

'Behind the Beautiful Image US Projects Lies a Sinister Reality'

Pezeshkian says US foreign policy principles create endless wars



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks to three Iranian media and political activists during an interview aired on August 29, 2025.

Non-oil exports hit \$16.5b in 4 months, trade with Arab neighbors grows

TEHRAN – Iran's exports reached \$16.55 billion in the first four months of the Iranian year (March 20–July 21), down 5.5 percent in value from a year earlier, even as trade with neighboring and Arab countries remained a major driver of non-oil commerce, officials said.

Mohsen Montazeri, director-general of planning and monitoring at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO), said outbound shipments amounted to 48.81 million tons, representing a 1.5 percent rise in weight.

Non-oil trade, including both exports and imports, totaled 61.02 million tons worth \$34.18 billion, marking a 0.5 percent increase in volume and a 10.2 percent fall in value year on year.

China remained Iran's top export market with \$4.56 billion, accounting for 27.6 percent of total shipments, followed by Iraq with \$2.94 billion (17.8 percent), the United Arab Emirates with \$2.12 billion (12.8 percent), Turkey with \$1.67 billion (10.1 percent) and Afghanistan with \$709 million (4.3 percent). Together, these five markets absorbed 72.5 percent of Iran's exports. ▶ Page 4



Destiny and strategy of two civilizations

at the dawn of a new order

By Babak Negahdari,

Head of Iranian Parliament's Research Centre

TEHRAN – Throughout the expanse of history, civilizations arise that not only shape their own fates but also serve as anchors of stability and purpose for the world around them. Iran and China, each rooted in their unique landscapes, have carried such a profound legacy—one forged from ancient cultural and trade exchanges along the Silk Road and the crucible of shared historical challenges.

Today, as the global landscape undergoes unprecedented shifts, these two ancient powers once again turn toward each other at a pivotal moment, leaning on this deep reservoir of heritage.

Current trends signal the decline of an old order and the gradual emergence of a new one. This transition is more than a mere shift in power; it's a fundamental reconfiguration of concepts like sovereignty, development, and security. Both nations have drawn invaluable lessons from their histories of resilience—teachings that emphasize how sustainable progress and national dignity can only be achieved through independence and a steadfast will to endure. This shared wisdom grants us a profound insight into the dynamics of today's transformations. ▶ Page 2

The price of irrelevance: Europe and the costs of its geopolitical followership

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – Europe is at a decisive moment in its geopolitical destiny. Frequently expressed in the rhetoric of "strategic autonomy," the dream of a self-sufficient Europe acting as a global player collided abruptly with reality after the Ukraine crisis, U.S. pressure on Russia, and the steady escalation of sanctions and punitive measures against actors not aligned with the Western agenda—most notably Iran.

Although the context seemed ripe for the European Union to assert its own weight, the evidence suggests the opposite: far from strengthening its voice, Europe has accepted a subsidiary role, paying a high economic, political, and moral price for ceding control of its foreign and security policy to Washington. ▶ Page 3

A subcontractor abandoned: PA discovers collaboration buys no protection, or visas

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – The Trump administration announced Friday it would deny and revoke visas for about 80 senior Palestinian officials, including President Mahmoud Abbas, ahead of the UN General Assembly in New York in September. The move, unprecedented in scope, would bar most of the Palestinian delegation from one of their few global platforms.

The State Department justified the measure by citing the Palestinian Authority's appeals to international courts, its alleged refusal to condemn the October 7 attacks, and its pursuit of unilateral recognition. Yet the decision violates the 1947 UN Headquarters Agreement,

47th anniversary of Sayyed Musa al-Sadr's disappearance

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — On Sunday, Lebanon marks the 47th anniversary of the disappearance of Sayyed Musa al-Sadr, the founder of the Resistance against Israeli occupation, along with his two companions—Sheikh Muhammad Yaqoub and journalist Abbas Badreddine.

The pro-Resistance Lebanese mark the event, while the country is experiencing its most difficult security and political dilemma, days before the army submits its plan to disarm the Resistance.

Over the past five decades, many narratives have been woven about the fate of Sayyed al-Sadr and his two companions, including incomplete accounts of an international conspiracy behind their kidnapping in Libya.

Rising Gaza famine sparks calls for Europe to pressure Israel

By staff writer

TEHRAN – European governments are facing increasing pressure to act against Israel as civilian casualties mount and widespread starvation intensifies in Gaza amid the nearly two-year-long conflict in the Palestinian territory.

Since Israel launched its military campaign in Gaza in October 2023, demonstrations have erupted across cities in Europe, with protesters urging their governments to pressure Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's administration to end the fighting. The situation has worsened as Israel's near-total siege of Gaza has triggered severe food shortages, fueling calls for urgent European intervention.

Israeli casualties and "missing" soldiers

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Hebrew media have described "security incidents" in Gaza City as one of the most difficult since October 7, 2023.

Israeli occupation forces (IOF) reportedly experienced at least three major "security incidents", the most serious occurred in the Zeitoun neighborhood, southeast of Gaza City, where Palestinian resistance forces attempted to capture IOF soldiers.

Four soldiers reportedly went missing, and the Israeli military imposed a media blackout on the incident.

At one point, Hebrew media reported, "There is no official information from the Israeli army regarding a capture operation in Gaza, but reports indicate that four soldiers are currently being searched for after heavy clashes, with the incident still classified as a concern."

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Iran to commemorate National Cheetah Day

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Iran tells Armenia foreign powers should not be allowed to undermine bilateral ties

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian has stressed that Iran and Armenia must not allow any foreign power to undermine their friendly and strategic relations, urging closer cooperation in both political and economic fields.

The Iranian president made the remarks on Saturday during a meeting in Tehran with Armen Grigoryan, Secretary of Armenia's National Security Council.

Pezeshkian voiced concern over the recent U.S.-brokered peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which includes plans for a transport corridor across Armenia's southern Syunik province to connect Azerbaijan with its exclave of Nakhchivan. Iran has long opposed the project, warning that it could alter the geopolitical balance of the South Caucasus and restrict Tehran's access to regional transport routes. ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Narrow window of diplomacy

Sobh-e-No reviewed the seventh round of negotiations between Iran and the European troika (Britain, France and Germany) that ended in failure. It wrote: The seventh round of negotiations between Iran and the European troika ended without a result. In the negotiations, Europe—acting as a proxy for Israel and the United States—sought to secure outcomes that had eluded them during the 12-day war in June, using the mechanism of snapback as leverage at the negotiating table. Iran has prepared itself for all scenarios, from ambiguous nuclear activity to using its regional power and influence to defend itself. From an economic point of view, the return of UN Security Council sanctions will not make much difference, because the United States has already applied all possible sanctions. However, the Iranian nuclear issue is an opportunity for Europe to get out of further isolation from global equations. In a situation in which Israel was desperately inciting the European troika to activate snapback mechanism and close diplomatic channels, Europe can, by avoiding dancing to the tune of Israel and the United States, prevent the escalation of tension by behaving as an independent actor and restore its position in global politics by managing the crisis.

Siasat-e-Rooz: The West seeking to blackmail Iran through snapback

Siasat-e-Rooz analyzed Europeans' behavior now that they have written a letter to the UN Security Council to activate the snapback mechanism against Iran. The paper said: After announcing the snapback mechanism, the Europeans have been claiming that they embrace negotiations. If the West were really seeking negotiations, it would have done so during these years and would have fulfilled its obligations under the JCPOA instead of illegally activating the snapback mechanism.

The results show that the West, imagining that the economic conditions are unstable, is seeking to blackmail Iran. The main point is that the West, having failed in the military confrontation, is seeking to make Iran surrender in the form of imposed diplomacy. The country's economic condition during the 12-day war showed that Iran has overcome difficult conditions resulting from sanctions and simply needs internal convergence and proper management. Meanwhile, reactions to Trump's tariffs have shown that the value of the dollar has lost its essence and that sanctions can be neutralized through closer interactions with neighbors, and blocs such as BRICS and Shanghai.

Bagheri Kani takes on international affairs role at Iran's Security Council



Ali Bagheri Kani (R) shakes hands with Armenia's security chief, Armen Grigoryan, at the presence of SNSC Secretary Ali Larijani (C) in Tehran, August 30, 2025.

TEHRAN – Ali Bagheri Kani, a seasoned Iranian diplomat, has been named deputy for international affairs at Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC). The pick was made by Ali Larijani, the new head of the SNSC, signaling that Iran is doubling down on experience when it comes to international security.

Just days after getting the job, Bagheri sat in on a meeting in Tehran between Larijani and Armen Grigoryan, who runs Armenia's Security Council. Larijani was appointed as Iran's senior security official after the 12-day war with Israel.

Bagheri, like Larijani, isn't new to high-pressure situations. He served as Iran's acting foreign

Jam-e-Jam: Tools that do not work against Iran

In an interview with Dr. Mohammad Marandi, an international affairs analyst, Jam-e-Jam discussed the issue of snapback and the importance of Iran's relations with countries such as China and Russia. Marandi said: Maximum pressure sanctions, after the activation of snapback, include all the cases that are currently in force. Russia and China's rejection of this process serves our interests and highlights that, had efforts to undermine Iran's relations with these countries succeeded, our situation would have been significantly more challenging. The foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has acted rationally and has always tried to have good relations with all countries in the world, including China and Russia. We even accepted indirect negotiations on our own terms, but after the attack on Iran, it became clear to everyone that the West does not have good intentions and cannot be trusted. The Islamic Republic has acted authoritatively and intelligently, and at the same time intends to strengthen its relations with countries member to BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Therefore, the Western threat tool is rapidly losing its steam.

Kayhan: Iran's strategy today is reciprocity, not passivity

In a commentary, Kayhan wrote that Iran has adopted a reciprocal approach toward the West. It said the point is that the West does not understand the language of logic and negotiation. What is important in the face of Western blackmail is the language of power and reciprocal threats. The best and most decisive response to the snapback mechanism is to withdraw from the NPT. This action not only sends a clear message to the West but also shows that Iran is no longer submit to oppressive and unilateral approaches. The West is not afraid of Iran's uranium enrichment and centrifuges, but of Iran's independence, progress, and empowerment under conditions of sanctions and pressure. Accordingly, the snapback mechanism, the JCPOA, sanctions, and diplomatic pressure are all a cover for the same main goal: to contain and stop a model called the Islamic Republic. By activating the snapback mechanism, Europe showed that the JCPOA was nothing but a trap for Iran. Now, by withdrawing from the NPT, the Islamic Republic will show that it is no longer willing to accept these ridiculous shows. This decision is not only a response to the arrogance of Europe and America, but also a clear message from the Iranian nation: dignity, independence, and national rights are not negotiable.

Iran tells Armenia foreign powers should not be allowed to undermine bilateral ties

From page 1 ► The president, however, said some of Tehran's concerns had been alleviated following assurances provided by Armenian officials.

He recalled his “fruitful” visit to Yerevan in August, where the two sides reached “positive agreements,” and welcomed progress in the implementation of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

The INSTC is a 7,200-kilometer multimodal network linking Iran with Central Asia, India, Russia, and Europe. Pezeshkian underlined that once completed, the project would not only strengthen regional trade but also foster greater political and economic convergence within the Eurasian Economic Union.

He further called for deeper trade and investment ties with Yerevan to expand bilateraleconomic exchanges. For his part, Grigoryan hailed Pezeshkian's visit to Armenia as a turning point in relations and reiterated his country's readiness to sign a comprehensive cooperation agreement with Iran. He also voiced hope that Armenian infrastructure and development projects would be carried out with the participation of Iranian companies, stressing that Armenia is prepared to multiply its trade volume with Tehran several times over.

Iran opposed to any geopolitical changes in Caucasus: top security chief

Earlier in the day, Grigory-



Iran's military chief Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi (R) and Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia Armen Grigoryan (L) meet in Tehran on August 30, 2025.

an held talks with Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani, who reiterated Tehran's opposition to any move that would bring about geopolitical changes in the Caucasus.

