



## Russia showed 'good and firm' stance during Israeli-US war on Iran, says top commander

TEHRAN – Iran's top military commander has praised Russia for its "very good and firm" position at the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in opposing Israel's 12-day war against the Islamic Republic in June.

Major General Abdollah Mousavi, Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces, made the remarks on Thursday during a meeting in Tehran with Russian Minister of Energy Sergei Tsivilev, who was visiting with a high-level delegation.

Mousavi said Iran had once again demonstrated to the world that it has never been the initiator of war, stressing that diplomacy remains the preferred avenue for resolving disputes. "Iran considers diplomacy and negotiations the best solutions to the problems," he noted.

At the same time, the general recalled that Iran's enemies had often exploited negotiations as a façade for deception. "The enemy used negotiations as a cover for betrayal and launched the imposed war against Iran," he said.

Mousavi underscored that despite such duplicity, Iran had shown it would not hesitate to defend itself. "Iran's Armed Forces powerfully gave a firm and crushing response to the United States and the Zionist regime," he emphasized. ▶ Page 2

## At UN, Iran defends Syria's sovereignty and blast Israeli expansionist agenda

TEHRAN – Iran has once again underscored its unwavering support for Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, declaring that any attempts to impose external agendas or fragment the country are unacceptable.

Addressing a UN Security Council session on Syria on Thursday, Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations, Amir Saeid Iravani, raised concerns about proposals promoting the federalization of Syria. He cautioned that such schemes would exacerbate divisions and risk plunging the country back into conflict.

"Iran will continue to support the Syrian people and their efforts to restore peace, stability, reconstruction, and national reconciliation, in full alignment with their own will," Iravani affirmed.

The envoy stressed that a durable solution in Syria can only emerge from a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process, free from outside interference or coercion. "The process must be genuinely inclusive of all communities. Excluding key groups would only deepen grievances, undermine legitimacy, and destabilize an already fragile situation," he warned. ▶ Page 3

## Iran, Russia discuss boosting economic co-op ahead of 19th joint committee meeting

Tehran – Iran's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad on Wednesday met Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilyov and Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller in Tehran to review economic cooperation and preparations for the next meeting of the Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee, the Oil Ministry's news agency Shana reported.

Paknejad said the talks followed up on the outcomes of the 18th joint committee, which was held in Moscow, noting that "the results required further pursuit" and that the two sides reviewed them in detail during the meeting.

He added that some areas of cooperation required revision and further dialogue, which were discussed and resolved.

On the 19th committee session, scheduled to be hosted by Iran, the minister said the timing and agenda were also discussed and would be announced "at the appropriate time."

## Exclusive: EU bans on Israel remain symbolic, says Uppsala University scholar

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – As tensions in Gaza and the West Bank escalate, the European Union has taken an unprecedented step by proposing the suspension of trade concessions with Israel, signaling growing international concern over the humanitarian crisis. The move comes amid widespread protests across European capitals, raising questions about the effectiveness of symbolic sanctions versus tangible political pressure.

To explore the implications of these developments, the Tehran Times conducted an exclusive interview with Dr. Ashok Swain, an Indian-born academic and political commentator who serves as a professor of peace and conflict research at Uppsala University in Sweden. A recognized expert on international conflicts, migration, water security, and global governance, Dr. Swain has extensively analyzed the intersection of human rights, international diplomacy, and the balance of power in West Asia.

## Gaza offensive reaches 'cataclysmic' scale as US shields Israel at UN

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – Israeli forces have intensified their offensive on Gaza City, unleashing a combination of airstrikes, drone attacks, and ground assaults that have left neighborhoods in ruins.

Witnesses describe "apocalyptic" destruction on Friday as civilians flee southward in a desperate search for safety, with many forced to walk for hours carrying only what they can hold. Telecommunications blackouts have crippled rescue efforts and obscured the true scale of casualties.

Olga Cherevko, a spokeswoman for the UN's humanitarian office, told the BBC she had personally witnessed the devastation during a 29-kilometer trip into Gaza City that took 14 hours. "The things there, and the scenes on the way to Gaza City, are nothing short of cataclysmic," she recalled.

## Israeli officers killed in Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The Israeli army has confirmed the deaths of four officers in battles in the Gaza Strip as the armed wing of Hamas issues a stern warning.

Among the dead occupation troops are one major and three lieutenants. In addition, soldiers were injured during fighting with the Palestinian resistance forces.

The al-Mujahideen Brigades have published footage that shows they had successfully targeted an Israeli Merkava tank in the Zeitoun neighborhood of Gaza City, striking it directly.

Other footage published by the resistance faction shows the wreckage of an Israeli military vehicle that was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

The explosion caused substantial damage. Israeli military helicopters were deployed to evacuate the dead and wounded soldiers.

In response to the resistance operation, Israeli military censorship imposed a ban on publishing specific details, describing the situation only as "serious."

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## Axis of Resistance: New era of decentralized warfare or uncharted territory

By Mohammad Khatibi

TEHRAN – As tensions flare across West Asia, many are asking what lies ahead for the 'Axis of Resistance' after its leadership and some of its capabilities took important blows.

Yet the movement's influence does not depend on massed brigades but on dispersed networks and disruptive tactics. Across all fronts, its factions exercise greater flexibility and individual autonomy, embodying a shift toward decentralization that allows them to absorb pressure while sustaining asymmetric operations. ▶ Page 2



## Iranian educator, writer Samineh Baghcheban passes away at 97

TEHRAN – The distinguished Iranian educator Samineh Baghcheban passed away in Tehran on September 17 at the age of 97.

The funeral ceremony of Samineh Baghcheban, children's writer and pioneer in the education of deaf children, was held on Friday, September 19 with the presence of a number of former students of the Baghcheban School for the Deaf, which she had managed after her father Jabbar Baghcheban's passing in 1966. Her body was buried in the Section for Notable People in Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery, south of Tehran, IRNA reported. ▶ Page 8

## TEHRAN PAPERS

*In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in the Thursday Iranian newspapers.*

## “Zapad” exercise in the middle of nuclear deadlock

Shargh analyzed Iran's participation in the “Zapad-2025” joint exercise and wrote: This exercise took place in a situation where only a few days remain until a possible return of (UN) sanctions against Iran. After months of tough negotiations and the experience of aggression by Israel and the United States, Tehran is still in a diplomatic deadlock, and Europe and the United States, in the nuclear file, not only insist on nuclear transparency by Iran, but also have linked non-nuclear issues such as missile power, regional policies, and even Tehran-Moscow relations to it. From the point of view of Western analysts, Iran's presence in the Zapad exercise with the participation of Russia and Belarus can be considered a tacit confirmation of Tehran's connection with the Moscow axis. Participation in multinational exercises can send a clear message about balancing threats and preventing Iran's geopolitical isolation; a message that is not necessarily seen as a complete alliance with Moscow, but rather an attempt to strengthen deterrence against possible future threats.

### Hamshahri: A danger for Europe

In a note, Hamshahri addressed the hardening of Europe's tone against Iran. It wrote: The statements of Mohammad Eslami, head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, about the positive atmosphere of the talks in Vienna, coupled with the hardening of the Europeans' tone can be analyzed as if Europe is unhappy with its waning position in face of Iran. That Europeans have replaced the United States, it has given an opportunity to them to demonstrate that they can play a meaningful role in major global issues, such as the Iranian nuclear negotiations

Therefore, any process that distorts this dream will be dealt with severely. In fact, the European troika is fundamentally not interested in resolving issues with Iran. Now that they have been sidelined by the United States, they are seeking to revive their role in global developments. Therefore, they are constantly looking for excuses. Eslami's statements that their language has become harsher also confirm this, so Europe's concern about losing its position on the Iranian nuclear issue has prompted it to take a harsh tone.

**Arman-e-Emrooz: Iran's agreement with IAEA intended to prevent snapback**

Arman-e-Emrooz commented on Iran's agreement with the IAEA and said: The Iran-Agency agreement was the product of several rounds of consultations between the IAEA and Iran in Tehran and Vienna, and at the last stop in Cairo between Araghchi and Grossi. This agreement was reached about two weeks before possible activation of the snapback sanctions; therefore, it remains to be seen whether it can open a door to diplomacy in managing the current crisis. It appears that Tehran's primary objective under this agreement is to prevent the activation of the snapback mechanism, a condition for which the European troika insisted on full cooperation with the IAEA. For now, the agreement has somewhat increased the chances of a temporary halt to the snapback, but it remains to be seen what the European and American sides will ultimately conclude.

### Iran: Tehran seeks to find a common language with Arab countries

The Iran newspaper said the Islamic Republic is facing a fundamental challenge in finding a common understanding about the dangers posed by the Zionist regime of Israel. It wrote: Whenever Iran speaks of the need to contain Israel, many Arab countries fear that Tehran will use this approach to increase its regional influence. This means that though these countries acknowledge the threat of Israeli expansionism, they are unwilling to ally with Iran in confronting the regime. As a result, they are in a state of confusion: on the one hand, they feel threatened by Israel, and on the other hand, they fear the restoration of Iran's regional power, while in practice, they have not been able to contain the instability caused by Israel's actions. This situation has resulted in a kind of Arab passivity towards regional developments. In such circumstances, the visit of officials such as Iran's Supreme National Security chief Ali Larijani to Saudi Arabia or the presence of Iranian delegations at the Doha summit could provide an opportunity to find at least a common language, one that emphasizes the need to contain Israel and the increasing dangers posed by its military adventures. However, there are serious doubts that this process can lead to a level of real security cooperation and the formation of a common front between Iran and the Arab countries.

