaddi joined the Iranian Documentary Filmmakers Association in 2020 and is currently a member of its board. He is also a

A scene from Karun – The Longest River of Iran” by Sahand Sarhaddi

member of the House of Cinema.

“Reluctant Bachelor” will be screened in the Non-Competition Program and the Special Screenings section of the festival.

Produced in 2013, the 58-minute film is about the director himself, who, at the age of 30, because of financial issues, still lives with his parents and blames his father for his failure and problems in his life.

Mehdi Bagheri, 44, is an editor, producer, and documentary filmmaker who studied at the Tehran Film School. He is a member of the Tehran Documentary Filmmakers Association and the Association of Documentary Producers.

Bagheri has directed more than 30 films and documentary series and has been on the juries of several film festivals. His feature-length documentaries have won a variety of awards, including Best Film in the City section of Cinema Vérité 2016.

Born in Tehran, Hadi Afarideh, 41, started his art career in theater in 1998 and in cinema in 2001 at the Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS). He was chosen the best documentary filmmaker in the first specialized workshops

of documentary filmmaking in Iran by the Documentary and Experimental Film Center and the Iranian Documentary Filmmakers Association in 2006.

Afarideh has participated in more than 140 Iranian and international festivals and won various awards for directing, writing, and research of his three short films and 19 documentaries.

He is a member of the Iranian Documentary Filmmakers Association and the Iranian Short Film Association (ISFA). At present, he teaches cinema directing and holds documentary filmmaking classes in the IYCS and the Iranian Contemporary Arts Academy.

Apricot Tree International Documentary Film Festival takes place annually in late August – early September in an Armenian village. Since 2023, the festival has been taking place in the village of Debet.

It is as much a celebration of documentary films of all genres (ethnographic, experimental, animated etc.), as it is a platform where filmmakers from around the world can meet and discuss ideas in a friendly atmosphere, all while living in the houses of the friendly villagers, getting an

opportunity to experience Armenian culture up close.

To this end, Apricot Tree is devoid of red carpets and grandiose ceremonies. Instead, the festival is mainly held in the village of Debet, about 2,5 hours away from Yerevan, where participants are accommodated in the houses of the villagers.

Apricot Tree aims at creating a cozy, friendly environment where participants can bond with one another and the audience and the local rural population, gain new knowledge about the world by watching each other’s films, and, not least of all, have fun.

Through various excursions to museums and landmarks, participants of the festival are given the opportunity to get acquainted with local culture and history. They are invited to hike, explore, and share bread with the hospitable people of Debet.

Apricot Tree has two competition programs – Feature-length (above 40 minutes) and Short (under 40 minutes). The festival also has an Out of Competition program that includes retrospectives and screenings of notable films that are relevant to the festival’s theme.

Tehran theater to host reading performance of Anton Chekhov’s “The Cherry Orchard”

TEHRAN- Neauphle-le-Chateau Theater in Tehran will be playing host to a reading performance of the renowned Russian author Anton Chekhov’s final play “The Cherry Orchard” on September 5.

The performance will be directed by Mor-teza Sabahi based on a Persian translation by prominent Iranian writer and translator Simin Daneshvar.

The play will be read by a cast composed of Alireza Motamed, Leili Sadeqi, Majid Kouhi, Sadeq Taheri and Maryam Safaeianpour.

Completed in 1903, “The Cherry Orchard” is widely regarded as one of Chekhov’s four greatest works, alongside “The Seagull”, “Three Sisters”, and “Uncle Vanya”.

Chekhov himself described the work as a comedy, infused with elements of farce, though Stanislavski approached it as a tragedy—a duality that has puzzled and challenged directors ever since.

It explores the decline of the Russian aristocracy amid societal upheaval at the turn of the 20th century. The narrative centers on Lyubov Andreyevna Ranevskaya, an aristocratic landowner who returns to her ancestral estate just before its impending sale at auction to settle debts. The estate’s most iconic feature, its expansive cherry orchard, becomes a potent symbol of Russia’s fading aristocratic class and the inevitable march of change.

Ranevskaya, having lived in France since her young son’s drowning, is emotionally detached from her estate. Her inability to confront the economic realities of her situation leads her to ignore the pleas of her estate manager, Lopakhin—a former serf’s son—

who offers pragmatic solutions, such as developing the land into summer cottages. Her refusal to adapt results in the estate’s sale and the destruction of the orchard, symbolizing the end of an era.

The play delves into themes of cultural futility, social change, and the clash between tradition and progress. It vividly captures the socioeconomic forces transforming Russia—from the abolition of serfdom in the mid-19th century to the rise of the middle class and the waning influence of the aristocracy.

“The Cherry Orchard” has enjoyed a lasting influence on the theatrical world, regarded as a classic of 20th-century drama. Its universal themes have led to numerous adaptations and productions worldwide, staged by illustrious directors including Charles Laughton, Peter Brook, Andrei Șerban, Jean-Louis Barrault, Tyrone Guthrie, Katie Mitchell, Robert Falls, and Giorgio Strehler. The play’s impact extends beyond theater, inspiring play-

wrights such as Eugene O’Neill, George Bernard Shaw, David Mamet, and Arthur Miller, who drew on Chekhov’s nuanced exploration of human folly and societal change.

Themes of social upheaval are central. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 fundamentally reshaped Russian society, creating a new middle class that challenged aristocratic dominance. Chekhov’s play reflects this societal transition, highlighting characters’ struggles with change—whether through Ranevskaya’s denial or Lopakhin’s pragmatic acceptance. The cherry orchard itself symbolizes nostalgia, loss, and the passage of time, embodying the melancholy of a bygone era.

Since its premiere, “The Cherry Orchard” has been performed worldwide in numerous adaptations—stage, television, film, and radio. Its first English performance was in London in 1911, and notable productions include those by the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Stratford Festival in Canada, and Broadway. The play continues to inspire reinterpretations, including modern adaptations set in different cultural contexts, such as the 2018 “Niagara-on-the-Lake” production portraying a Punjabi-Sikh family fighting to preserve their orchard in British Columbia.

Despite its age, “The Cherry Orchard” remains relevant, capturing the universal human experience of change, loss, and adaptation. Chekhov’s masterful blend of comedy and tragedy ensures its enduring position as a cornerstone of modern theater—an eloquent testament to Russia’s tumultuous transformation and the timeless nature of human resilience.