Larijani instead welcomed Armenia's inclusion in the INSTC, which connects Iran's northern neighbors to the Sea of Oman.

“Iran has always supported the independence and resilience of regional countries as the basis for lasting security,” Larijani said, voicing support for continued peace talks between Yerevan and Baku.

Grigoryan, in turn, underlined Armenia's commitment to national sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of borders, and reciprocity in international

relations.

He assured Tehran that Armenia's sovereignty over security, military, and customs issues had been preserved in its agreements with Azerbaijan, and pledged that ties with Iran would remain unaffected.

U.S. presence a threat to stability in the Caucasus: Iran's military chief

Meanwhile, Iran's military chief, Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, also met with the Armenian official.

Speaking in Tehran, Mousavi said Iran welcomes peace initiatives between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but stressed that foreign intervention would only complicate regional disputes.

“A peace agreement between

Armenia and Azerbaijan can bring lasting peace and security to the region, and the Islamic Republic of Iran always supports such processes,” Mousavi stated.

“However, the presence of foreign powers, including the United States, is a matter of serious concern for the Caucasus.”

The top commander emphasized that “historical realities confirm the negative role played by the United States in the region,” urging the creation of effective mechanisms to prevent tensions from escalating under the influence of outside powers.

Mousavi's remarks reflect Iran's longstanding position that regional issues should be resolved by regional states themselves, without the involvement of external actors.

Tehran has repeatedly cautioned that U.S. and NATO-backed initiatives could undermine sovereignty, fuel divisions, and shift the delicate geopolitical balance in the South Caucasus.

For his part, Grigoryan referred to Armenia's August 8 agreements with Azerbaijan under the “Crossroads of Peace” initiative.

He stressed the importance of safeguarding Armenia's sovereignty over the Syunik corridor — the sensitive strip of land bordering Iran — and assured that Yerevan seeks to prevent any negative impact on relations with Tehran.

Eight arrested as IRGC dismantles Mossad-linked terror cell in eastern Iran

TEHRAN – As part of its ongoing crackdown on terrorists and spies, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has successfully dismantled a terror cell with ties to Israel's infamous Mossad spy agency.

The operation, conducted in Khorasan Razavi province was announced through a statement published on Saturday.

Eight individuals were arrested during a precisely targeted operation, which the IRGC'S intelligence wing in Khorasan Razavi carried out in concert with the Iranian judiciary.

The individuals were part of a Mossad network that also collaborates with separatists.

The IRGC's statement said evidence uncovered reveals the terrorists underwent specialized online training orchestrated by Mossad, which transformed them into tools for espionage and sabotage.

They stand accused of transmitting sensitive coordinates of vital Iranian infrastructure and intelligence on high-ranking military figures directly to their handlers within the Israeli spy apparatus.

They, however, were arrested before they could carry out their planned sabotage attacks.

“The terror cells intended to sabotage important centers within the sacred city of Mashhad, the heart of Khorasan Razavi.

Destiny and strategy of two civilizations at the dawn of a new order

From page 1 ► In this context, the notion of “stability” demands a precise redefinition. Stability born from submission to a hegemonic force is fragile and fleeting.

In contrast, stability that springs from resistance in defense of national identity is deeply rooted and reliable.

This form of endurance, emblematic of Iran's contemporary experience and tested in trials like sanctions, the COVID-19 crisis, and recent conflicts, represents not just a domestic achievement but a strategic asset for the entire region and its international partners.

Geography shapes the destiny of nations. Iran is not a peripheral player but the geopolitical heart of Eurasia—a nexus where energy corridors, trade routes, and cultural flows converge.

Any vision for a secure and enduring connectivity across Asia would be incomplete and vulnerable without a stable, thriving Iran as its strategic pivot.

The steadiness of this vital core is essential for the overall health of the region's economic and security framework.

Enduring partnerships are built not on fleeting interests but on shared principles and aligned worldviews.

Iran's eastward orientation is no tactical maneuver; it reflects a strategic, long-term realignment drawn from a thorough assessment of historical trajectories.

This authentic direction, proven in critical historical junctures, provides the necessary consistency and predictability for deep, multifaceted collaboration.

Economic cooperation between these two powers must transcend simple transactional logic and evolve into an “integrated ecosystem.”

Such a system rests on the organic linkage of energy security, technology transfer, and complementary supply chains.

This framework not only generates lasting economic benefits but also weaves productive structures together, fostering a constructive mutual interdependence resilient against external pressures.

A sustainable security architecture in West Asia emerges not from foreign interventions but through collaboration among regional actors.

The role of a responsible global power lies not in direct involvement in disputes but in facilitating and supporting the formation of such indigenous security structures.



This approach replaces “engagement in crisis” with “participation in stability,” activating our joint capabilities for mutual protection.

The essence of this partnership can be defined by complementary strengths. One side acts as a global economic and technological anchor, while the other serves as a geostrategic hub and guarantor of security depth in a critical region.

Each plays a unique, irreplaceable role, forming a powerful and stable whole when united— an alliance of partners with distinct yet synergistic capabilities.

In the present circumstances, the strategic destinies of these two civilizations are intertwined more than ever.

Attempts to destabilize Iran

and obstruct its natural role are part of a broader strategy to contain emerging Asian powers.

Thus, Iran's security and development are not isolated concerns but integral to the security and growth of the entire Asian continent, particularly its strategic allies. This represents an undeniable shared fate.

Ultimately, history demands that nations recognize defining moments and chart the future with courage and foresight. Iran, with its proven internal stability, independent political will, and clear vision, stands ready alongside China to play a constructive role in shaping an order where cooperation supplants confrontation, and sustainable development replaces hegemony. This is not merely a choice but a shared historical responsibility.

‘Behind the beautiful image US projects lies a sinister reality’

Pezeshkian says US foreign policy principles create endless wars

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian told a group of his country’s political activists during a televised interview that he does not think the United States would begin to move towards peace any time soon, adding that while Iran is not seeking war, it is always ready to fight one.

The president who is known as some of the more lenient politicians in the country when it comes to engagement with the West made the remarks when asked about the possibility of a new war with Israel and Washington.

U.S.-Israeli strikes hit Iran back in June for a period of 12 days, damaged Iran’s nuclear, military, and civilian infrastructure, and killed over 1,000 Iranians.

Iran responded with barrages of missiles and drones that eventually forced Israeli and American leaders to back down and request a ceasefire.

Washington said the aim of the war was to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. But a lack of evidence to support the claim, its conduct of the war and the rhetoric it employed at various points of the conflict suggest the true objective was the overthrow



of the Islamic Republic. Pezeshkian himself was targeted in an assassination attempt at least once during the 12-day war.

During the interview, Pezeshkian recalled a book he read as a student that talked about the Vietnam war, and perfectly encapsulated U.S. foreign policy.

“The U.S. is unwilling to relinquish its global interests, while sovereign nations and their people refuse to surrender their resources,” he explained, adding that Americans will “never stop these actions on their own.”

About half a year after taking office, Pezeshkian began to attend indirect talks with the United States to discuss Iran’s nuclear

program. The June war broke out only days before the two sides were set to meet in Muscat for a sixth round of talks.

Many now believe the U.S. was never genuine about diplomacy, and only pressured Iran to enter talks in order to make it think a war was not incoming.

“Behind the beautiful, attractive image America projects lies a sinister reality – a face that, when you look closely, ruthlessly kills women, children, the elderly, and the sick. Yet these same people preach about ‘democracy’” the president stated.

Pezeshkian said if Iranians unite and work together, it would be difficult for the U.S. to repeat its aggression.

Nonetheless, Iran will always remain ready to defend itself. “We are not after war, and we’ve said that from day one, but we’re not afraid of war either.”

The Iranian leader extended his criticism to European nations, stating that they accuse Iran of violating agreements while engaging in breaches themselves.

He specifically mentioned the so-called snapback mechanism, which allows signatories of the JCPOA to re-instate UN sanctions against Tehran should they find it non-compliant.

Germany, France, and the UK notified the UN Security Council Thursday that they are invoking the mechanism, even though they have scrapped all of their own commitments for years, and also backed the recent strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities.

“We do not want snapback at all,” he said. “But it is questionable how some European countries, which themselves violate many international laws, now accuse us of not respecting frameworks. How can such claims be accepted from them?”

Pezeshkian said his primary focus is the preservation of Iranian unity, irrespective of any future steps taken by Western states.

The price of irrelevance: Europe and the costs of its geopolitical followership

From Page 1 ► **The illusion of autonomy**

The notion of European strategic autonomy has filled endless academic and diplomatic forums since 2014. It was invoked as the reasonable alternative to military dependence on the United States and as a historic opportunity to build bridges with Eurasia. Yet facts show that at every major crossroads—whether the war in Ukraine, relations with Moscow, or nuclear policy toward Iran—the EU has consistently chosen to forgo its margin of maneuver and align, often uncritically, with the interests of its increasingly unreliable U.S. ally.

It is not only European diplomacy that seems to have resigned itself to this role; the cost of that strategic surrender ripples through its entire architecture of security, economy, and external influence. Sanctions on Russia have had serious consequences for European industry—especially in key sectors like energy and manufacturing—while reshaping the map of continental alliances. The result is an EU with less freedom of action, increasingly conditioned by dynamics it does not fully control.

The concrete costs: Energy, technology, and global influence

Automatic alignment with Washington has carried tangible costs: the transfer of capital and jobs to U.S. firms, particularly in defense and technology. Europe’s response to the crisis—following the breakdown of dialogue with Moscow—only deepened transatlantic dependence. At the same time, coercive measures against Russia did not substantially alter its behavior, exposing the asymmetry of costs between Europe and the United States.

Europe’s obsession with “following the rules” and its technocratic approach to foreign policy contrast sharply with Washington’s tactical flexibility. The U.S., far from suffering from its “maximum pressure” strategy, has attracted investment and profited from Europe’s resource drain; meanwhile, European industry is forced to buy American energy and weapons at inflated prices, worsening the innovation gap and technological dependence

that hobble any project of real independence.

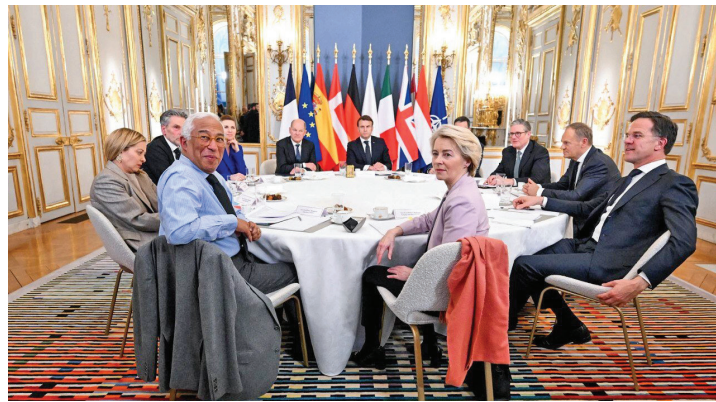
The Iran case: A missed opportunity and diplomatic costs

One of the clearest examples of the cost of European followership is its handling of the Iran file. The nuclear deal (JCPOA) had allowed the EU to regain a mediating role and open new political and commercial channels with Iran—an essential actor in West Asia’s balance and a potential partner for reducing reliance on hostile energy suppliers. Yet the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA marked the collapse of any expectation of autonomous policy from Brussels.

A sober analysis of Iran’s nuclear aspirations requires moving beyond the Manichaean dichotomy imposed by Washington and Tel Aviv. For nearly two decades, Iran’s leaders have emphasized their intent to use nuclear energy for civilian purposes, in pursuit of economic development and energy autonomy as a sovereign right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Despite fears and disinformation spread by hostile lobbies, there is no conclusive evidence that Iran has developed nuclear weapons, and IAEA inspections have historically found no major violations to justify its current isolation.

Had the EU prioritized dialogue and agreement over punishment and threat, it could have consolidated its role as an actor of peace and mediation in Eurasia, creating alternative channels of economic and energy cooperation beyond the U.S.–Gulf axis. Instead, Europe forfeited commercial and political benefits, while Chinese and Russian companies filled the gap left by departing European firms. Under pressure, Tehran proved resilient, consolidating its economy under sanctions, strengthening autonomous regional networks, and aligning itself with the multipolar order that is steadily moving away from Western hegemony.