## Iran defers UN draft resolution on nuclear sites attacks after US pressure

TEHRAN – Iran announced on Friday that it has decided to defer consideration of a draft resolution aimed at prohibiting attacks and threats of attack against nuclear facilities, noting that the move was taken to counter the unlawful pressure and intimidation exerted by the United States on the IAEA General Conference.

Iran's Permanent Mission to the UN noted that while the majority of member states had expressed readiness to support Iran's draft resolution, many faced threats of retribution, prompting the deferment to safeguard the integrity of the decision-making process.

On Thursday, Iran's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Reza Najafi, addressed Iran's proposed resolution calling for a ban on attacks against peaceful nuclear facilities. He revealed that while many IAEA member states condemned Israel's recent military actions, several—despite close relations with Iran and other co-sponsors—reported being subjected to “intense pressure and threats” from the United States to withhold support.

According to Najafi, these states clarified that their abstentions did not reflect their true positions. Instead, they appealed to Iran and its partners to postpone advancing the resolution until next year's General Conference.

Speaking at the IAEA General Conference under an agenda item proposed by Iran titled “Prohibition of All Forms of Attack and Threat of Attack Against Nuclear Facilities under Agency Safeguards,” Najafi condemned the “criminal act” of the United States and Israel in attacking Iran's nuclear facilities, warning that indifference toward such violations would have serious consequences for international peace and security.

He stressed that unlawful military strikes on safeguarded nuclear sites not only undermine states' legitimate rights to the peaceful use of nuclear energy but also directly damage the cred-

ibility of the Agency's safeguards system. “This is a matter of utmost seriousness. The world must send a clear message that such illegal attacks cannot and will not be tolerated,” Najafi said.

Najafi welcomed countries, particularly members of the Non-Aligned Movement, that condemned the aggression, praising their responsible stance. He demanded that both the U.S. and Israel be held accountable for their “gross violations” of international law and the non-proliferation regime.

He reminded the conference that the UN Charter explicitly prohibits the threat or use of force, stressing that no interpretation could justify premeditated military strikes on nuclear sites under IAEA safeguards. He added that such actions contradict both IAEA General Conference resolutions and the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which emphasized the prohibition of attacks on safeguarded facilities.

“Inaction in the face of such aggression cannot be equated with neutrality,” he warned. “It only normalizes unlawful behavior and encourages its repetition. Peaceful nuclear facilities—meant to symbolize transparency and trust—would instead become military targets, putting the entire non-proliferation regime at grave risk.”

Iran has repeatedly raised alarm at international forums over U.S. and Israeli violations of international law through military strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities. Tehran insists its nuclear program remains exclusively peaceful and argues that failure to hold Washington and Tel Aviv accountable risks creating a dangerous precedent for other conflicts.

The debate over Iran's resolution comes amid heightened tensions following Israel's large-scale military assault on Iran in June, which included strikes on nuclear sites and was backed by the United States.

# Russia showed ‘good and firm’ stance during Israeli-US war on Iran, says top commander



Russian Minister of Energy Sergei Tsivilev meets with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) and Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi (R) in Tehran on September 17 and 18, 2025.

From page 1 ► On June 13, Israel launched a blatant and unprovoked act of aggression against Iran, sparking a 12-day war that left at least 1,064 Iranians dead, including senior military commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians.

The conflict escalated further when the United States intervened by bombing three Iranian nuclear facilities—a move condemned by Tehran as a grave violation of international law.

Iran responded forcefully. Its Armed Forces launched strikes on strategic Israeli sites across the occupied territories and also targeted the al-Udeid air base in Qatar, the largest U.S. military installation in West Asia. By June 24, Iranian counter-operations succeeded in halting the joint Israeli-American assault.

Beyond military issues, Mousavi highlighted the broader opportunities for cooperation between Tehran and Moscow, particularly in the face of severe Western

sanctions. “Iran and Russia have numerous capacities to develop cooperation despite the West's pressure,” he said, pointing to the resilience of the two nations' partnership.

Energy Minister Tsivilev echoed these sentiments, stressing the need to deepen both economic and defense ties. He expressed support for expanding joint commissions to elevate the level of bilateral cooperation and emphasized that Russia was committed to working closely with Iran across multiple sectors.

### Iran-Russia cooperation shows era of unilateralism is over: Pezeshkian

On Wednesday, Tsivilev also met with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. During their talks, Pezeshkian stressed that cooperation between independent states such as Iran and Russia could serve as a model for ending the era of unilateral dominance in global affairs.



“A successful model of cooperation among independent countries, including Iran and Russia, will prove that the era of unilateralism in the world is over,” the president said. “We will be able to lead our countries to development and progress without the need for or dependence on unilateral powers.”

Pezeshkian emphasized Iran's commitment to fully implementing previously signed agreements in the fields of transportation, energy, and power generation. He called on ministers and experts from both sides to redouble their efforts to ensure rapid progress.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran is seriously pursuing the implementation of agreements between the two countries. There is no obstacle in the way of Tehran-Moscow cooperation,” he stated.

The president voiced hope that regular high-level visits and exchanges of delegations would

further strengthen relations between the two “friendly and allied” nations.

For his part, Tsivilev conveyed warm greetings from President Vladimir Putin to the Iranian president and expressed satisfaction with the constructive outcomes of the Iran-Russia Joint Economic Commission. He stressed that Moscow was prepared to move forward with the implementation of bilateral agreements without delay.

“No sanctions or external pressure can impede trade and economic cooperation between Russia and Iran,” Tsivilev said, adding that the two countries had shown resilience in the face of Western restrictions.

Iran and Russia, long considered close and strategic allies, have continued to expand cooperation across economic, political, military, and energy sectors despite sustained Western sanctions.

## Axis of Resistance: New era of decentralized warfare or uncharted territory



### From page 1 ► Hezbollah

Disarming Hezbollah faces an almost insurmountable uphill battle and is unlikely to succeed in the near term. Beirut simply lacks the institutional muscle and political cohesion to wrest control of the group's vast arsenal. The Lebanese Armed Forces, chronically underfunded and overstretched, cannot mount a credible, unilateral operation against Hezbollah strongholds in the south or the densely populated southern suburbs of Beirut without significant external backing either it be the U.S. or its regional allies. Hezbollah is deeply embedded in both Lebanon's security architecture and its political system and the group is widely seen as the only reliable bulwark against repeated Israeli incursions.

Any attempt to seize arms depots risks igniting more than isolated clashes—it could trigger a broad-based uprising capable of reigniting sectarian fault lines. In effect, what starts as a disarmament push could spiral into a full-blown civil war, fracturing the fragile consensus that has held the country together for many years. Hezbollah still commands tens of thousands of

fighters and an arsenal that rivals many national militaries.

However, the group has shifted from an offensive?deterrence posture to a more cautious, defense?oriented stance. With Damascus no longer under Assad's control, there has been reroutes of arms shipments by sea and air. Even so, Syria remains a crucial transit hub, as some actors are willing to keep supply lines open and ready to challenge central government.

### Hamas

The sustained Israeli offensive has exacted a heavy toll on Hamas's senior commanders, rocket stockpiles, and tunnel networks, degrading its ability to launch large?scale operations. Yet the movement retains a decentralized command structure: local brigade leaders and tunnel crews continue to orchestrate ambushes.

This guerrilla resilience means that even after major setbacks, Hamas can inflict persistent casualties on Israeli forces. Israel's planners and their Western backers face a stark dilemma: to occupy and govern the 365 km² of Gaza would require deploying—and sustaining—tens

of thousands of troops in one of the world's most densely populated territories. Urban warfare in refugee camps and high-rise complexes multiplies the risk of Israeli casualties and civilian collateral damage, undermining both domestic support and international legitimacy.

Also, any large-scale displacement of Gaza's over two million Palestinians is logistically unfeasible: there are no safe corridors or host countries, and the UN relief apparatus is already overstretched. Politically, mass expulsions would provoke uproar across the Arab world, reigniting regional protests and jeopardizing Israel's budding normalization deals.

With no durable governance plan or regional partner ready to assume responsibility, Tel Aviv's strategic choices narrow to a limited deterrence posture, temporary buffer zones, or negotiating a ceasefire that leaves Hamas in place.

### Ansarallah

Yemen's conflict arena has proven uniquely intractable for the U.S. Ansarallah has weathered over two years of intensive air campaigns by U.S. and Israel,

emerging with its core command structure intact. The movement's disruptive tactics have done real damage to Israeli shipping and over all forcing shipping lines to reroute, which inflates global energy prices. Rocket and drone salvos aimed at Israel further underscore the group's ability to project power—and signal to regional adversaries that no front is beyond their reach.

On the opposing side, anti-Ansarallah groups backed by Western and Persian Gulf states remain hampered by disunity and resource shortfalls. Competing commanders vie for territory, and chronic funding gaps limit sustainment of complex operations. U.S. policymakers face their own constraints. Sustained airstrikes risk civilian casualties that undermine Trump's peacemaking messaging. At the same time, there is no appetite in Washington—or among Persian Gulf partners—for committing American ground forces to what can be turned in to a quagmire.

Despite external pressures, Yemen remains the axis's most durable front. The Ansarallah blend of home-grown innovation, legitimacy among many Yemenis, and access to asymmetric tools means they can absorb blows and keep chipping away at strategic chokepoints.