Perhaps the greatest—if intangible—cost is Europe’s loss of long-term credibility. In Iran’s strategic imagination, the EU no longer appears as a reliable partner or as a counterweight to U.S. unipolarity, but as a soft, fick-



le intermediary unable even to guarantee the implementation of basic international agreements. This perception limits any possibility of structural cooperation in critical areas: energy, technology, migration management, or regional stability.

Examples abound. Renewed sanctions not only harmed Iran’s economy and society but also undercut Europe’s diplomatic standing in the region. Turkey, India, Brazil, and above all China and Russia stepped in to fill the leadership vacuum, launching their own initiatives to sustain multilateralism and Eurasian integration without Brussels. The cost: reduced access to emerging markets, greater political isolation, and the decline of any European global ambition in favor of powers with real autonomy.

The mirage of European unity

Behind the rhetoric of “European unity” lies deep fragmentation. Germany and Austria prioritize trade and cheap energy; France clings to its nuclear force as its shield; Eastern states automatically align with U.S. maximalism out of fear of Russia; and the South searches for middle paths that rarely materialize for lack of geopolitical weight.

The management of sanctions and common policy toward Iran and Russia has laid bare these fractures: while some push for restoring pragmatic relations, others choose permanent hostility, reproducing a foreign agenda at home. In the long term, this lack of consensus weakens the EU’s negotiating position and widens the gap between the rhetoric of autonomy and actual impotence.

The past years show Europe is passively accepting its displacement to the margins of the global

game. Its inability to define an independent policy toward Moscow and Tehran positions it as a mere appendage of Washington, condemned to pay the costs of decisions made elsewhere. The price is steep: resource loss, technological erosion, diminished trust from potential partners, strategic dependence, and growing diplomatic irrelevance.

Paradoxically, being perceived in Tehran as an insubstantial and unpredictable actor means the EU also loses its ability to influence or moderate the Islamic Republic’s excesses and encourage reforms or openness. When the incentive of dialogue is replaced by coercion and punishment, the result is greater defensiveness, nationalism, and the consolidation of alternative alliances.

Toward a new Eurasian architecture

The post-Ukraine era has accelerated the formation of a new Eurasian order, in which the EU is almost a spectator, watching the emergence of alliances and consensus that challenge the old bipolar logic. Iran, alongside Russia, China, and other emerging powers, is driving multilateral initiatives based on non-interference, sovereignty, and new mechanisms of cooperation and security. Europe, preoccupied with internal crises, arrives late to this game and laments lost opportunities for influence and gain.

To avoid being permanently relegated to the periphery, the EU must rethink its priorities, invest in autonomous capacities—technological, energy, military—and rebuild diplomatic bridges, especially with key actors like Iran.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran’s fixtures in AFC U23 Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers unveiled

TEHRAN – Iran will face Hong Kong in the opening match of the AFC U23 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026 Qualifiers.

Iran will play Hong Kong on September 2 at the Al Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi in Group I.

Omid Ravankhah’s team will also play Guam and the UAE on September 6 and 9, respectively.

The 2026 AFC U-23 Asian Cup qualification will be an international men’s under-23 football competition which will decide the participating teams of the 2026 AFC U-23 Asian Cup.

The 44 teams were divided into eleven group of four team. In each group, teams will play each other once at a centralized venue.

The 11 group winners and the four best runners-up will qualify for the final tournament.

Iranian boxers win medals at Belt & Road Youth Boxing Festival

TEHRAN – Iranian boxers claimed two silver and two bronze medals at the 3rd Belt & Road Youth Boxing Festival.

The competition was held in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China from August 15 to 30.

The tournament brought 32 teams from 20 countries together.

Mehrshad Sherafatmand lost to Kazakhstan boxer in the final bout of 75kg and seized a silver medal.

In 80kg weight class, Amir Ali Fatahian lost to his Indian rival and won a silver medal.

Zubair Issa Zehi and Matin Chamipa won two bronzes in 50kg and 54kg, respectively.

Iran U23 football beat Hong Kong in friendly

TEHRAN – Iran U23 football team defeated Hong Kong in a friendly match on Friday in Abu Dhabi.

The match was held as part of preparation for the AFC U-23 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026 Qualifiers.

Iran will start the campaign with a match against Hong Kong on September 2 at the Al Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi in Group I.

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Iranian ministers consult on sports diplomacy

TEHRAN – The joint meeting of the Minister of Sport and Youth and the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the heads of sports federations was held to facilitate international affairs in this field.

Abbas Aragchi, the Foreign Minister, joined Sports Minister Ahmad Donyamali to discuss sports diplomacy for the country.

Given the high importance of sports diplomacy in developing sport, presidents of the National Olympic and Paralympic Committees, as well as heads of sports federations, were present at the meeting on Saturday.

“In the 12 days of confrontation with Israel, many national teams were abroad competing, and due to canceled flights, they could not return home. However, the Foreign Ministry officials were active during these hard days and did every-

thing in their power to remove obstacles in line with the sports community,” Donyamali said.

The Minister of Sport and Youth then emphasized the need for deeper interaction between the sports family and the Foreign Ministry, adding: “The sports federations and the National Olympic and Paralympic Committees played an effective role during the conflict, both among the athletes and on international stages. We believe the status of sports diplomacy is so important that it helps elevate the country’s overall diplomatic standing in such times.”

He noted that one of the major problems for sports federations is the lack of visas for athletes.

Donyamali then outlined upcoming important events for Iranian sport:

“The Youth Asian Games in Bahrain and the Islamic Solidarity Games in Saudi Arabia are significant multi-sport events we are approaching this year. We have no concerns about the Solidarity Games since necessary consultations have been conducted with the Saudi ambassador. Regarding Bahrain, our expectation is to benefit more from the ministry’s capacity so that our athletes can focus entirely on hoisting the national flag with peace of mind,” Donyamali said.

Iran defeat U.S. to advance to 2025 FIVB U21 World Championship final

TEHRAN – Iran eased past the U.S. in straight sets (25-21, 25-20, 25-20) in the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship semifinals on Saturday.

Ali Mombeni led Iran with 19 points, while Cole Hartke scored 13 points for the U.S.

Iran will play Italy on Sunday in the final match, while the U.S. lock horns with Czech Republic in bronze medal match.

Iran had previously defeated Kazakhstan, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Canada, Poland, Argentina and China in the competition.

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

The competition is being held in Jiangmen, China.

Iranian teams unchanged in FIFA World Rankings

TEHRAN — The latest edition of the FIFA Futsal World Rankings was released and Iran’s women’s and men’s futsal teams remained unchanged in the rankings.

In the women’s rankings, Brazil remain at the top, which serves as the basis for pot allocation used when the draw for the eagerly anticipated tournament is held on 15 September.

Iran’s women’s team remain ninth, while Thailand and Japan have moved up one and five places respectively to fourth and fifth.

In the men’s rankings, Iran’s team remain fifth. Brazil lead the ranking, followed by Portugal, Spain, Argentina, and Iran.

Cameroon captain Aboubakar on Persepolis’ radar

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club have reportedly set their sight on signing Cameroonian striker Vincent Aboubakar.

The 33-year-old forward has most recently played for Turkish club Hatayspor.

Aboubakar is a member of Cameroon national football team since 2010 and has scored 45 goals in 112 matches.

Persepolis is searching for a forward after parting company with Issa Alekasir and Serdar Dursun.

Aboubakar has played for French club Lorient and Portuguese side Porto.

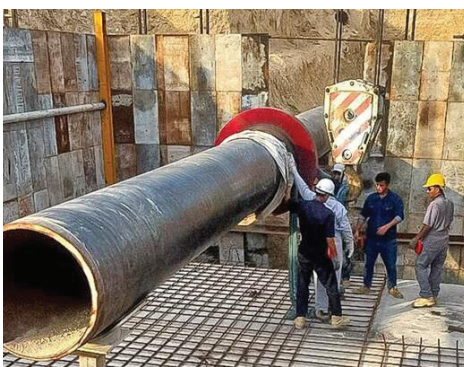
POGC completes onshore section of South Pars Phase 16 gas pipeline

TEHRAN – Pars Oil and Gas Company has brought into operation the onshore section of a new 32-inch pipeline from South Pars Phase 16, aimed at strengthening gas transmission and easing supply imbalances, the company said on Friday.

The project consists of a 115-kilometer pipeline, including 110 kilometers offshore and five kilometers onshore, linking the SPD-16 platform at the shared South Pars gas field to the sixth refinery complex.

Nematollah Shahrouyi, head of the pipeline construction project, said the offshore laying of the line had already been completed, while the final five-kilometer onshore stretch was recently finished.

The pipeline has a daily capacity of 28.3 million cubic meters of rich gas and required more than €155 million (\$173 million) in in-



vestment.

Shahrouyi praised the cooperation of the Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company and the South Pars Gas Complex, noting that the project was carried out entirely with domestic expertise and contractors.

Pezeshkian inaugurates 2 major oil pipelines, 722 industrial projects

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian on Friday ordered the official launch of two strategic oil ministry projects and 722 industrial projects under the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, state media reported.

The oil projects include the 455-kilometer Bandar Abbas–Rafsanjan products pipeline and the 340-kilometer Sabzab–Rey sour crude oil pipeline.

Pezeshkian praised workers, investors and managers for their role in completing the projects, saying they will cut costs, boost efficiency, reduce environmental hazards and fuel smuggling, and strengthen energy security.

The Bandar Abbas–Rafsanjan pipeline, built with about €400 million (\$448 million) in investment, consists of a 26-inch, 455-kilometer line, three pumping stations, a storage terminal, 100 kilometers of power transmission lines and three substations. It has started with a daily capacity of 13 million liters, set to rise to 48 million liters by year-end, avoiding the daily movement of 1,600 fuel tankers and saving the equivalent of \$120 million in fuel.

The Sabzab–Rey sour crude pipeline, with €330 million (\$370 million) in investment, includes a 30-inch, 102-kilometer line and a 26-inch, 239-kilometer line, supported by five pumping stations, two balancing tanks, 43 kilometers of power lines and four substations. The first section, Sabzab to Tangeh Fanni, has begun operating with a



450,000-barrel-per-day capacity, while the second section to Shazand will add 300,000 bpd by December. The line will for the first time enable crude from northern Dezful fields to reach Shazand and, in the future, Tehran refineries.

More than 95 percent of the equipment was domestically produced. The two pipelines are expected to create 3,000 direct and 7,000 indirect jobs.

In parallel, Pezeshkian inaugurated 722 new or revived industrial units across 27 provinces. These include 588 new plants in chemicals, metals, electronics, food, pharmaceuticals, textiles, paper and non-metallic minerals, representing \$300 million in investment and generating over 7,000 direct jobs.

Another 134 previously idle factories in 20 provinces were revived with about \$48 million in spending, creating nearly 2,000 jobs, with the potential to rise to 3,800.

Over \$340m invested in new industrial park infrastructure in a year

TEHRAN – The government has developed more than 170 trillion rials (\$340 million) worth of new infrastructure in industrial parks across 31 provinces over the past year, the head of the Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) said.

Reza Ansari, who also serves as deputy industry minister, announced the investment during a ceremony marking the inauguration of 588 new factories and the revival of 134 idle units in industrial estates nationwide for Government Week.

He said energy shortages remain the most pressing challenge for industrial zones.

“In some provinces, industrial parks face power outages for up to three days a week. This severely increases production costs, adding pressure on both workers and manufacturers,” Ansari told reporters. He said industrial parks consume around 4,000 megawatts of electricity and called for the Energy Ministry to reconsider power cut policies affecting these hubs.

To mitigate shortages, ISIPO has facilitated renewable energy projects, securing over 600 permits from the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA). About 60 megawatts of solar power capacity has already been installed on rooftops and within industrial zones, Ansari said.



He criticized fuel supply disruptions for diesel generators, adding that many industrialists are forced to purchase fuel on the black market. “Industry is being treated unfairly. To keep production lines running, manufacturers are buying diesel at 15,000 to 20,000 toman per liter, compared with the official rate of 300 toman,” he said.

A recent survey in the Shamsabad Industrial Park found the average fuel cost for a single unit at over 70,000 rials per liter (\$0.7), most of which benefits middlemen and smugglers. Ansari said the issue is not a shortage of diesel but poor policymaking and mismanagement in distribution. He urged coordinated action between the Oil Ministry and industrial authorities to resolve the crisis.

Non-oil exports hit \$16.5b in 4 months, trade with Arab neighbors grows

From Page 1 ▶ Montazeri said the average export price stood at \$339 per ton, down seven percent from last year. He added that petrochemicals and petroleum-based products made up 49 percent of exports, mining and minerals 25 percent, industrial goods 17 percent and agriculture nine percent.

On the import side, Iran purchased 12.21 million tons of goods worth \$17.03 billion, a 14 percent drop in value. The UAE was the largest supplier with \$5.41 billion (30.7 percent of total imports), followed by China at \$4.59 billion (26 percent), Turkey at \$2.59 billion (14.7 percent), India at \$669 million (3.8 percent) and Germany at \$628 million (3.6 percent). The five accounted for 79 percent of imports.

Imports were dominated by intermediate goods at 72 percent, with consumer and capital goods each holding a 14 percent share. Gold imports reached \$1.07 billion in the period.

Montazeri said Iran posted a positive trade balance with 81



countries, totaling \$5.8 billion, while recording a negative balance of \$6.9 billion with 60 other states.

Trade with Arab nations and neighbors

Trade with Iran's Arab neighbors has strengthened this year despite broader declines in overall export value. Iraq remained Iran's second-largest export destination after China, with nearly \$3.0 billion in purchases, dominated by foodstuffs, construction materials, and indus-

trial goods. The UAE continued to serve as both a key market and a re-export hub, facilitating financial and logistical channels for Iranian trade despite sanctions.

Exports to Oman, Qatar and Kuwait also expanded, particularly in petrochemicals, cement, and agricultural products, according to data reported by the Tehran Times. Officials said Iran's strategy of deepening regional supply chains and leveraging short-distance logistics has allowed Tehran to offset disrup-

tions in long-haul trade.

Beyond Arab states, Turkey remained a vital market, while Afghanistan preserved its role as a steady buyer of fuel and basic goods despite political instability.

Mohammadali Dehqan Dehnavi, deputy minister of industry and head of the TPO, said non-oil exports reached a record \$58 billion last year, boosted by preferential trade agreements. He cited the free trade deal with the Eurasian Economic Union, which took effect in May, as a key driver of recent growth.

He added that Tehran is working to finalize a free trade pact with Pakistan, a move expected to significantly raise the current \$3 billion trade volume between the two neighbors.

Despite setbacks from port accidents, regional conflicts, and currency policy shifts, officials maintain that expanding ties with Arab states and regional neighbors will remain central to Iran's trade strategy in 2025.

Industry Ministry unveils support package for industries

TEHRAN – Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade has rolled out a support package for manufacturers and producers to ease challenges ranging from energy shortages and liquidity constraints to foreign currency access and supply of raw materials.

The initiative comes after Israel's 12-day war against Iran, which damaged eight state-run industrial parks and one privately-owned zone, leaving about 15 production units with 40 to 60 percent losses. The disruption caused equipment failures and hampered output, while the unstable post-war economy triggered capital flight and dampened consumer demand for durable goods.

Industry Minister Seyed Mohammad Atabak has met industrial leaders and inspected damaged facilities, pledging banking facilities, foreign exchange support, and insurance and tax relief. The government has drawn up a special support plan in coordination with the private sector, including chambers of commerce, cooperatives and guilds, to revive affected industries.

The package was finalized in the government's Infrastructure Working Group, which includes the ministries of economy, agriculture, justice, oil and energy, the Central Bank, the Plan and Budget Organization, and the presidential office for science and technol-

ogy. It prioritizes sectors tied to household livelihoods and aims to ensure industrial resilience.

Support measures cover taxation and social security relief, banking facilities, foreign exchange commitments, infrastructure needs such as transport and energy, and trade facilitation through customs and import licensing. Provisions include repayment holidays, extension of past credit lines, temporary suspension of penalties on bounced checks, and reclassification of overdue loans after three months to ease financial pressure.

Over 140 villages connected to national power grid in a year

TEHRAN – Iranian Energy Ministry has connected 144 villages to the national power grid over the past year as part of the government's push to expand electricity access in rural and deprived areas, the Energy Ministry said.

Despite inheriting power shortages from the previous administration, the government has prioritized rural electrification and the overhaul of aging

distribution networks, with upgrades underway in 6,500 villages.

The ministry has also launched a program to equip nomadic communities with solar systems, overcoming the challenge of their seasonal migration. In the past year, 7,500 nomadic households have been provided with solar power units, enabling access to electricity wherever they move.

Efforts to boost overall generation capacity have added 271 megawatts from decentralized power plants, while the distribution transformer capacity has increased by 3,621 megavolt-amperes, and transmission and sub-transmission transformers by 9,765 megavolt-amperes.

Infrastructure expansion has included 997 kilometers of new transmission and sub-transmission lines and the replacement of

19,500 kilometers of overhead wires with cables to enhance grid reliability.

Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi said recently that the government aims to tackle electricity shortages through a mix of solar generation and demand-side efficiency, noting that decentralized production at the point of consumption can deliver faster results than expanding long-distance transmission lines.

Iran eyes 40m tons of transit by 2028 under 7th Development Plan

TEHRAN – Iran plans to double its annual transit volume to 40 million tons by the end of its Seventh Development Plan in 2028, a senior Transport and Urban Development Ministry official said, highlighting the country's ambitions to become a regional transit hub.

Jafar Jamili, acting head of the ministry's Office for Commercialization and Trade Associations, said nearly 20 million tons of cargo transited through Iran in the past year, with about 88 percent moved by road and 12 percent by rail.

Most of the traffic consisted of petroleum products shipped from Iraq's Kurdistan region through southern Iranian ports to Persian Gulf Arab states. Other transit flows passed through Bandar Abbas toward Afghanistan and from northwestern to northeastern borders.

Under the new plan, 70 percent of transit is expected to move by road and 30 percent by rail. Jamili said meeting the 40-million-ton target requires expanded road and rail infrastructure, upgraded border terminals, and streamlined customs and trade processes.

He noted that geopolitical tensions in maritime chokepoints such as the Strait of Hormuz, Bab el-Mandeb and the Suez Canal have increased global interest in overland routes, particularly since the Russia-Ukraine war disrupted supply chains.

Jamili stressed the role of economic diplomacy, pointing to President Masoud Pezeshkian's visits to Armenia and Belarus, both members of the Eurasian Economic Union, as part of efforts to strengthen regional connectivity. Iran aims to leverage crossings such as Jolfa and Nakhchivan to enhance its link with Armenia and Russia, especially

while the Rasht–Astara railway remains incomplete.

Despite its strategic position on the Caspian Sea, Jamili said Iran has yet to capitalize on the region's potential. “Only one percent of Russia's 900 million tons of trade goes through the Caspian, showing that effective investment in this transit route has been lacking,” he said.

He added that sanctions on shipping, banking and insurance continue to divert some Indian and Russian exports away from Iran, even at the cost of longer routes and higher expenses.

Jamili said Iran is engaged in several regional corridors, including TRACECA, CPEC–ITI and KTAI, but boosting their competitiveness requires foreign investment, banking solutions and closer regional coordination.

Iran aims to boost renewable power capacity to 7,000 MW by 2026

TEHRAN – Iran plans to expand its renewable energy capacity to 7,000 megawatts by the next Iranian calendar year (begins late March 2026), up from current levels, an energy official said.

Jafar Mohammadzadeh, deputy head of investment at the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), told IIRB that the government

has accelerated solar and other renewable projects, targeting a sharp increase in output. He noted that the ministry's plan to add 100 MW each week reflects earlier preparations in the sector.

“Our goal is to raise renewable energy's share in the country's electricity mix from the current 1.5 percent to 15 percent by the end of the 14th government's

term,” he said, adding that Iran's vast solar potential gives the target strong backing.

Mohammadzadeh said peak electricity demand occurs during summer, when solar output is also at its highest, making renewables particularly valuable. He added that small- and large-scale solar projects are being supported through attractive

contracts, including long-term guaranteed purchase agreements that allow investors to recover costs in about three years.

He also noted that in the short term, some equipment imports will be required to speed up construction of large-scale plants, with the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade providing support.

A subcontractor abandoned: PA discovers collaboration buys no protection, or visas

The visa ban is an assault on Palestinian representation

From page 1 ► which obliges Washington, as host state, to admit all delegations. International law, like diplomacy, is treated in Washington as a tool bent to Israel's interests.

Contrary to U.S. assertions that Abbas has not condemned the Hamas October 7 operation, in a letter sent in early June 2025 to French President Emmanuel Macron — and also to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman — Abbas wrote that what Hamas did, “in killing and taking civilians hostage, is unacceptable and condemnable.” He further called for the immediate release of all hostages, the dismantling of Hamas's military capabilities, and its removal from power in Gaza.

Collaboration discarded

The ban is striking because the Palestinian Authority has long served as a subcontractor for Israel's occupation. Rather than a liberation movement, Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah became administrators of an imposed status quo.



The so-called PA “security forces” have worked closely with Israel to suppress resistance—arresting fighters, dispersing protests, and keeping order while settlements expanded. The Authority collected taxes, ran services, and projected a façade of sovereignty as Israel tightened control.

Again and again, Abbas bent to U.S. and Israeli demands: endless “peace talks” without peace, restraining international campaigns against Israel, and managing a bu-

reaucracy designed more to pacify than to resist.

His rhetoric echoed Washington's ostensible preference for negotiations over confrontation. Yet the moment he pursued even mild accountability—seeking prosecutions in The Hague, he and his entourage were punished like enemies.

The lesson is clear. Compliance has not protected Abbas. Obedience has not earned favor. By banning the delegation, Washington

has shown that subservience guarantees nothing. The PA's decades of compromise have delivered only humiliation, proving that trading resistance for hollow promises is a bargain with no reward.

Hypocrisy laid bare

Washington claims its decision safeguards peace, but hypocrisy is obvious. In 1988, it denied Yasser Arafat a visa, forcing the UN to relocate to Geneva so he could speak.

In 2013, it barred Sudan's Omar al-Bashir over his ICC indictment. Yet Benjamin Netanyahu—himself wanted by the ICC for Gaza crimes—will address the Assembly without issue. Law is wielded selectively; principle turned into a cudgel.

Timing also reveals intent. France, the UK, and Canada are preparing to recognize Palestine, joining nearly 150 countries that already do. Washington fears Abbas might use the UN podium to press for independence, and so silences him preemptively.

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

Israeli casualties and “missing” soldiers

From page 1 ► The three incidents occurred in different locations Zeitoun (southeast Gaza City), al-Sabra (south Gaza City), and Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

Fierce clashes were reported between Palestinian resistance fighters and the IOF, with close-quarters combat taking place in both Gaza City and Khan Younis.

The most intense fighting happened in Zeitoun, where Israeli media described the incident as one of the most difficult since the war began.

Fighters from Palestinian resistance groups ambushed a unit from the IOF's Nahal Brigade and attempted to capture troops in a second ambush. Four IOF soldiers were believed to be unaccounted for, and the military did not issue any official statement to deny the reports.

To prevent soldiers from being taken captive, the IOF reportedly activated the “Hannibal Protocol” but clashes continued until early Saturday morning as more Palestinian resistance fighters joined the battle.

According to updates released after the event, one IOF soldier was killed, and at least eleven others were seriously wounded. Reports suggest more fatalities among the IOF ranks.

While the Israeli military searched for its

missing soldiers, Palestinian resistance forces hindered the operation by firing mortars and machine guns at the IOF and targeting six rescue helicopters.