The Axis of Resistance has decisively entered a new era and each faction has weathered direct blows to their leadership and arsenals, yet maintain operational autonomy. As West Asia enters uncharted territory, the line between battlefield and political arena blurs. The true test will be whether U.S. and its allies can innovate faster than the Resistance Axis rebuilds. In this contested landscape, adaptability, coalition building, and nuanced diplomacy may prove as powerful as any missile or drone.

# Iran says Europe ignored ‘logical’ offer based on ‘baseless excuses’

A day after Macron accused Araghchi of lacking agency, the E3 caved in to US pressure and officially began snapback of UN sanctions

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – As a leader who has frequently talked about how “concerned” he is about Iran’s battered nuclear program in recent weeks, Emanuel Macron of France inarguably blunted any efforts to prevent tensions from shooting up when he sat down with a Zionist journalist on Thursday and announced that Europe will re-instate UN sanctions against Iran, regardless of what the country has done or might do in the future.

Asked by Israel’s Channel 12 whether the so-called snapback was a done deal, Macron said: “Yes. I think so.”

The French President said Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi had come up with a “reasonable” plan to stop the reimposition of UN sanctions, but the E3 (France, Germany, and Britain) rejected the offer because it was not supported by the “other members of the [Iranian political] structure”.

Macron did not make the same assertions when Araghchi travelled to Cairo earlier this month to sign a deal with the Director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on behalf of his country. By signing the agreement, Iran promised that it would look for ways to allow the return of IAEA inspectors, after the Iranian parliament suspended cooperation with the agency following U.S.-Israeli attacks on three nuclear sites in Natanz, Esfahan, and Fordow.

## What is ‘snapback’?

The “snapback mechanism” is a provision of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). It enables any of the deal’s signatories to unilaterally reimpose all pre-JCPOA UN sanctions on Iran if they believe Iran is not adhering to the agreement. Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief.

However, the JCPOA has been largely defunct for much of the past decade. The U.S. left the pact in 2018 and re-imposed stringent embargoes against Iran, sending its economy into a tailspin. With Washington’s withdrawal, European signatories began backpedaling on their own commitments despite publicly clinging to the deal. Roughly 18 months after this collective Western cold shoulder, Iran began rolling back some of its own promises.

The other two JCPOA participants, China and Russia, believe the West is responsible for the lame-duck state of the 2015 deal, and have called on Europe and Washington to return to diplomacy.

Another significant blow to the JCPOA came with the U.S.-Israel



French President Emanuel Macron talks to Israel's Channel 12

airstrikes that targeted the very facilities the 2015 deal was meant to safeguard back in June. President Donald Trump has claimed multiple times since the attacks happened that they “obliterated” Iran’s nuclear sites.

The looming reimposition of UN sanctions against Tehran is widely seen as the knockout blow. The E3 triggered the snapback mechanism in late August. A day after Macron made his remarks, the UNSC rejected a resolution put forth by South Korea, the

largely self-sufficient, Tehran has repeatedly stated that its ballistic missile program is non-negotiable, and many Iranian assets have been frozen for years already. Furthermore, Russia and China, key allies of Iran within the United Nations Security Council, said in a statement published on Friday that they will not comply with the snapback, calling it “illegal” and “invalid”.

## Europe’s lost relevance

Iran’s foreign minister holds a seat on the Supreme National Se-

## UNSC rejects resolution to lift anti-Iran UN sanctions

On Friday, the UN Security Council rejected a resolution that would have permanently lifted UN sanctions on Iran related to its nuclear program, a decision Tehran decries as politically motivated.

The vote failed with four nations in favor and nine against. Russia, China, Pakistan, and Algeria supported blocking the return of sanctions, while nine members opposed the lifting of sanctions, and two abstained.

This vote concludes a 30-day “snapback” process initiated by Britain, France, and Germany (the E3) in late August. The E3

triggered this process, aiming to reimpose sanctions unless Iran complied with their demands regarding its nuclear activities. Despite Iran addressing European concerns, culminating in an agreement to resume cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), this proved insufficient for the E3, which Iranians argue have effectively become mere puppets of the United States.

If no resolution offering extension of sanctions relief for Iran is offered in the following weeks, anti-Iran UN sanctions will be re-imposed on September 27.

current president of the 15-member council, that called for the permeant lifting of anti-Iran UN sanctions. With no extension of sanctions relief in sight, the full re-imposition could take effect on September 27.

While the concrete economic effects of these returning sanctions are expected to be limited, given that any imaginable limitation has already been imposed by Washington following its JCPOA withdrawal, they are still likely to spur a spike in Iran’s currency exchange rate.

The embargoes include a ban on conventional arms, restrictions on ballistic missile programs, and the freezing of Iranian assets. But the practical impact of these measures is debatable too. Iran’s military program is

an end. Israeli acts of aggression, including repeated airstrikes on Syrian territory, represent clear violations of international law and the Charter of the United Nations,” he stated.

Israel has intensified its military operations across Syria in the wake of last year’s collapse of former President Bashar al-Assad’s government. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ordered forces to expand operations deeper inside Syrian territory, seizing several strategic locations and consolidating Israel’s military presence in the southwest.

Israeli jets have conducted hundreds of strikes on Syrian targets in recent months, aimed at weakening Damascus’s capabilities under the HTS caretaker



Iran’s Ambassador to the UN, Amir Saeid Iravani, addressed a Security Council meeting on Syria on September 18, 2025.

government. At the same time, Israeli forces have established at least nine military posts in southern Syria, many within the UN-monitored buffer zone. Although Tel Aviv claims these

In a post on X, Araghchi reacted to Macron’s remarks, and reminded him that he acts on behalf of the whole country. “I am pleased that President Macron has recognized the reasonableness of my proposal. However, he and the international community should be aware that I have the full backing of all bodies within the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the Supreme National Security Council,” he wrote.

Iran’s Foreign Ministry Spokesman, Esmail Baghaei, appeared to return the accusations, questioning Macron’s motivations for reassuring Israelis that the snapback was a “done deal.” Israel has been averse to the JCPOA since its signing.

“Why should President Macron be ‘rushing’ to choose an Israeli TV channel to dismiss what he admits is a REASONABLE proposal from Iran and instead reassure his ‘selected’ audience that snapback is a ‘done deal?’” Baghaei posted on X.

Iranians have long criticized Europeans for relinquishing their agency and relevance in international affairs, often characterizing them as having become proxies of the United States. Similar assertions are frequently made by analysts concerning other European-related issues, such as the war in Ukraine. European leaders have been excluded from peace negotiations between the U.S. and Russia, and the Trump administration is often described as being dismissive of European perspectives on how the war in Ukraine should end.

After Friday’s voting, Iran’s UN mission said in a statement that Europe ignored Tehran’s offer due to “political greed” and based on “baseless claims”.

## What could happen next

There are few calls within Iran for the government to actively prevent the re-imposition of UN sanctions. After the dismantling of the JCPOA, years of debilitating embargoes, and a full-scale war imposed against Iran, few within the country’s political and analytical circles believe Tehran should make concessions to prevent the “snapback” of sanctions. This is why the Cairo agreement received backlash within Iran, with observers accusing the government of beating a dead horse.

Nonetheless, Iran’s Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) previously announced that the Cairo agreement would not be implemented if pre-JCPOA UN sanctions were reinstated. Lawmakers and several diplomats have also stated that Iran will consider withdrawing from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) immediately following the restoration of sanctions.

## Safarzadeh eyes two golds at 2025 World Para Athletics Championships

TEHRAN – Iranian Paralympic sprinter Hajar Safarzadeh aims to win two gold medals at the 2025 World Para Athletics Championships in India.

She won a silver medal in the 400m T12 category at the Paris 2024 Paralympics with a time of 55.39 seconds.

The 12th Para Athletics World Championship will be held in Delhi, India, from Sep. 27 to Oct. 5 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. The competition expects over 1,000 athletes and awards 186 medals: 101 men’s medals, 84 women’s medals, and 1 mixed medal.

“All my focus is on shining in the event. I hope to set a good record there and lift my personal best. I intend to compete in two events: the 200m and 400m,” Safarzadeh said in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

“I have done my utmost to arrive in India in the best possible condition. Predicting outcomes in sport is difficult, but I am hopeful of winning two gold medals in Delhi,” she added.

“Participating in India will be a good preparation for the Para Asian Games Nagoya 2026, and I want to perform at my best there.

“My ultimate goal for competing at the World Para Athletics Championships and the 2026 Asian Para Games is to get ready for the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympic Games. I hope to upgrade my silver medal to gold at those Games,” Safarzadeh concluded.

## Iran fail to reach the FIBA U16 Women’s Asia Cup Division A

TEHRAN – Iran narrowly lost to India 67-66 in the final match of the FIBA U16 Women’s Asia Cup 2025 Division B.

Viha Jonnalagadda top-scored for Team India with 21 points and 10 rebounds, which she laced with 3 blocks. Subramanian finished with 19 points behind a 7-of-15 shooting from the field, including two triples.

Mobina Bereihi tried to will the young Team Melli back in the game following a booming trifecta from the corner with exactly seven seconds to spare, but time was no longer enough to complete the comeback.

Hasti Khazaei and Elina Kazemevini added 10 points each for the team from West Asia, who fell to the same team that beat them in the first day of competitions last Saturday. They finished the tilt with a 4-2 card.