Fighters from al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, launched what was described as a fierce assault, setting ambushes and striking fortified IOF positions. Israeli media reported that four different IOF positions in Zeitoun were targeted in a short span of time.

Describing the nature of the attacks, reports pointed out that “Hamas cells emerge from the rubble, execute deadly ambushes, and vanish.”

Following the incident, the IOF withdrew from Zeitoun and returned to their bases.

Military censorship has been enforced, prohibiting publication of details about the missing soldiers. Hebrew reports stated “Military censorship has, as usual, imposed restrictions on events in Gaza, amid conflicting reports over whether contact was lost with Israeli soldiers.”

The al-Qassam Brigades posted a brief but pointed message on the social media platform Telegram, which read: “A reminder for the forgetful – death or captivity.”

In the nearby al-Sabra neighborhood, IOF soldiers also fell into an ambush, prompting the regime's helicopters to bomb the area. Mean-

while, IOF warplanes intensified their presence over Gaza, carrying out airstrikes and deploying flares.

The ambushes occurred just hours before al-Qassam commander and spokesman Abu Ubaida warned that any Israeli plan to occupy Gaza City would come at a high price in blood and increase the chances of IOF soldiers being captured.

“The enemy's criminal plans to occupy Gaza will backfire upon their political and military leadership. The Zionist army will pay with the blood of its soldiers, and new opportunities to capture additional prisoners will emerge by God's will.”

“Our fighters remain on high alert with elevated morale, ready to demonstrate extraordinary heroism and teach the invaders harsh lessons with divine assistance.” The military spokesman added.

The IOF has been stepping up bombings in and around Gaza City as the regime's military prepares for a ground invasion.

On Saturday evening, Israeli Army Radio stated, “The Israeli military has denied reports claiming that a capture operation took place in the Gaza Strip,” but as one military expert noted, the occupying regime is in damage-control mode.

ate the humanitarian catastrophe.

Amid growing international scrutiny, Slovenia and the Netherlands urged the European Union to adopt stronger measures against Israel, including banning imports from West Bank settlements and suspending arms deals. Slovenia said existing measures—such as barring Israeli ministers from entry and restricting trade—were insufficient, while the Netherlands, joined by Sweden, pushed for EU-level sanctions.

The mounting outcry against Israel's policies in Gaza has heightened expectations that the EU might take more decisive steps to curb civilian suffering and famine in the enclave. Yet, the effectiveness of European pressure remains uncertain, particularly given Israel's strategic alignment with the United States, its principal Western ally. Whether Europe can translate growing public and political demands into concrete action will be a critical test of its ability to influence the ongoing crisis.

and 2024.

Sayyed al-Sadr never separated the fate of Lebanon from that of Palestine. He believed that supporting the Palestinian cause was a moral and political test for the Arab and Islamic world: “Support for the Palestinian cause is as sacred as my turban, my prayer niche, and my pulpit.”

In doing so, Sayyed al-Sadr placed himself in direct confrontation with Israeli expansionist projects, which have always bet on dismantling the Lebanese interior and distancing it from the Palestinian cause.

Today, Sayyed Musa al-Sadr's project for balanced development and an inclusive civil state remains an urgent need, not just an annual commemoration.

Yemen mourns PM killed in Israeli strike, vows continued resistance

In the wake of a deadly Israeli airstrike on Thursday, Yemen's presidency announced in a Saturday statement the martyrdom of Prime Minister Ahmad Ghaleb al-Rahwi and several ministers during a routine government workshop in Sana'a. The attack, which also left other ministers wounded, was condemned as a “cowardly act” aimed at undermining Yemen's role in supporting Gaza.

President Mahdi al-Mashat has named First Deputy Prime Minister Mohammed Ahmed Mufatah to take over the duties of Prime Minister.

Al-Rahwi, a seasoned statesman from Khanfar in Abyan Governorate, was widely respected for his resilience, deep connection to his community, and decades of public service.

Rising through local governance despite repeated assassination attempts and personal loss, he was seen by many as a symbol of steadfastness and dedication to Yemen's sovereignty.

His leadership in the “Government of Change and Construction” was marked by a focus on national unity and resistance to foreign aggression.

“The blood of our great martyrs will be fuel for continuing on the same path,” the presiden-



cy declared, vowing that state institutions will keep serving the Yemeni people “no matter the magnitude of the loss.” Officials reassured citizens that the government will continue its duties in a caretaker capacity.

The presidency reaffirmed its “original position in supporting and aiding the people of Gaza” and pledged to keep building the armed forces to confront “all challenges and dangers,” echoing the broader stance of a nation that sees itself on the front lines of defending Palestine and resisting Israeli aggression.

Ferdowsi University hosts meeting on Israeli state terrorism

MASHHAD – An international conference on “Israeli State Terrorism” was convened by the Habilian Association, bringing together experts from Iran, Italy, Argentina, and Pakistan to mark Iran's National Day of Fight against Terrorism. The conference provided a platform for a multi-faceted critique of Israeli policies and international backing.

The event featured analyses on international law, media representation, geopolitical responses, and the prevailing double standards in defining terrorism. Speakers unanimously argued that Israel's actions against Palestine, Lebanon, and Iran constitute a form of state-sponsored terrorism that is often shielded from accountability by arrogant Western countries.

The conference began with a speech by Seyyed Mohammad Javad Hasheminejad, Secretary General of the Habilian Association. In his opening remarks, he honored the memory of the martyr nuclear scientists, the innocent women and children who were victims of the June attacks by the Zionist regime on Iran, and all the country's martyrs of assassination.

Subsequently, Dr. Seyyed Hossein Mousavifar, Assistant Professor of International Law at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, provided a precise legal analysis of the Zionist regime's actions against Gaza and Iran. Citing the principles of international law, he described these actions as a clear example of the blatant violation of fundamental principles such as proportionality and distinction in use of military force.

Next, Giulio Chinnapi, an Italian geopolitical analyst and editor-in-chief of the “World Politics” blog website, analyzed the positions of Western and Arab governments, as well as international organizations, regarding the Zi-

onist regime's aggressions against Iran, Gaza, and Lebanon. He said the fact that the Zionist regime is not held accountable for its crimes stems from the geopolitical alliances and strategic interests of major powers.

Furthermore, Ursula Asta, a distinguished Argentinian journalist and member of the editorial board of Radio Gráfica, as the next speaker, examined the role of mainstream Western media. According to her, these media outlets, by systematically justifying the actions of the Zionist regime and treating its victims inhumanely, have become a tool for psychological warfare. Ursula Asta then presented strategies to counter this one-sided narrative and provide a more balanced picture to global public opinion.

Finally, Muhammad Murtaza, a Pakistani geopolitical analyst and senior researcher at the Pak Institute for Peace Studies, addressed the issue of the West's double standards in labeling terrorism. He posed the fundamental question: Why are the violent actions of non-state groups immediately labeled as terrorism, while similar or more severe actions by the Zionist regime are justified under the framework of “self-defense”?

Murtaza cited the role of Zionist lobbies in shaping Western foreign policy as a key factor in creating this double standard.

The Habilian Association stated that the aim of holding this meeting was to create international solidarity and form a more cohesive intellectual front among experts and researchers to counter the state terrorism of the Zionist regime and its supporters. It was announced that the full video of this meeting and the texts of the speeches will be published soon.

Double-tap silence: Erasing Gaza's storytellers

By Muhammad Akmal Khan

ISLAMABAD – Khan Younis awakened under an indistinct dawn, its disarming silence resonating across its streets and rooftops, where Palestinian journalists adjusted cameras in preparation to livestream another day from Gaza's never-ending night. Smoke drifted over broken streets; sunlight caught shards of glass; these exhausted journalists continued performing their last duty: to record, to witness, and to keep memory alive when others chose not to witness.

As Mohammed Salama from Al Jazeera prepared to set up his camera on a rooftop of Nasser Hospital, there came a loud, metallic shriek as the first missile struck, scattering shards of glass and equipment into dust in its wake. As medics and fellow journalists rushed to pull the injured from the debris, a second missile hit the same spot. It was a “double-tap” strike designed to kill rescuers, silence witnesses, and bury the story.

Six journalists were killed within seconds: Mohammed Salama (Al Jazeera), Hussam al Masri (Reuters), Mariam Abu Daqqa (Associated Press), Moaz Abu Taha, Ahmed Abu Aziz, and Hassan Douhan—an academic and correspondent for Al-Hayat al-Jadida. Their cameras lay blood-smeared and broken on the rooftop; at least 20 others died alongside them: patients on stretchers, nurses transporting supplies between wards, paramedics carrying supplies—they were gone not because of where they stood, but because of what they tried to protect.

This attack is not the result of chaos; it is deliberate. When missiles target those holding cameras first, it is never a coincidence. It is intent. Since October 7, 2023, over 270 journalists have been killed in Gaza, making this the bloodiest period for the press in modern history, as recorded by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

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

Rising Gaza famine sparks calls for Europe to pressure Israel

From page 1 ► Tensions escalated further after the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), a global hunger monitoring body collaborating with the United Nations and major aid agencies, declared on August 22 that an “entirely man-made” famine is underway in Gaza City, the Strip's largest urban area, and its surrounding regions. The IPC warned that deteriorating conditions threaten a sharp rise in deaths across the territory.

However, European responses have been divided. Countries such

as Spain and Ireland are advocating for robust pressure on Israel to halt its attacks on Palestinians, while others, including close allies like Germany, prefer limited or no direct action.

On Friday, foreign ministers from Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Slovenia, and Spain issued a joint statement condemning Israel's planned takeover of Gaza City. Citing the IPC's famine declaration, the ministers emphasized the urgent need for UN agencies and NGOs to operate in Gaza to allevi-

ate the humanitarian catastrophe.

Amid growing international scrutiny, Slovenia and the Netherlands urged the European Union to adopt stronger measures against Israel, including banning imports from West Bank settlements and suspending arms deals. Slovenia said existing measures—such as barring Israeli ministers from entry and restricting trade—were insufficient, while the Netherlands, joined by Sweden, pushed for EU-level sanctions.

a fate, but rather an international game that served only Israel's interests.

Sayyed Musa al-Sadr held his rifle at the Ain al-Binya camp in the Bekaa Valley, and said: “Weapons are the adornment of men.”

While foreign embassies were inciting Lebanese to fight each other, Sayyed Musa al-Sadr went on a hunger strike inside a mosque in Beirut's southern suburbs to prevent attacks on the surrounding Christian villages, believing that all internal fighting served Israel.

Afterwards, he established the Resistance Brigades in 1975 to confront the Israeli occupation regime. These brigades inflicted heavy losses on the occupation regime during the Battle of Shalaboun in 1978, paving the way for liberation in 2000 and the victories in 2006

harmonizing spiritual values with the requirements of the modern state.

“Sects are a blessing, but sectarianism is a curse,” Sayyed Musa al-Sadr (R) says.

Sayyed al-Sadr realized that building a state begins with equality and not marginalizing one sect at the expense of another.

Hence, he focused on establishing institutions that would eliminate deprivation and preserve the dignity of Shiites, believing that social justice and economic development are the fundamental pillars of any political stability.

This was during the civil war of the 1970s, when he worked diligently to extinguish the flames of discord between Arab capitals, emphasizing that civil war was not

47th anniversary of Sayyed Musa al-Sadr's disappearance

From page 1 ► It remains certain that the one who hid him was the same one who benefited from his absence, thinking that by hiding him, his project would be extinguished; however, the fire rebounded on the magician, and his Resistance project only grew and grew.

Forty-seven years have passed, and Sayyed Musa al-Sadr's project has continued to be a comprehensive national and humanitarian project that has risen above sectarian divisions and narrow political interests.

Sayyed al-Sadr was not a traditional religious scholar who merely preach and provide religious and spiritual guidance. Rather, he was a reformist thinker with a forward-looking vision that made him an exceptional figure capable of

Tourism rally marks martyrs of 12-day Israeli imposed war

TEHRAN—A family tourism rally themed “Martyrs of Authority Memorial” was held with participation of Presidential staff and their families on Friday to commemorate the Government Week (August 23–29).

The event displayed a manifestation of solidarity, social passion, and the preservation of the culture of sacrifice during the 12-day Israeli war on Iran, IRNA reported.

According to a report by Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran (TACI), 60 vehicles and 170 participants set off from the Niavaran Cultural and Historical Complex in Tehran, and after traveling a two-and-a-half-hour route based on specific maps, they gathered at the finish line located at the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Line’s Cultural, Sports and Welfare Institute.

This rally was organized by TACI with the slogan “The Art of Being a Family” and honored the memory of the martyrs of the 12-day imposed war of the Zionist regime against

Iran, as well as the martyred state officials.

This type of rally is not of any speed nature, but the main criterion for success is compliance with traffic laws and regulations, maintaining safety and discipline along the route, and the intelligence and accuracy of the participants.

Accordingly, the cars passed through control stations along the route and their performance was evaluated by the intelligent rally control software and under the supervision of human resources.

In the end, the best teams were introduced and awarded immediately after reaching their destination with the help of the rally control software and based on the total points earned.

The main goal of this event is to create social vitality, promote a safe driving culture, develop family activities in the field of motor racing and link such events with cultural and social values.

Iran seeks to expand tourism ties with Iraq

TEHRAN – Iran aims to broaden tourism cooperation with Iraq across four sectors, a senior industry official said.

Hormatollah Rafiei, director of the Association of Iranian Travel Agencies, said the two sides have agreed to develop health, sightseeing, religious, and scientific tourism. He made the remarks after a meeting with Iran’s cultural attaché in Iraq.

According to IRNA, Rafiei, who traveled to Baghdad to make preliminary arrangements for holding Iran-Iraq Tourism Roadshow, in a meeting with the Iranian Cultural Attache, emphasized the decision of the country’s private sector in the tourism industry to develop sightseeing, pilgrimage, scientific, and health tourism between the two countries.

He explained that Iranian tour operators, who will travel to the three cities of Baghdad, Basra, and Karbala in the Iran-Iraq tourism roadshow event, should focus their advertising and negotiations on four axes proposed and agreed upon by the Association of Iranian Travel Agencies with Iraq’s state and private sector involved in the tourism industry.

Rafiei continued that Hojatoleslam Gholamreza Abazari, Iran’s cultural attaché in Iraq, emphasized that considering that 50 percent of Iran’s inbound tourism comes from Iraq and that the tourism fair between the two countries is being held for the first time since the Islamic Revolution of Iran by tourism industry’s private sector, he considers it his duty to support holding this event.

Announcing Iraq’s readiness to develop tourism relations with Iran in the fields of cultural, sightseeing, and health tourism, in addition to

pilgrimage tourism, Rafiei said that about 3.5 million tourists from Iraq travel to Iran annually, and efforts are being made to increase this figure to five million incoming tourists by the end of this year.

Tourism between Iran and Iraq is deeply rooted in religious pilgrimage, or Ziyarat, which draws millions of visitors annually to sacred sites. Iraq hosts key Shi’a shrines in Karbala and Najaf, while Iran welcomes pilgrims to Mashhad, home to the shrine of Imam Reza (A.S.), and Qom, a major center of Shi’a scholarship. Cities such as Shiraz, with its rich Islamic heritage, also attract religious visitors.

Beyond pilgrimage, both countries share centuries of cultural, historical, and linguistic connections that can be further developed into broader tourism exchanges. Iran’s ancient cities, including the UNESCO-registered Persepolis and Isfahan, showcase Persian architecture and world heritage sites, while Iraq is home to the ruins of Babylon and the Mesopotamian cradle of civilization. Such sites appeal to travelers interested in history and archaeology.

Cultural tourism opportunities also extend to traditional music, crafts, and cuisine, which reflect shared influences and mutual appreciation across the two nations. Moreover, natural landscapes such as the Zagros Mountains, marshlands in southern Iraq, and Iran’s diverse climate—from deserts to lush forests—provide eco-tourism potential.

Strengthening tourism ties between Iran and Iraq could therefore go beyond religious travel, promoting historical exploration, cultural exchange, and nature-based tourism, while deepening people-to-people connections across borders.

Echoes of the Past: Millennia-old painted pottery vessel

The pictured vessel is a masterful example of the celebrated Cheshmeh Ali ware tradition, dating to the Transitional Chalcolithic period, approximately 5200–4800 BC.

Its surface displays a rich orange-red hue, meticulously smoothed and burnished to a soft sheen. The elegant decoration is executed in a deep black pigment, with all motifs rendered in fine, confident lines.

The vessel’s form and decorative scheme showcase the profound influence of older traditions in basketry and woodworking. This is evident in the bands of precise, hatched lines that frame the central scene, a pattern that closely resembles the work of a basket weaver. While the majority of Cheshmeh Ali pottery is adorned with geometric designs like stripes, chevrons, and dots, this piece features a far less common and more narrative motif. The central register presents a striking procession of long-legged, long-necked birds, likely herons or storks, parading in a horizontal band. This depiction is a brilliant example of the potter’s skill, capturing the essence of the local fauna with a few minimal, yet highly naturalistic, strokes. Such animal imagery—which also includes goats, ibex, and gazelles—forms an important, though rare, part



of the ceramic tradition, with representations of humans being exceedingly scarce.

Renowned for its distinctive handmade construction, Cheshmeh Ali ware’s decorative schemes are typically painted in black pigment on a still-damp surface, which can create slightly blurred edges. The presence of such intricate animal figures on this large bowl, as opposed to the common geometric or floral patterns, makes it a notably rare and important specimen within the tradition.

Ismailabad or Mushelan Tappeh is located south of the Tehran-Qazvin road and it was first excavated by archaeologist Ali Hakemi between 1958 and 1961.

Tehran to host conference on UNESCO listing of Khorramabad Valley sites

TEHRAN – Iran’s tourism minister has said a national conference will be held in Tehran to celebrate and promote the UNESCO inscription of the Prehistoric Sites of the Khorramabad Valley, which were added to the World Heritage list in July.

Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri made the announcement during a visit to Lorestan province, where he attended a local ceremony marking the valley’s inscription, Mehr news agency reported on Saturday.

The upcoming event [in Tehran] would gather experts, scholars, and representatives from Lorestan and across the country, Salehi-Amiri said in a televised interview.

“We have discussed with the local and provincial officials and MPs to hold a national conference in Tehran with the participation of experts from Lorestan and across Iran, so that we can once again celebrate the inscription of the prehistoric sites.”

He said the sites should be introduced globally through international media. “The 29th World Heritage site in Iran belongs to Lorestan, and we can make significant use of this capacity,” he said, adding that local schools would be encouraged to integrate Lorestan’s geography and heritage into lessons to foster pride among students.

Salehi-Amiri also highlighted

Four photographs showing prehistoric sites in the Khorramabad Valley. The top-left image shows a rock shelter with a small opening. The top-right image shows a cave entrance in a rocky cliff. The bottom-left image shows a prehistoric site with a large rock shelter and a small cave. The bottom-right image shows a rocky cliff with a cave entrance.

The UNESCO-registered Prehistoric Sites of the Khorramabad Valley, which preserves evidence of human occupation dating back about 63,000 years, is situated in western Iran.

plans to pursue World Heritage inscription for Falak-ol-Aflak Castle in Khorramabad (the capital of Khorramabad province). “When a site is inscribed on the World Heritage List, it belongs to all humanity. Foreign tourists spend to see these sites, and no other property with this antiquity has yet been registered,” he said.

The Prehistoric Sites of the Khorramabad Valley, inscribed during the 47th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Paris in July, include five caves and one rock shelter. The area preserves evidence of human occupation dating back 63,000 years, with archaeological remains from the Middle to Upper Palaeolithic periods.

The sites reveal Mousterian and Baradostian cultures and provide insights into early human migration from Africa to Eurasia. Finds such as symbolic objects and sophisticated stone tools highlight the cognitive and technological development of Homo sapiens in the Zagros Mountains.

Among the most significant sites is Yafteh Cave, which contains some of the region’s earliest evidence of symbolic behavior, while Ghamari Cave preserves traces of Neanderthal occupation followed by Chalcolithic pastoral communities.

As mentioned by Salehi-Amiri, Iran has over one million documented heritage sites, of which about 43,000 are officially registered. Lorestan ranks as the country’s second province in terms of registered heritage properties.

Yazd official calls for stronger tourism cooperation with Isfahan



TEHRAN – The head of the Tourism Commission of Yazd Islamic City Council has called for closer cooperation between Yazd and Isfahan to boost joint tourism initiatives.

Bibi-Fatemeh Haqirossadat made the remarks during a one-day visit to Isfahan, saying the

trip provided an opportunity for tourism associations from both cities to explore ways of expanding collaboration, CHTN reported.

Highlighting the cultural, historical, and religious tourism potential of both destinations, she said Yazd and Isfahan could work together to attract more domes-

tic and international visitors as part of Iran’s so-called “Golden Triangle of tourism.”

First signed in 2016, the Golden Triangle agreement links the provinces of Isfahan, Fars, and Yazd. The pact has recently been renewed by provincial governors to strengthen cooperation, improve infrastructure, and increase accessibility across the three historic regions.

Haqirossadat said discussions in Isfahan focused on tourist exchange programs, noting that closer cooperation could lengthen visitors’ stays, generate economic growth, and create new jobs. She added that partnerships between Yazd and Isfahan could serve as a model for other historic cities seeking constructive interaction in the tourism sector.

In October 2024, the mayors of

Yazd, Isfahan, and Shiraz signed a trilateral agreement in Shiraz under the “Golden Triangle of Iran’s Tourism” framework. The deal outlined support for joint research projects, the use of international networks, and the organization of conferences, workshops, and exchange visits. It also emphasized identifying investment opportunities and promoting cultural and artistic programs to showcase the heritage of the three cities.

Isfahan, once a hub of international trade and diplomacy, is among Iran’s leading tourist destinations, celebrated for its mosques, palaces, and bazaars. Yazd, located in central Iran’s desert region, is famed for its winding lanes, mud-brick architecture, and innovative urban planning that has sustained life in an arid environment.

Scaffolding taken down from Qazvin Jameh Mosque after 15 years

TEHRAN – Scaffolding has been removed from the southern iwan of Qazvin’s Jameh Mosque after nearly 15 years, marking the completion of a major restoration project, the provincial cultural heritage chief said on Thursday.

Seyyed Mehdi Hosseini said the removal followed instructions from the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts during a recent visit to the site.

“The scaffolding was installed about 15 years ago to preserve and restore this part of the mosque. During this period, structural damages were addressed and conservation works were carried out,” Hosseini explained.

He said restoration included removing incompatible additions, reinforcing structures with traditional materials, rebuilding decorative vaulting based on the original design, and preserving historical layers.

According to Hosseini, the next stage will focus on the dome chamber of the mosque once re-

lated studies are finished.

The Jameh Mosque of Qazvin, also known as the city’s Friday Mosque, is among Iran’s oldest and most important Islamic monuments. Built on the site of a Sassanian fire temple, its foundation dates to 807 CE under Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid.

Today the mosque is recognized as a prime example of a four-iwan courtyard plan, with a central yard of about 4,000 square meters. Situated 150 km northwest of Tehran, Qazvin served as the Safavid capital for more than four decades in the 16th century.

Hosseini said the mosque, which is being considered for inclusion on UNESCO’s World Heritage list, remains central to both the city’s cultural identity and ongoing conservation efforts.

Situated some 150 km northwest of Tehran, Qazvin was the capital of the Safavid Empire for over forty years (1555–1598) and is nowadays known as the calligraphy capital of Iran. The city has sometimes been of central importance at major moments



A view of the centuries-old Jameh Mosque of Qazvin

in Iranian history. It was initially founded by Shapur I (r.240–270), the second ruler of the Sassanian Empire. It was refounded by Shapur II (r.309–379), who established a coin mint there. Under the Sasanians, Qazvin functioned as a frontier town against the neighboring Daylamites, who made incursions into the area.