The young Team Melli instead settled for a runner-up finish for the second time in a row, having done as much during the 2023 Division B competitions in Jordan as well after bowing to the Philippines via rout.

Earlier in the day, Indonesia defeated Hong Kong 5-1-30 in the bronze medal match.

## Iran victorious over Kuwait at 2025 Asian U17 Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Kuwait 35-30 at the 1st Asian Men’s U17 Handball Championship on Friday.

The win marks Iran’s fourth victory in the campaign, as the Persians had previously defeated the Maldives, Syria, and South Korea.

The young Team Melli will meet Jordan and Qatar in Group II on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

Group I consists of South Korea, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Chinese Taipei.

The competition started in Amman, Jordan,

on Sept. 15 and will run until Sept. 25.

This championship marks the inaugural continental competition for the U17 men’s category in Asia.

It also serves as a qualification tournament for the 1st IHF Men’s U17 Handball World Championship, scheduled to take place in Morocco from Oct. 24 to Nov. 1.

The top two teams from the Asian Championship will qualify for the World Championship.

The championship was previously scheduled to be held in July but was postponed due to the conflict between Iran and Israel.

## Iran to play Serbia at 2025 FIVB World Championship Round of 16

TEHRAN – Iran will meet Serbia on Tuesday (September 23) in Round of 16 of the 2025 FIVB Volleyball World Championship.

Iran has defeated Serbia 3-1 in Belgrade at 2025 Volleyball Nations League in June.

Team Melli advanced to the next stage as runner-up and will meet Pool H top side Serbia, while Tunisia play Czech Republic.

Italy are the defending champions, having won its fourth title in 2022.

Taking place in Manila, Philippines, the championship features 32 teams from across the world competing for the coveted title, divided into eight pools of four teams, where the top two advance to the knockout stage.

## Persepolis eye ex-Newcastle defender Jamal Lewis

TEHRAN – Iran’s Persepolis football team have reportedly set their sight on signing former Newcastle left-back Jamal Piaras Lewis.

The 27-year-old player started his playing career in Norwich City in 2016 and has also played in Watford and Sao Paulo.

Persepolis, headed by Vahid Hashemian, have not yet found a left-back after three weeks into the Iran league and are under pressure as the Reds are the most decorated team in the league.

Jamal Piaras Lewis has represented Northern Ireland 39 times since 2018.

## Iran drop FIFA ranking

TEHRAN – Iran national football team dropped one place to 21st in the latest FIFA Men’s World Ranking released on Thursday.

Japan still are the best Asian team, despite slipping two places to sit 19th globally.

Kuwait made the biggest jump, moving three spots to 135 and 25th in Asia.

There were also positive moves for Tajikistan (104), Malaysia (123), Turkmenistan (138) and the Philippines – who all improved their global rankings by two spots.

Korea Republic strengthened their hold on third, remaining 23rd in the world.

Spain have returned to the ranking summit after a making a sensational start to qualifying for World Cup 26. La Roja last topped the ranking back in June 2014, when they were world and European champions.

La Albiceleste are now third, with France second after back-to-back wins over Ukraine and Iceland.

## Rail freight through Iranian ports rises 14% in 5 months on year

TEHRAN – Iran moved about 3.6 million tons of cargo through its ports by rail in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), up 14 percent from the same period last year, the head of commercial affairs at Iran Railways said.

Abedin Hadinejad Lajimi told state media that trains, with capacities of 2,400 to 4,000 tons, play a vital role in clearing port traffic, cutting air pollution and linking ports to domestic destinations.

He highlighted rail's safety advantage over roads, citing 26,000 annual road deaths, and its fuel efficiency of 3.2 cc per ton-kilometer compared with 33.3 cc for trucks.

He said rail's share of port cargo rose from 7.3 percent last year to nearly eight percent so far this year. Under Iran's seventh development plan, the target is to reach 25 percent.

Hamidreza Abaei, executive director of the national ports master plan, also said the current 7.5 to 8.0 percent share is far below the global average of 40 to 50 percent and stressed the need to expand port-rail links

and upgrade infrastructure.

He reported 85 percent progress on the project to connect Chabahar port to the rail network and listed Khorramshahr, Imam Khomeini, Shahid Rajaei and Amirabad as the main ports already linked by rail.

Abaei noted Shahid Rajaei's leading role in container rail traffic, Imam Khomeini port's close competition, and Khorramshahr's 40 percent share, while citing Amirabad's infrastructure limitations as a drag on its rail use.

He also pointed to challenges, including longer delivery times — one to two days by truck versus about five days by rail from ports to Tehran — which reduce competitiveness. Strengthening internal port infrastructure and improving coordination across sectors are also essential, he said.

Both officials agreed Iran would need to raise rail's share by about five percentage points each year to meet the 25 percent goal by the end of the five-year plan, requiring major investment and structural reforms in logistics.

## Iran, Azerbaijan to hold joint economic committee meeting next week

Tehran – The head of the Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Chamber of Commerce said the two countries will hold a meeting of their joint economic committee in Tehran next week, with Azerbaijani Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev attending, Tasnim news agency reported.

Hossein Pirmoazen, speaking at a meeting with Iran's ambassador to Baku, said the agenda includes plans to establish a joint logistics hub and an industrial park in the Bileh-Savar free trade and industrial zone on the border, which were agreed during the Iranian president's recent visit to Azerbaijan.

He noted that while Azerbaijan is professional in negotiations and drafting agreements, implementation of projects has progressed cautiously and requires follow-up.

He stressed that building the joint industrial park is vital to attract investment in the Ardabil free trade zone, highlighting incentives such as tax exemptions, easier import and export procedures, investment security, and access to international markets.

Pirmoazen said both sides have proposed allocating equal land in Iran and Azerbaijan for the park, and Ardabil province is ready to provide the necessary water, electricity and gas infrastructure.

The official also pointed to the planned Ardabil-Baku railway as a potential turning point for boosting agricultural exports from Iran's northwest to Russia by reducing transport costs and strengthening regional trade links.

Pirmoazen welcomed improved cross-border trade, noting that truck waiting times at the border had dropped from one week to 48 hours. He said round-the-clock customs operations under the joint committee could further increase daily truck crossings from the Bileh-Savar border point, currently about 220.

He added that traditional trade practices hinder export growth by exposing exporters to exchange rate risks, and called for modernized approaches to expand the volume and value of bilateral trade.

Trade relations between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan have seen remarkable growth in recent years. By leveraging their cultural, historical, and geographical commonalities, the two countries have worked to expand their economic cooperation through joint projects, border trade exchanges, and the development of transit corridors.

The Republic of Azerbaijan holds an important position in Iran's neighborly policies. Beyond the bonds of neighborhood and historical connections, the two nations share familial ties.

Fortunately, a new chapter has been opened in the relations between the two countries, which is promising for both nations. There are numerous opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation ahead of them.

The agreements reached and the joint

projects currently underway between Iran and Azerbaijan in the fields of trade, energy, and transportation, as well as the continuation and strengthening of these collaborations, will transform Iran and Azerbaijan into strategic partners for one another.

Iran and Azerbaijan signed Persian and Azeri versions of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on April 8 during the 16th Joint Economic Committee meeting, co-chaired by Iran's minister of transport and urban development and Azerbaijan's deputy prime minister.

The meeting between Iranian Minister Farzaneh Sadegh and Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev focused on reviewing bilateral projects and cooperation in economic, transport, trade, energy, and banking sectors.

The signed Persian and Azeri texts of the memorandum were appended to the English version of the MOU, which had been previously signed in Tehran in February 2025.

As part of her official visit, Minister Sadegh also inspected joint transport infrastructure projects between the two countries.

In mid-May, senior officials from Iran and Azerbaijan stressed the need to expedite the construction of key transit routes during a high-level meeting in Tehran, highlighting the strategic importance of enhancing connectivity between the neighboring countries.

Ali Akbar Ahmadian, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, met with Hikmet Farhad oglu Hajiyev, foreign policy advisor to the President of Azerbaijan, to discuss advancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in the transport and infrastructure sectors.

Ahmadian said the historical ties and geographic proximity between Iran and Azerbaijan necessitate the elevation of economic and political relations to their highest potential. Referring to the recent visit by Iran's president to Baku, he noted that Tehran is committed to fully implementing the agreements made during that trip as well as previous bilateral accords.

“Accelerating the development of transit routes between our countries is a strategic necessity,” Ahmadian said, adding that these projects must be pursued at the highest levels to overcome existing obstacles to economic and trade cooperation.

Hajiyev echoed the sentiment, stating that the Iranian president's visit to Baku opened a new chapter in bilateral relations. He noted that the signed cooperation documents between Tehran and Baku reflect a growing dynamism in their ties that is expected to continue.

Hajiyev also underscored the strategic value of transit corridors passing through Iran, expressing Azerbaijan's strong commitment to expanding trade, banking cooperation, and joint energy field development with its southern neighbor.

# Vietnamese Embassy in Tehran Celebrates 80th National Day, Highlighting Enduring Ties with Iran

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN – The Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Iran hosted a distinguished ceremony on the evening of Thursday (September 18) to mark the 80th anniversary of Vietnam's National Day. The event, held at the embassy premises in Tehran, brought together members of the diplomatic corps, foreign ambassadors, and Iranian government officials in a celebration of bilateral friendship and cooperation.

The guest of honor was Mr. Farshad Moghimi, Iran's Deputy Minister of Industry, Mining, and Trade, whose presence underscored the importance of the economic and diplomatic relationship between the two nations.

The ceremony commenced with a video titled “Viet Nam - An 80-year journey for independence, freedom and happiness (1945-2025),” which showcased the nation's remarkable progress and patriotic spirit, also powerfully depicted Vietnam's recent grand military parade, held in honor of the eight decades since its declaration of independence.

His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Luong Ngoc, the Ambassador of Vietnam to Iran, then addressed the assembled guests. In his speech, he reflected on Vietnam's profound historical journey and its contemporary achievements.

The following is the text of Mr. Ambassador's speech.

“Dear H.E. Mr. Farshad Moghimi, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade of Iran,

- Representatives from esteemed ministries and agencies of Iran,

- Ambassadors, diplomatic friends, members of the Iran-Viet Nam Friendship Association, Iranian friends and the Vietnamese community in Iran.

- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today, the Embassy of Viet Nam in Iran is very honored and delighted to organize a ceremony to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam with the participation of many distinguished guests.

During these days, all Vietnamese people are joyfully organizing many activities to celebrate the National Day with great pride, deep gratitude, excitement and confidence in the bright future of the country.

September 2, 1945 was a momentous day in our nation's history when President Ho Chi Minh solemnly read the Declaration of Independence, giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. To this day, Viet Nam has gone through an 80-year journey for national independence, peace and development with proud results, a part of which was shown in the video you just watched.



Dear Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Due to historical circumstances, our country has always been invaded by foreign forces which triggered the Vietnamese people to stand up to defend the country. With heroic spirit, iron will, passionate patriotism, a burning desire for independence and freedom in the blood of every person and the spirit of great solidarity of millions of people as one, we overcame countless pains, difficulties and adversities to fight for national independence and to regain peace in 1975.

The seemingly insurmountable difficulties after the war, notably poverty, backwardness, along with the harsh policy of siege and embargo, did not discourage us at all. Fierce conditions combined with a strong will to rise and a creative spirit, not backing down, led to comprehensive Renovation Process launched in 1986. The most important thing is that we have renewed our thinking about the way we look at the world and the path the country must take.

The achievements of 40 years of the Renovation Process have proven that Viet Nam's path is the right one. During that process, we always remember the past with peace, altruism, optimism as well as having less blame for circumstances to aim the highest goal of bringing Viet Nam to keep pace with other countries. During the war, every Vietnamese person sacrificed everything they had to protect the Motherland. In peacetime, Viet Nam always harmonizes development with social justice and is determined to leave no one behind.

Distinguished Guests,

Looking back at the journey of national protection and construction over the past 80 years, we always feel fortunate to receive from international friends, progressive forces and peace-loving people from across the 5 continents, support such as weapons, oil, financial assistance, economic aid, goods, projects of essential for industry and people's living. From the bottom of our hearts, the State and all Vietnamese people will forever remember and be grateful for that great, valuable

and sincere support and assistance.

Dear friends,

We are witnessing a world in a very special period, full of turmoil and unpredictability both naturally and socially, with conflicts in many places and many unprecedented challenges, while at the same time opening up many great opportunities. As a nation that has experienced countless pains due to war, the Vietnamese people deeply understand the value of peace, so they earnestly wish to contribute their best to preserving that peace for a global prosperity.

In that context, with the aspiration for national development, Viet Nam is determined that this is a ripe opportunity to enter into a decisive “era of national rise”, considered as the second Renovation Process. We are racing against time with many profound reforms, aiming to create breakthroughs to overcome the middle-income trap, moving towards the goal of becoming a modern industrial, high-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2045.

We realize that we still have many limitations and are in the process of exploring new development directions suitable for the country. Therefore, Viet Nam always wishes to learn and share development experiences and strengthen cooperation with other countries and the international community, including Iran.

Dear friends,

Viet Nam - Iran relations have a history of exchanges dating back to the 10th century and officially established diplomatic relations in 1973. Since then, bilateral relations have developed well, in which a series of activities commemorating the 50th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations (1973-2023) is a memorable milestone. Viet Nam and Iran share many similarities. The people of both countries are hard-working, friendly, intellectual and peace-loving. There is yet much more room to promote bilateral cooperation.

During the 7 months of living and working in the beautiful country of Iran, I have felt that

potential more and more clearly. I believe that in the coming time, bilateral cooperation will have new developments in many fields, especially in politics, economics, culture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges..., thereby better taking advantage of the inherent potential of the two countries, contributing to building a peaceful and prosperous world community.

On this occasion, allow me to express my gratitude for your kind and sincere words on Viet Nam in recent days as well as for the presence of Deputy Minister H.E. Mr. Farshad Moghimi and all of you. In the intimate atmosphere tonight, we feel your warm eyes and smiles, your sincere handshakes. That is a great encouragement for us.

We wish an everlasting peace in the world and forever lasting Viet Nam – Iran friendship!

We wish you good health, success and a pleasant evening!

Thank you very much.”

Following the ambassador's remarks, Deputy Minister Moghimi took the stage to convey the congratulations of the Iranian government to the nation and people of Vietnam. In his address, he eloquently framed the significance of the day.

“This day not only commemorates Vietnam's rich history and culture of independence,” stated Mr. Moghimi, “but also serves as an opportunity to renew the friendship and cooperation between our two nations.”

He further emphasized the durability of the bilateral relationship, noting, “The friendly relations between our two countries have now entered their fifty-second anniversary.” He credited the sustained strength of these ties to their foundation on “mutual respect, the pursuit of common interests, ongoing consultations, and close cooperation in regional and international organizations,” as well as the warm personal relationships between high-ranking officials.

A symbolic highlight of the evening followed as Ambassador Nguyen and Deputy Minister Moghimi were joined by the ambassadors of five other nations to jointly cut a celebratory cake adorned with the flags of Vietnam and Iran.

The formal program transitioned into a reception where guests were treated to a culinary experience featuring beloved Vietnamese dishes such as “Pho” alongside traditional Iranian cuisine. The festive atmosphere was enhanced by a visually stunning video clip showcasing Vietnam's natural beauties and cultural attractions, all set to a soundtrack of traditional Vietnamese music, providing a fitting end to an evening of diplomatic camaraderie and mutual respect.

## TCCIMA signs cooperation deal in China's free economic zone

TEHRAN – A Tehran Chamber of Commerce delegation visiting China's Khorgos region signed a memorandum of understanding with the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce on Thursday to strengthen bilateral trade, the chamber said.

The agreement, signed by Mahmoud Najafi Arab, head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), and Faming Ma, president of the Khorgos chamber, commits the two sides to exchange trade information and delegations, introduce business opportunities, and lay the groundwork for expanding commercial ties.

Najafi Arab told participants that China is Iran's top trading partner, with significant flows in both imports and exports, and highlighted the historical depth of trade between the two nations dating back to the Silk Road.

He said Iranian industry relies heavily on Chinese raw materials, intermediate goods, and machinery, and called for faster joint action, urging Chinese counterparts to move beyond what he described as a cautious approach.

Referring to the 25-year strategic cooperation agreement between Tehran and Beijing, he said Iran's private sector is tasked with putting the pact into practice, and that platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS can support this effort.

Najafi Arab added that Tehran Chamber is considering opening an office and a permanent showroom in Khorgos to showcase Iranian products, alongside plans to set up a private-sector export management company to ease trade logistics. He pointed to the potential of China's 100-million-strong Muslim

population as a promising market for Iranian halal goods, and said Iran also seeks Chinese investment in renewable energy and gas industries.

Khorgos deputy mayor Zantao Li welcomed the Iranian delegation, describing the region's transport links, dry port facilities, and customs-free arrangements with Kazakhstan. He said the zone's preferential trade policies, including five-year corporate tax exemptions for foreign investors and customs duty relief, provide strong incentives for Iranian companies.

Li voiced support for Tehran Chamber's plan to open an office in Khorgos and expressed hope for increased Iranian exports of agricultural and mineral products to China, alongside higher shipments of Chinese goods to Iran.

# Hezbollah calls for unity against “Greater Israel” vision

Hezbollah Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem on Friday called on the opponent political parties in Lebanon as well as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to start a new phase of cooperation in the face of the Zionist expansionist scheme which targets the entire region, Al-Manar reported.

Addressing a ceremony to commemorate the first martyrdom anniversary of Commander Ibrahim Akil (Martyr Abdul Qader) and Al-Rudwan Unit commanders at Sayyed Al-Shuhada Complex in Beirut's Dahieh, Sheikh Qassem indicated that the entire region is facing an exceptional and dangerous political turning point.

“The Israeli entity, planted in our region since the beginning of the 20th century, dug deeply with colonial and arrogant support that began with Britain and then moved to America.”

Sheikh Qassem added that this occupying entity functions as an expansionist outpost of



the West, a tool of the United States, a scarecrow meant to intimidate the region, and a barrier to its independence.

Israel has reached the peak of criminality, brutality, and disregard for any humanitarian, legal, international, or human rights norms — with full, detailed backing from the American administration, he said.

“The soft war, sanctions, Madrid, and the Abraham Accords

all failed to achieve the clear and quick results America and ‘Israel’ sought — hence, genocide became their chosen solution.”

Hezbollah considers that what follows the strike by the enemy entity against Qatar is different from what preceded the strike on Qatar, Sheikh Qassem underlined.