Qazvin was captured by invading Arabs around 644 CE and destroyed by Hulagu Khan in the 13th century. In 1555, after the Ottoman capture of Tabriz, Shah Tahmasp (1524–1576) made Qazvin the capital of the Safavid Empire, a status that Qazvin retained for half a century until Abbas the Great moved the capital to Isfahan in 1598. Today, it is a provincial capital that has been an important cultural center throughout its history.

Health officials, managers attend ToT workshop to strengthen immunization program

TEHRAN – Over 80 health officials and senior managers from across Iran gathered in Hamadan for a 3-day training of trainers (ToT) workshop to enhance immunization service delivery and improve vaccine coverage across the country.

Organized by the Hamadan University of Medical Sciences in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MoHME), with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (Gavi), the event was held from July 26 to 28, the WHO website announced in a press release on August 27.

The workshop brought together immunization officers from 32 universities of medical sciences. Participants honed their skills in areas such as vaccine scheduling, cold chain management, and monitoring adverse events following immunization, and also in risk communication to effectively address public health concerns.

The Essential Program on Immunization (EPI) Manager at the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Seyyed Mohsen Zahraei noted the Islamic Republic of Iran's successful, 50-year history of battling infectious diseases, including the country's eradication of polio and elimination of measles. He underscored the vital role of the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) in guiding immunization policies.

Head of the Communicable Diseases Department at the WHO Country Office in Iran, Omid Zamani, underlined the Organization's commitment to Iran's health initiatives, highlighting their align-



ment with the global Immunization Agenda 2030.

Throughout the sessions, participants engaged in candid discussions about the local challenges they face, such as logistical hurdles in reaching remote, rural communities.

An online evaluation survey conducted by WHO at the workshop's close revealed high participant satisfaction with the organization and content of the training and the expertise of the trainers.

The knowledge and skills gained during the workshop will have a ripple effect as participants go on to conduct training at the provincial and local level to empower a broader network of health care providers.

Strengthening national immunization program

Participating in a consultative workshop, national experts and international partners explored the potential to promote the country's immunization pro-

grams in June.

The two-day workshop to develop Iran's National Immunization Strategic Plan was held from 9–10 June 2025 at the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

The consultative workshop provided stakeholders with a platform to review and update national immunization strategies, identify challenges, and discuss ways to improve vaccine coverage across the country, the WHO website announced in a press release on June 30.

Participants included representatives from the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, universities of medical sciences, the Iran Food and Drug Organization, the Pasteur Institute of Iran, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the WHO.

Zamani shared insights drawn from successful global immunization experiences and emphasized the importance of aligning with Immunization Agenda 2030 targets and adapting international

best practices to the Iranian context and local health infrastructure.

Focusing on country ownership and local adaptation helps ensure that the resulting strategic plan is evidence-based, practical, and sustainable, and can be effectively implemented within the country.

The workshop also heard from national leaders, including the head of the NIHR, Ali Akbari Sari, who highlighted the Institute's scientific support role, and Zahraei, who reiterated the need for operational plans to be tailored to local conditions.

Participants engaged in specialized group discussions, delving into goals, implementation strategies, and key assessment indicators. The outcomes of these collaborative sessions will form the foundation for the final version of the National Immunization Strategic Plan. Once finalized, the plan will be submitted to the relevant authorities for approval.

Another focus of the workshop was to establish effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress and impact.

WHO's participation underscores its commitment to supporting the Islamic Republic of Iran by leveraging global knowledge for national health priorities. WHO is a committed partner to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, providing technical guidance and support to strengthen essential health services, including robust and equitable immunization programmes that protect the population from vaccine-preventable diseases. The workshop was supported by a grant from GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance.

Iran to commemorate National Cheetah Day

TEHRAN – The 'National Cheetah Day' is celebrated annually on August 31 to raise awareness about the significance of safeguarding and increasing the existing population of Asiatic cheetahs in the country.

Once roaming vast plains from West Asia into India, the Asiatic cheetah is now found only in Iran. Since 2001, around 85 cheetahs have died because of human-related factors, indicating we have posed a greater threat to their survival than nature.

Listed as one of the most critically endangered big cats in the world, saving the Asiatic cheetah from extinction has turned into a shared responsibility.

The latest report by the Department of Environment (DOE) has shown that there are 26 Asiatic cheetahs in the country, with 20 individuals living in the wild, and six in captivity.

According to the head of the DOE, Shina Ansari, the extinction of the world's rarest cat has become a symbol of our challenges and responsibilities towards Iran's nature.

Preserving cheetahs is not merely an environmental concern. It is a symbol of the country's ecosystem's health, a life-balance preserver. Protecting the cheetah means ensuring the right to life for people and nature.

The DOE makes its best efforts to preserve endangered animals. However, the goal will be fulfilled only by the participation and involvement of people, media, responsible institutions, and nature lovers.

Relocating domestic animals from cheetah habitats, fencing the Tehran-Mashhad road, which is one of the most dangerous areas, and breeding in captivity are among the most recent measures the DOE has been taking to preserve cheetahs.

Also, the DOE is following up on the allocation of two trillion rials (around 2 million dollars) to decrease cheetah mortalities on the Tehran-Mashhad road through enhancing road lighting, reducing vehicle speeds, and fencing. Drones and other wildlife monitoring tools can also be used to conserve cheetahs in the area.

According to the latest report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN),

some 154 species of Iranian vertebrates are critically endangered of extinction.

In May, President Masoud Pezeshkian issued an order, obligating the DOE to develop a strategic plan to preserve endangered species in the country.

The DOE has already developed action plans for the conservation of 25 endangered species, and the plans are being implemented in the country. It is also planning to organize a committee for the preservation of critically endangered species, including cheetahs, black bears, and great bustards.

Currently, about 128 species of animals and vertebrates in the country are at risk of extinction, some of which are not in good condition, and amphibians are the most vulnerable in this area. Persian zebra, Asiatic cheetah, black bear, and yellow deer are in danger of extinction.

A comprehensive and operational plan in the field of the environment is needed to cover different environmental sectors. It must include goals, assumptions, operational measures, financial resources, and results.

More Iranian universities in ISC WUR 2024

TEHRAN – The 2024 World University Rankings (WUR) report by the Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC) has included 72 Iranian universities, up from 69 in 2023.

A total of 426 universities from 31 Islamic countries are listed in the ranking, where Turkey, with 102 universities and Iran, with 72 universities, and Pakistan, with 39 universities, are placed first to third, IRNA reported.

Among the top universities of Islamic countries, Saudi Arabia ranks 172. Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Egypt jointly rank 401–450, Qatar ranks 451–500, and Turkey, the UAE, and Lebanon rank 501–600.

Tehran University's ranking has changed from 501-600 in 2023 to 401-500 in 2024. The University is placed first in the country.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences ranks second. The university's global ranking is 501-600, up from 601-700 in 2023.

Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences' ranking has also improved from 801-900 in 2023 to 601-700 in 2024, ranking third in the country.

Sharif University of Technology and Tarbiat Modares University are placed fourth and Fifth, respectively.

In the ISC WUR 2024, there are 2,661 top universities from 114 countries and six continents. Harvard University, Stanford University, Johns Hopkins University, University College London, and the University of Oxford are the top five universities.

ISC WUR is one of the ranking systems that started ranking universities for the first time in 2018 by the ISC Ranking Department with the aim of evaluating the universities of the country as well as Islamic countries at the world level.

To rank the world universities in its criteria, ISC considers the most important mission of universities, which are research (60 percent), education (10 percent), international activities (15 percent), technology and innovation (15 percent), and then evaluates universities.

Besides, the number of university retractions is calculated with a negative score, which is included in a criterion called Negative Reputation.

In the ISC World University Ranking, universities that have published at least 850 documents in Web of Science 2020-2022 are considered. The information on this ranking is collected from USPTO, WOS, and InCites.

Recent rankings

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

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

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

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

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

Among Iranian universities, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah Univer-



sity of Medical Sciences, and Yazd University of Medical Sciences have improved their rankings by 1002, 961, and 948 positions, respectively.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IRCS staff attending disaster response training courses

TEHRAN – The Rescue and Relief Organization of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is holding disaster preparedness and response training courses for some 85,000 rescuers, relief, and rapid response teams.

The training courses will be concurrently conducted in different provinces, including Tehran, Isfahan, Kerman, Gilan, and Markazi, IRNA reported.

The course has three modules regarding national hazards. The first part will be implemented in cities for relief workers. The second phase will train rescuers at the provincial level, and the third will be for rapid response teams, who have a central role in disasters and crises.

So far, three trainers have been trained in prehospital care, logistics, relief preparedness, and combat in Gilan province. Upon their

return to their own provinces, the trainers will hold specialized courses for relief workers and rescuers.

In January, the IRCS held a rescue and relief Olympiad for 256 men and women rescuers from all over the country, competing in four-member teams.

The main objective of the Olympiad was to improve the physical fitness and skills of the IRCS rescue forces to enhance their efficiency in providing relief services in times of disaster.

The rescue and relief Olympiad involved seven steps, including navigation (forest, valley, and mountain), water rescue, rescue basket, emergency accommodation (setting up tents), prehospital care, road-rescue missions (stabilizing, saving, and transferring victims), and mountain search and rescue.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Iran reopens schools under strict health protocols

Over 15 million students attended schools nationwide on Saturday for the new school year under strict health protocols to protect teachers, staff, and students against the coronavirus pandemic.

The opening bell of the new academic year was rung symbolically by President Hassan Rouhani at a girls' high school in downtown Tehran.

Mohsen Haji Mirzaei, Education Minister, symbolically attended the virtual festival.

More than 15 million students started the new school year in 116,000 schools across the country, Haji Mirzaei stated.

This year, education is followed in three forms of in-person, virtual, and television-based, but our priority is school attendance, he noted, highlighting, all schools should strictly follow the health regulations so that the students are protected.

بازگشایی مدارس با پروتکل های سختگیرانه بهداشتی

بیش از ۱۵ میلیون دانش آموز سال تحصیلی جدید را با رعایت پروتکل های سختگیرانه بهداشتی آغاز کردند.

رنگ آغاز سال تحصیلی به صورت ارتباط تصویری در مراسمی به دستور رئیس جمهور در دبیرستانی در تهران نواخته شد.

محسن حاجی میرزایی وزیر آموزش و پرورش در این مراسم گفت: بیش از ۱۵ میلیون دانش آموز سال تحصیلی جدید را در ۱۱۶ هزار مدرسه آغاز کردند.

وزیر آموزش و پرورش در این مراسم گفت: امسال آموزش دانش آموزان به سه شکل حضوری، مجازی، و تلویزیونی دنبال می‌شود، اما اولویت ما آموزش حضوری دانش آموزان است. او افزود: همه مدارس باید شیوه نامه‌های بهداشتی را به طور جدی رعایت کنند تا مشکلی برای دانش آموزان پیش نیاید.

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

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 43051505
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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do not waste water even if you were at a running stream.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:05 Evening: 18:53 Dawn: 4:08 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:36 (tomorrow)

What’s in Tehran art galleries



Painting

* Aran Gallery is showcasing paintings by Rojan Baqeri in an exhibition named “Heaven: Lilith-Eve”.

The exhibition will be running until September 12 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle-le-Chateau St.

* A collection of paintings by Somayyeh Moharami is currently on display in an exhibit at Binesh Gallery.

Named “Inevitable”, the exhibition runs until September 13 at the gallery located at 22 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave.



* An exhibition of paintings by Neda Azami is underway at Ebteda Gallery.

Entitled “Personal Silence”, the exhibition will run until September 3 at the gallery located at 35 Farrokhi Alley, near Vali-e Asr Square.

* Paintings by Alireza Mohseni are currently on view in an exhibition at Vaali Gallery.

The exhibit named “Protected Area” will continue until September 16 at the gallery located at 72 Khoddami St., Vanak Sq.



* Paintings by Hamidreza Fotouhi are on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

The exhibit named “Parasite” will be running until September 12 at the gallery, which can be found at No. 5, Bahrami alley, Mashahir Street, Qaem Maqam Farahani Avenue.