“After the strike on Qatar, the targeting now reaches the Re-

sistance, the governments, the peoples, and every geographic and political barrier standing before ‘Greater Israel’. The goal has become Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Iran.”

“We must all confront this danger together — states, governments, peoples, and the Resistance — and the only path for this confrontation is unity against the common enemy within defined limits of unity,” Sheikh Qassem underscored.

Sheikh Qassem noted that ‘Israel’ must be recognized as the danger, not the Resistance.

He called on Saudi Arabia to open a new page with the Resistance .

“I call on Saudi Arabia to open a new page with the resistance, based on dialogue founded on the fact that Israel is the enemy, not the resistance; dialogue that freezes disagreements from the past.”

## Ibrahim Aghil: The architect of ‘Hezbollah military doctrine’

**By Mohammad Mahdizadeh**  
Iranian expert in international military history

TEHRAN – It has been one year since the assassination of General Hajj Ibrahim Aghil, Hezbollah's operations chief, along with 14 of his comrades and fellow officers in an Israeli air raid on the southern suburb of Beirut (Dahia).

This airstrike revealed the story of one of the most influential military commanders of the modern era, previously shrouded in secrecy.

Ibrahim Aghil—also known as “Hajj Abdulghader” and “Hajj Tahseen” among friends and foes—began his journey in resistance at Aameliyah Mosque in Beirut in 1976, a year after the Lebanese civil war began. Though born into a non-religious family of Shia immigrants from the Beghaa Valley who settled in the Corniche el-Mazraa neighborhood in downtown Beirut, he was deeply influenced by the speeches of Imam Mussa Sadr, the prominent Shia leader of the time, and joined his Amal movement.

Following the Islamic Revo-

lution in Iran and Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Ibrahim Aghil became a follower of Imam Khomeini and a key figure in resistance cells in Beirut. This marked the beginning of the formation of Hezbollah and the Islamic Jihad of Lebanon.

Aghil was instrumental in planning and executing major attacks against hostile forces. He played a crucial role in defeating Israel and forcing its retreat from Beirut in September 1982, as well as leading martyrdom operations against American, Israeli, and French troops in Beirut and Tyre during 1982 and 1983.

After Hezbollah was officially established in February 1985, Ibrahim Aghil was appointed chief commander of the Central Training Unit (CTU) within Hezbollah's military wing, the Islamic Resistance. For several years, he traveled frequently between Lebanon and Iran, mainly for military missions and Islamic studies. Later, after Hezbollah's first general council in 1989, he became deputy commander of the Jihad Council. Known within the Islamic Resistance by his military nickname

“Hajj Abdulghader,” he began an in-depth study of modern military history, comparing global military battles with Hezbollah's unique experience, particularly Israel's retreat to the occupied South Lebanon border strip in 1985. This research was pivotal in developing what is now known as Hezbollah's Military Doctrine and establishing the Special Forces of the Islamic Resistance.

During the final years of Israeli occupation in South Lebanon, Aghil served as chief commander of operations in Jabal Aamel, leading campaigns against Israeli forces and the Lahad mercenaries in the occupied region. His strategic plans and decisive operations—especially against Israeli bases in Sojod, Aramta, and Bayyada—significantly weakened Israeli forces, culminating in the liberation of South Lebanon on May 25, 2000.

After liberation, General Aghil helped plan prisoner capture operations between 2000 and 2003. These efforts led to two successful missions: one in the occupied Shebaa Farms on October 7, 2000, and another



called Operation True Promise in Zarit, northern occupied Palestine, on July 12, 2006.

Following the 33-day war in 2006, Ibrahim Aghil and Imad Mughniyah began reorganizing Hezbollah's special forces. After Israel assassinated Mughniyah in Damascus in February 2008, Aghil completed this task and named the primary special assault unit the “Radwan Force.” He appointed his longtime deputy, Hajj Ali Fayyadh—former leader of Hezbollah's military advisory team during the 1992-1995 Bosnian war—as the first operational commander of Radwan Force.

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

## Gaza offensive reaches ‘cataclysmic’ scale as US shields Israel at UN

From page 1 ► Cherevko described a constant stream of people heading south on foot while hundreds of thousands remain trapped in the city. Her UN convoy came under near misses from Israeli strikes, underscoring the danger to both civilians and aid workers.

The Israeli military insists the operation is aimed at dismantling Hamas battalions, freeing captives, and eliminating what it calls “terror infrastructure.”

Yet humanitarian agencies say the tactics — advancing from multiple directions and forcing families toward the coast — amount to the systematic compression of civilians into shrinking, unsafe areas. With much of Gaza declared an evacuation zone, aid groups argue there are no true “safe zones” left.

Hospitals are collapsing under the dual

weight of bombardment injuries and famine. The World Health Organization warns that critical facilities are running at several times their intended capacity, with life-saving supplies blocked at crossings.

Gaza's Health Ministry announced Friday that hospitals recorded at least four new deaths from famine and malnutrition in the past 24 hours, including one child, bringing the overall toll of hunger-related fatalities to 440 since the war began in October 2023.

The ministry added that since March 18, more than 12,600 people have been killed and over 54,000 injured in Israeli attacks, while at least 2,514 Palestinians have died and more than 18,400 have been wounded while trying to access food or aid.

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

## Israeli officers killed in Gaza

From page 1 ► Hebrew-language media reported heavily on the attack, describing it as a “catastrophe.”

The IOF's acknowledgment came after a delay, eventually confirming that the deaths occurred during battles in the Jenina neighborhood of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. The ambush is said to have taken place in an area that had been deemed “secure” by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF).

Meanwhile, in the north of the Strip, Palestinian resistance fighters carried out a second operation that involved armed clashes and gunfire. Hebrew media reported casualties among the IOF in what was described as a well-planned ambush by Palestinian fighters.

The Palestinian resistance operations come amid growing Israeli concerns about the potential capture of IOF soldiers. As fighting intensifies within Gaza City, fears are rising that resistance forces may seek to kidnap IOF troops as leverage.

According to the Hebrew newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth, the regime's intelligence recently presented a classified briefing to the Knesset estimating that around 7,500 Palestinian fighters are currently stationed in and around Gaza City.

In the face of these developments, al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, issued a stern warning to the Israeli occupation regime.

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

## Taliban official rejects US return to Bagram airbase

Afghanistan has rejected a call from President Donald Trump for the United States military to return to the country and reclaim the Bagram airbase, Al Jazeera reported.

A foreign ministry official declared on social media on Friday that Kabul is ready to engage, but maintained that the US will not be allowed to re-establish a military presence in the central Asian country.

Trump said on Thursday that his administration is pressing to “get back” the base at Bagram. The US president, who has long expressed hope of reclaiming the facility, noted that its position is strategically vital

due to its proximity to China.

“We're trying to get it back,” Trump announced. “We gave it to [the Taliban] for nothing,” he complained, adding that Bagram is “exactly one hour away from where China makes its nuclear missiles.”

However, Taliban officials have dismissed the idea. “Afghanistan and the United States need to engage with one another ... without the United States maintaining any military presence in any part of Afghanistan,” Zakir Jalal, a foreign ministry official, posted on social media.

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

## Pakistan says its nuclear program can be made available to Saudi Arabia under defense pact

Pakistan's defense minister says his nation's nuclear program “will be made available” to Saudi Arabia if needed under the countries' new defense pact, marking the first specific acknowledgment that Islamabad had put the kingdom under its nuclear umbrella, AP reported.

Defense Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif's comments underline the importance of the pact struck this week between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which have had military ties for decades. The move is seen by analysts as a signal to Israel, long believed to be the only possessor of nuclear

weapons in West Asia. It comes after Israel's attack targeting Hamas leaders in Qatar last week killed six people and sparked new concerns among Persian Gulf Arab nations about their safety as Israel's war on Gaza has devastated the territory and set the region on edge. Speaking to Geo TV in an interview late Thursday night, Asif made the comments while answering a question on whether “the deterrence that Pakistan gets from nuclear weapons” will be made available to Saudi Arabia.

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

## Trump threatens TV networks amid Jimmy Kimmel fallout

US President Donald Trump has suggested some TV networks should have their licences “taken away”, the BBC reported.

The remarks come after pressure from the administration led ABC to suspend Jimmy Kimmel. The late-night TV host made comments about the Charlie Kirk murder suspect, saying Trump supporters had tried to “characterize this kid as anything other than one of them”.

Kimmel's suspension following the threat of regulatory action has raised concerns the Trump administration was attempting to curtail the free speech of its critics - with other talk show hosts commenting on the row.

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

## Exclusive: EU bans on Israel remain symbolic, says Swedish university scholar

Ashok Swain says public outrage from European capitals forced Brussels to act

From page 1 ► In this interview, he provides a detailed assessment of the EU's latest actions, the underlying motivations behind European responses, and the potential consequences for both Israel and Palestinian civilians. He also addresses the growing disconnect between EU official policies and the sentiments of citizens demanding accountability.

Below is the full text of the interview:

**The European Union has often been accused of shielding Israel diplomatically. Do you see the move toward tariffs and sanctions on Israel as a genuine policy shift, or more as symbolic pressure?**

The EU's proposed tariffs and sanctions are a break from its usual pattern of shielding Israel diplomatically, but they remain half-measures designed to signal pressure rather than fundamentally alter the balance of power. Suspending trade preferences on a slice of Israeli

exports and targeting extremist ministers sends a political message, yet it avoids touching Israel's arms trade with Europe or the broader Association Agreement. It is more symbolic than structural, and Israel knows it.