* Hoor Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Ahmad Morshedlou.

The exhibition will be running until September 19 at the gallery located at 12 Naemi Alley, North Mirza Shirazi St., off Motahari Ave.



* Ech Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by a group of artists including Ehsan Arjomand, Zahra Mohammadi, Mahshid Arab, Mahsa Karimi, Hossein Tadi and Solmaz Nabati.

Entitled “Unavoidable Blank”, the exhibit runs until September 12 at the gallery that can be found at 10 Mirza Taraj opposite Dowlat St., Shariati Ave.

* A collection of paintings by Najmeh Pashai is on view in an exhibition at Homa Gallery.

The exhibition named “Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea” will be running until September 9 at the gallery located at No. 8, Fourth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

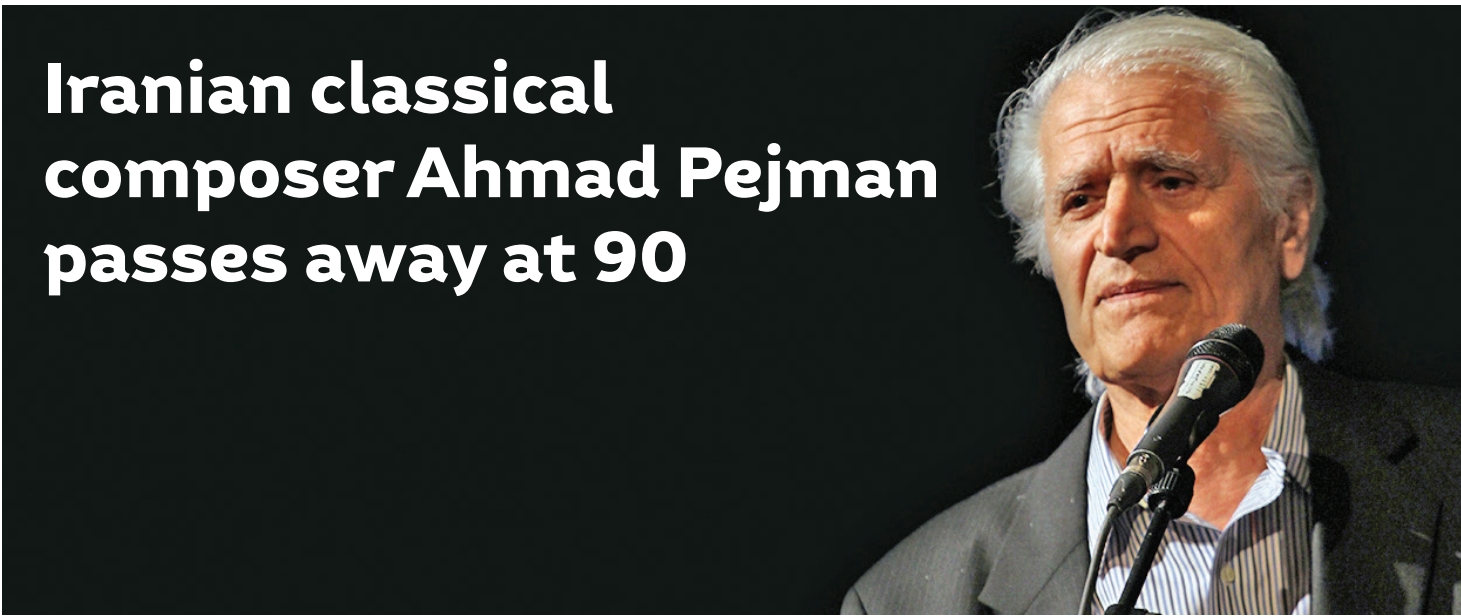
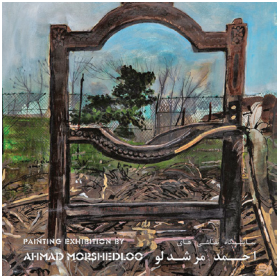
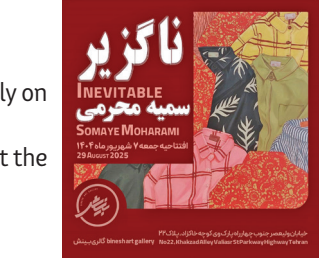


* An exhibition of paintings by Niloufar Aqahassani is underway at Seyhoun Gallery.

The exhibit named “Tree” will run until September 3 at the gallery located at No. 11, 4th St., Vozara Ave.

* A collection of paintings by Mona Shahsavari, Ghazaleh Abdollahzadeh, Aram Khadem, and Neda Sadeqnia is on display in an exhibition at Tarrahan Azad Gallery.

The exhibition named “In Silence” will be running until September 9 at the gallery located at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.



Iranian classical composer Ahmad Pejman passes away at 90

TEHRAN – The veteran Iranian classical composer and musician Ahmad Pejman passed away in Los Angeles, the U.S., on August 29.

Known for his works in opera, symphonies, and music for films, Pejman died at the age of 90 on Friday evening after a long period of illness, IRNA reported.

Born in Lar, Fars Province, Pejman was exposed to the sounds and rhythms of southern Iran from early childhood. In high school, he started violin lessons with Heshmat Sanjari and music theory with Hossein Nassehi.

As a young violinist with the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, he was awarded a scholarship to study composition at the Music Academy in Vienna. He studied composition with Thomas Christian David, Alfred Uhl, and Hanns Jelinek. As a first-year student at the Academy, Pejman’s compositions were performed by the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, and his orchestral work Rhapsody was performed by the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Upon graduation from the Academy of Music in Vienna, Pejman returned to Iran in 1968, where he was commissioned to write the opera “Hero of Sahand,” which was based on the legendary Persian hero Babak Khorramdin. Between 1969 and 1978, Pejman continued to compose symphonic works, operas, ballets, and also wrote many scores for motion pictures and television programs.

In 1976, he moved to New York, where he entered Columbia University’s Doctorate of Music program in New York and continued his studies with Buelant Arel, Vladimir Ussachevsky, and Jack Beeson.

In 1984, Pejman moved to Los Angeles and continued to compose and arrange music for jazz

and pop ensembles and motion pictures.

In the early 1990s, Pejman decided to return to Iran and continued with a long-term devotion to scoring films for directors including Majid Majidi, Bahman Farmanara, Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, and Mohsen Makhmalbaf. He won two Crystal Simorgh awards from the Fajr Film Festival and four awards from the Iran Cinema Celebration.

In 1992, he was commissioned to write a cantata for choir and orchestra for the liberation of Khorramshahr. He was then commissioned to write music for a musical theater to be performed at Tehran’s Vahdat Hall. Since 1993, Pejman has been writing film music, composing for the orchestra and choir, and releasing various soundtracks and CDs.

“Resurrection Concert” or “A Persian Night with Vancou-

ver Opera Orchestra,” featuring Vancouver Bach Choir, was held at the Orpheum Theater in Vancouver in 2019 to pay tribute to Ahmad Pejman. For the very first time in Canada, 150 Professional musicians graced the magnificent Orpheum Theater to perform masterpieces by renowned Iranian composers at the Persian Night concert. Three movements of the Symphonic Poem “Sudden Resurrection” composed by Ahmad Pejman were performed in this concert, conducted by Leslie Dala.

Pieces from other Iranian composers, Loris Tjeknavorian, Hooshang Kamkar, Homayoun Khorram, Gholamhossein Minbashian, Fardin Khalatbari, Mahyar Alizadeh, Ramin Jamalpour, and Saman Samimi were in the repertoire of the concert as well. Alireza Ghorbani and Talin Ohanian were Vocalists in the concert.

Simorgh Theater in Tehran will stage Florian Zeller’s “The Lie”

TEHRAN – Simorgh Theater in Tehran will host the play “The Lie” written by the French novelist and playwright Florian Zeller for five days.

Mohamad Ghavam is the director and producer of the 80-minute play and also performs in it along with Donya Bakhtiari, Fate-meh Zarei, and Amirali Taran. The play will be performed from September 1 to 5.

In “The Lie,” a companion piece to Zeller’s earlier play “The Truth,” a married couple has invited another married couple to dinner. They are best friends. But things get complicated because the hostess believes she has spotted her friend’s husband kissing another woman in the street. She wants to cancel the dinner party because she feels she must tell her friend the truth. But her husband tries to convince her that in life it is sometimes necessary to tell a lie or hide the truth as a sign of love and tact, and that there is no point in getting involved in the lives of others.

This ethical moral dilemma soon evolves into a wild labyrinth of deceptions, truths, and lies, in which no one knows anymore who is cheating on whom and with whom, and whether all four are actually faithful or unfaithful. The latter does not matter anymore.

What really matters is the trust a person loses when one catches their loved one lying. This is why the play is resolved reassuringly: both couples decide to re-establish mutual trust despite possibly divergent facts, since they have realized that to insist on the truth could lead to a total war. Or, in the words of one of the protagonists, if everyone told everyone the truth, no one in this world would talk to anyone anymore.

“The Lie” received its English language world premiere at the Menier Chocolate Factory, London, in September 2017.

Zeller, 44, is a French novelist, playwright, theater director, screenwriter, and film director. He has written over a dozen plays, that have been staged worldwide and have made him one of the most celebrated contemporary playwrights.

His work has been translated into a dozen languages, including English and Persian. He won the Prix Interallié in 2004 for his novel “Fascination of Evil”.

Zeller has won the most prestigious French and international playwriting awards, including the Molière Award and the Laurence Olivier Award.

Palestinian girls host Gaza art exhibition

In an act of defiance, at a time when the simple daily struggle for survival is a battle in itself, courageous Palestinian girls in Gaza host an art exhibition to express their pain through paintings and other emotion invoking works of art.

On August 28, in downtown Gaza, a group of talented but traumatized Palestinian artists used their talents to educate and vent their feelings of fear, anguish, and anger amid Israeli military onslaught at an art exhibition despite the constant risk to their safety, 5Pillars reported.

A group of courageous young Palestinian girls organized the exhibition featuring paintings that reflect the hardships and tragedies in their lives, caused by Israel’s brutal and indiscriminate attacks whilst enforcing an economic blockade of the Palestinian territory.

Normal life in the Palestinian strip may have ceased but the bravery and strength of Pales-

tinian women and girls never ceases to amaze.

Everyday life has become an unimaginable struggle and there are daily reports of deaths of people due to lack of food and water.

The art exhibition highlights the struggles faced by Palestinian women, while also serving as a powerful expression of resistance and freedom of expression despite the near total destruction and devastation of schools, hospitals and residential areas of the strip.

The themes of the works are mostly dark and features starvation, death and suffering – a reminder of the life of Palestinians trapped in Gaza.

Prior to Israel’s genocidal war on the Palestinian strip, Gaza was home to several colleges of art and art galleries as well as many museums and cultural centers. Most, if not all of these institutions have been completely destroyed during Israel’s

indiscriminate bombing of the Gaza Strip.

Gaza has a very young population and, according to estimates, around 25% of the population consists of young people of secondary school and college going age.

In addition, prior to October 2023, there were approximately 87,000 students enrolled in higher education institutions (universities, colleges, and open university channels) across the Gaza Strip.

Art and painting has become a popular skill for many Palestinians who feel as if their plight and their culture is being routinely ignored by the global community.

At a time when Palestinian history, culture, and the people themselves are facing a genocide, young talented Palestinians face few options of expression or therapy left.

At least 63,000 Palestinians have been killed and 159,000 injured in Israel’s genocidal war on

the Gaza Strip since October 2023.

Many victims remain trapped under rubble or on the streets and rescue teams are still unable to reach victims due to ongoing Israeli bombardment and lack of equipment.

Israel’s full blockade of the Gaza Strip, in place since early March, has created catastrophic conditions for the enclave’s 2.4 million residents, leading to famine, widespread disease, and the collapse of essential services.

Last November, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. Israel also faces a genocide case at the International Court of Justice over its war on the enclave.

Qatari officials are continuing to call on the international community to put pressure on Israel to accept the most recent ceasefire proposal.