**To what extent do you think public protests across European capitals forced EU leaders to act?**

Public protests across European capitals have been the real driver of this shift, forcing EU leaders to finally confront the gap between their rhetoric on human rights and their complicity in Israel's war. Without months of sustained mobilization—from Barcelona to Berlin—Brussels would have continued with its empty calls for restraint. The EU's hand has been forced by its own citizens' outrage, not by any sudden moral awakening in its institutions.

**EU states are deeply divided on the Israel-Palestine conflict. How sustainable is a**

**common EU position on sanctions, given countries like Germany's traditional support for Israel?**

A common EU position on sanctions will be extremely fragile, as countries like Germany continue to cloak Israel in historical guilt and strategic alignment, while Hungary treats it as part of its illiberal alliances. Southern and Western European states may push harder, but the deep divisions mean any collective stance will be diluted and constantly at risk of unraveling. Sustaining unity against Israel's conduct will remain an uphill struggle.

===== Do you foresee these sanctions translating into real pressure for a permanent ceasefire and accountability, or will Israel be able to weather the economic hit?

These sanctions are unlikely to bring about a permanent ceasefire or real accountability, because Israel has weathered far greater economic and diplo-

## 60,000 Chinese tourists visit Iran annually: ambassador

TEHRAN--Emphasizing the deepening of scientific and cultural relations between Iran and China, the Chinese ambassador to Iran stated that 60,000 Chinese tourists visit Iran annually.

During a visit to the University of Mazandaran province on Tuesday, Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Zhong Peiwu emphasized the importance of deepening scientific, cultural, and technological collaboration between Iran and China for comprehensive development, Mehr news agency reported.

He noted that nearly 60,000 Chinese tourists visit Iran each year, viewing this as a valuable opportunity to strengthen cultural and scientific exchanges between the two countries.

Zhong Peiwu stated, “The exchange of professors and students, collaboration in artificial intelligence, and support for knowledge-based companies are key pillars for advancing our scientific partnership with Iranian universities.”

He added, “The Chinese Embassy in Iran is working to simplify visa issuance for students and tourists to enhance peo-



ple-to-people connections and expand scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries.”

Zhong Peiwu also highlighted the Persian language education programs in China and the Chinese language courses at the University of Mazandaran, stating, “Promoting language and cultural education in both countries will help strengthen our ties.”

In 2019, Tehran waived visa requirements for Chinese nationals in a bid to attract more tourists.

## Iranian artisans join crafts festivals in Uzbekistan

TEHRAN – Iranian artisans are participating in the third Kokand International Crafts Festival and the second International Festival of Handicrafts in Rishtan, Uzbekistan, which opened on September 18.

They have put on display glimpses of Iran's cultural richness, Mehr news agency reported.

Narges Rajaei , the director general of Handicrafts Education and Promotion Department, said that Kokand International Crafts Festival, as one of the remarkable international events , provides a unique platform for introducing the culture, history, and art of countries every year, with the participation of artists and artisans from all over the world.

This event is an opportunity for exchanging the knowhow between the artisans from various countries and plays an important

role in promoting international markets for handmade products and improving the status of indigenous art across the world, she pointed out.

This year, Iran with 18 artisans has taken part in the event in diverse fields such as potteries, seven-color tiles, carving, inlay, mosaic, khatam, calligraphy, traditional ornaments, tapestries, and traditional embroidery, she added.

Rishtan is one of the oldest cities in Uzbekistan and the country's main pottery center.

Uzbekistan World Handicrafts Festival is one of the most important handicraft events in the world. The International Pottery Forum is held simultaneously with this festival in one of the most important and oldest pottery production centers, the city of Rishtan.

The event will run until September 20.

## Elymaean, Sassanid artefacts seized in Yasuj

TEHRAN – A number of historical objects dating back to the Elymaean and Sassanid periods have been seized in Yasuj, the head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province said on Wednesday.

Seyyed Mojtaba Amirhosseini told reporters that the items were discovered after police stopped and searched a suspicious car in an area near Yasuj.

He said initial examinations showed that 51 coins from the Elymaean and Sassanid periods were among the re-

## Mahdishahr’s self-colored carpets manifest natural wonders

TEHRAN—Mahdishahr’s self-colored carpets are a manifestation of the wonders of nature and the unparalleled art of human hands, which have imprinted the authenticity and identity of a region in their texture and weave.

Preserving these hand-woven carpets belonging to the Sangsari tribe of Mahdishahr county in Semnan province is a heritage that needs attention to be incorporated into daily life and home interior design, IRNA wrote.

It is one of the most authentic handmade carpets in the world, the weaving of which is a process full of elegance and emotion, and stems from the ancient arts of the Sangsar tribes.

In this pure art of carpet weaving, there is no color in the warp and weft. Every color that comes to mind is the natural color of the warp and weft, as if nature has brought its color to the heart of the carpet under your feet.

In this type of Sangsari tribal carpet, the color of the warp and weft is extracted directly from the natural spectrum of more than 13 colors of the wool of the native Sangsari sheep.

The weavers are patient and skilled women who, with their capable hands, depict mental weaving without a formal plan in the form of successive and harmonious knots, so that each knot represents hours of patience,

covered objects.

Authorities also confiscated two Islamic-era bracelets, six old rings, a metal detector, and excavation tools, Amirhosseini said.

He added that the seizure marked one of the largest recoveries of smuggled historical objects in the province in the first three months of the year.

The Iranian police impounded a Peugeot 405 sedan in connection with the case and arrested two suspects, ISNA reported.

skill, and love for the art.

These knots ultimately become a unique and living carpet. This art is still alive among the women of the Sangsar tribe, but the lack of attention to this original industry is an obstacle to its dynamism and prosperity, and it is expected that the authorities will help preserve this ancient heritage with various strategies, including registration in the National Heritage List.

Using natural dyes of wool without chemicals causes less pollution and maintains environmental health. In addition, the absence of chemical dyes and artificial additives makes this carpet safe for use in the home, especially for children and sensitive people.

The self-dyed carpet of the Sangsar tribe is actually a reflection of the cultural identity of the region and a living legacy of the past. Today, with the introduction of machine-made carpets and chemical dyes, the original art of self-dyed carpets is at risk of being forgotten and lost.

Revival and attention to this art means preserving an important part of cultural identity, promoting the local economy and protecting the environment.

Also, with rising global attention to sustainable and environmentally friendly products, self-dyed carpets can find a special place in domestic and international markets.

# Isfahan launches first film tourism map to highlight city’s movie locations

ISFAHAN – Isfahan unveiled its first tourism map of film shooting locations on Wednesday, offering visitors an interactive way to explore the city's cultural and cinematic heritage.

The map was introduced at a ceremony at the Isfahan House of Artists. The project was developed by Isfahan Municipality's tourism department.

Alireza Massah, head of the department, said the initiative is the seventh tourism map prepared by the municipality. He noted that earlier maps had covered Isfahan's Chaharbagh neighborhood, bazaars, and libraries.

Massah said the idea emerged during the “Salam Cinema” program, which initially documented demolished and active cinemas in Isfahan before expanding to filming sites, including locations from



the television series “The Tales of Majid”.

“The printed version of the map allows tourists to have a tangible and memorable experience,” Massah said. “While digital applications are important, physical maps and catalogues remain a key tool in tourism.”

He explained that the map includes illustrations, images from films, and related infographics, and can be framed and kept as a souvenir.

Massah added that private investors are invited to build tourism products around the content, with the municipality providing the base material. “The map took about two years

to be prepared.”

Massah underlined the launch is part of broader efforts to expand film tourism in Isfahan and that future editions are planned.

Once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy, the ancient city of Isfahan remains one of Iran's most prominent tourist destinations. Isfahan is largely renowned for its breathtaking Islamic architecture, including stunning mosques, palaces, and bazaars.

Visitors may also explore genuine samples of Persian gardens and walk along the city's tree-lined boulevards, soaking in the beauty and history at every turn. The city's architectural marvels, such as Naqsh-e Jahan Square -- one of the largest squares in the world -- make it a jewel of town planning.

## Israeli airstrikes damage Yemen’s National Museum, Houthi authorities say

TEHRAN – Israeli airstrikes have damaged Yemen's National Museum in the capital Sanaa, shattering windows and doors and raising concerns over the safety of its collection, Houthi officials and local archaeologists said.

The Houthi-run culture ministry said the strikes were part of attacks on Sept. 10 that killed more than 45 people and wounded 165 across Sanaa and the northern province of Al-Jawf, The Art Newspaper reported.

Footage published by the Associated Press showed debris scattered across the museum's courtyard, with broken win-

dows, doors and banners depicting its collection lying in the plaza.

“The damage extended to the museum's main hall, where a number of artefacts and photographs are on display, as well as to the museum's doors, windows and storage rooms,” Amida Sholan, an archaeologist and professor at Sanaa University, told The Art Newspaper.

Sholan, speaking from outside Yemen, said she had not confirmed whether artefacts were damaged but warned that structural damage could leave the building vulnerable. “Our greatest concern at the moment is the risk of looting, especially

since all of the doors and windows have been completely destroyed,” she said.

The National Museum, originally opened in 1971, houses tens of thousands of objects, including pre-Islamic artefacts, manuscripts and sculptures. It reopened to the public in May 2023 after a decade-long closure during Yemen's war.

The Old City of Sanaa, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located nearby, does not appear to have been damaged. UNESCO said it suspended activities in Houthi-controlled areas after four of its staff were detained and remains unable to verify heritage damage.

## Shalbfian: Iran ready to draw foreign investment in health tourism

TEHRAN—Iran is ready to draw foreign investment in health tourism, said Ali-Asghar Shalbfian, a senior official of Tourism Ministry.

Speaking at an international tourism investment conference, which was held with the participation of the UN Tourism, at the National Library in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, Shalbfian emphasized the expansion of in-

ternational cooperation and the use of regional capacities through presenting Iran's strategic perspectives on foreign investment and explaining the existing incentives, Mehr news agency reported.

The event was attended by tourism ministers and high-ranking officials, representatives, and ambassadors of Russia, China, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbeki-

stan, Kazakhstan, India, Pakistan, Czech Republic, Bahrain, the UAE, Austria, Montenegro and Australia.

Shalbfian participated in the specialized panel on 'Investment Opportunities in the Region and Healing Heights'.

Describing the outstanding capacities of Iran's health tourism, he explained the strategic plans

of the Islamic Republic of Iran for developing international cooperation in this field.

Focusing on identifying investment opportunities, he said that this conference provided a strategic platform for exchanging experiences and promoting international cooperation, and recent investment incentives in Iran were also introduced.

Second Announcement



Iran Tobacco Company

ONE TIER GENERAL INTERNATIONAL TENDER RENEWAL NOTICE  
Tender REF No. in national tender website : 53,199,886

Iran Tobacco Co , intends to purchase some of the required non-tobacco raw materials through international tender. Therefore, all eligible applicants will be invited to receive the tender documents from 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 until the end of office hours on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025 , after payment the amount of 2 million Rials to the account No, 47000701336609 of Parsian bank, Azadi branch and receive the bid documents from ITC tender secretariat located at 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Education building, Qazvin Ave, Iran Tobacco Company or from the national tender website : iets.mporg.ir after registration process and receive tender documents.

All applicants who do not have the approved sample/consignment in the tender row in the last one year period, must send the sample to Iran Tobacco Company security department , 1st floor , Shahid Golchin building, Qazvin Ave, Qazvin square, Tehran, Iran, in the amount specified in the tender documents, from 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 to 18<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Complete and accurate details of the seller must be indicated on the samples.

The deadline for submitting offers and envelopes to the security secretariat office located in, 1st floor , Shahid Golchin building, Qazvin Ave, Qazvin square, Tehran, Iran, is the end of office hours on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

The offers will be opened in Iran Tobacco Company located at Qazvin Sq, Qazvin Av, Tehran ,Islamic Republic of Iran, at 10.00 on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

Applicants for participation in each row of tender items can provide the guarantee of participating in the tender in the same row and submit the price proposal in the same row .

It is worth mentioning that the basis of price comparison is determined by Bandar Abbas CFR.

If the sample does not match the declared technical specifications, it will be possible to modify and resend the sample during the period of initial sending of the samples by the bidder to the management of the central security office.

Description of bidding items

Item	Description of goods	Unit	Quantity
1	Cigarette paper Double 22mm	Bobin	5600
2	108mm filter rod T4 and Nano	Rod	250,545,678
3	Smal Size filter rod 66mm	Rod	79,882,061
4	126 mm king Size filter rod (Tehran factory)	Rod	4,914,000
5	Tipping paper 64mm Bahman Light Round corner	Bobin	1612

For more information, you can contact to 0098 21 51261651 and 51261920

Communications and International Affairs Management, Iran Tobacco Company

# Iran, Cuba follow up on joint vaccine production

TEHRAN – Ali Jafarian, the senior advisor to the health minister, and Cuba's Acting Minister of Public Health, Tania Margarita Cruz Hernandez, have discussed ways to expand medical and scientific ties between the two countries, taking further actions on boosting cooperation in vaccine production and the biotechnology sector.

The Wednesday meeting was centred around following up on formerly reached agreements between Iran and Cuba, promoting scientific and technical collaborations with the Pasteur Institute in order to transfer pneumococcal vaccine production technology from the Finlay Institute of Vaccines. The officials also discussed potential capacities for manufacturing the vaccine.

Moreover, Jafarian held meetings with other Cuban officials such as deputy minister of foreign affairs, the deputy minister of foreign trade and investment, the head and director general of Cuba's Center for State Control of Medicines and Medical Devices (CECMED), the directors of the Finlay Institute of Vaccines, the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB), the Group of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Industries in Cuba, BioCubaFarma, the Cuban Center of Molecular Immunology (CIM), as well as the largest hospital in Cuba, Hermanos Ameijeiras.

Medical ties between Iran and Cuba date back more than three decades, and the first cooperation



between the two countries began with the transfer of technology for manufacturing hepatitis B vaccine from Cuba's CIGB to the Pasteur Institute of Iran.

In recent years, the two countries successfully developed a Covid-19 vaccine (PastoCovac), and the process of transferring technology for the pneumococcal vaccine is currently underway.

The Iran-Cuba Joint Commission is chaired by Iran's Ministry of Health and Medical Education, and the 19th meeting of this commission is scheduled to be held in Cuba in the near future.

## Joint biotechnology, vaccine production projects

In May, Cuban Ambassador to Tehran, Jorge Fernando Nicolás, in a meeting with Alireza Biglari, the Iranian deputy health minister for international affairs, discussed ways to follow up on joint projects,

especially in biotechnology and vaccine production projects.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2025, the seventh Exhibition of Export Capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was held from April 28 to May 2 at Tehran's International Permanent Fairgrounds.

A delegation of Cuban officials, headed by the Ambassador, also met representatives of the Pasteur Institute of Iran, the Food and Drug Organization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Trade Promotion Organization.

Referring to the successful experience of cooperation between Iran and Cuba, Biglari termed these relations as a successful model in international scientific interactions.

Cuba is one of the countries in Latin America with the highest level of cooperation with Iran in different fields, including the health sector,

Jafarian said in January.

"Thanks to advanced technologies in Cuba, the two countries have benefited from collaborative partnerships in the health sector, such as developing Hepatitis and PastoCovac vaccines," IRNA quoted Jafarian as saying.

During the meeting, Mohammad-Hossein Niknam, the former deputy health minister for international affairs, highlighted that following the 10-year agreement reached last year, the joint meeting has gained more importance, particularly in economic and political sectors.

"So far, besides the main document, seven other documents related to organizations have been finalized, and four more documents are being reviewed. Also, a list of joint projects in the health sector has been prepared."

During the meeting, the representatives of the stakeholder organizations and bodies presented their opinions and considerations about their own documents.

The participants also emphasized the importance of following up on the agreements reached by the private sector during the Havana International Exhibition in 2024.

The exchange of business delegations, the development of financial models to meet the Cuban markets' needs, and the opening of a credit line for the private sector's activities were among other issues that were emphasized

## Iran explores ways to foster co-op with Universal Post Union, APPU

TEHRAN – The CEO of the National Post Company of Iran, Mohammad Ahmadi, in separate meetings with the 28th Universal Post Congress Chair, Tariq Ahmed Al Wahedi, and the secretary general of the Asian-Pacific Postal Union of India, Vinaya Prakash Singh, has explored avenues for enhancing collaborations.

The officials met on the sidelines of the 28th Universal Post Congress, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from September 8 to 19.

During the meeting with Al Wahedi, who is also Group CEO of 7X, a UAE-based investment and holding group focused on trade, transport, and logistics, the Iranian official underlined the significance of expanding postal relations between the two countries.

Highlighting the country's progress in Post and the services provided based on modern technologies, Ahmadi voiced Iran's readiness for the expansion of ties with other countries, including Dubai, particularly in electronic commerce.

Referring to the country's logistics capacities, he said Payam special economic zone and International Airport are ready to provide logistics and postal services. Also, utilizing the capacity of sea mail lines, shipments can be transported to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ahmadi added.

For his part, Al Wahedi welcomed the idea of boosting mutual relations and expressed optimism about signing a memorandum of understanding in the near future. He also announced the UAE's willingness to use its economic and commercial team to expand joint efforts with the Iran Post Company.

The official also extended a formal invitation for Ahmadi to follow up on the talks.

Ahmadi held a meeting with Marjan Oswald, the deputy director general of the Universal Postal Union. During the meeting, he introduced/presented the Geocoded National Address File (G-NAF) as one of the most strategic projects of Iran Post Com-

pany, saying that the services provided by this infrastructure have the capability to be implemented at a global level by post companies. Moreover, the official expressed the country's willingness to benefit from the partnership and consultations of the Universal Postal Union.

For his part, Oswald said the technology center of the Universal Postal Union is ready to provide advisory services in the field of information technology, proposing that Iran utilize the capacity of the Union's Advisory Committee to further benefit from scientific experiences, as well.

The secretary general of the Asian-Pacific Postal Union of India, Singh, and Ahmadi discussed the development of green post, digital transformation, and data-based services.

Iran Post is developing the third-generation postal services and welcomes the Union's technical assistance to accelerate the transformation process, he mentioned.

Referring to the capacities of the Iranian innovative companies, the official said over 140 start-ups are members of Iran Post Company innovative center. Ahmadi invited Singh to pay a visit to Iran and overseas digital transformation projects in person.

"We need technical advice in final distribution, particularly in using electric vehicles, and we would be grateful for the union's educational support in this field," Ahmadi noted.

For his turn, Singh announced the readiness of APPU to provide a consultant to the country.

"We are pleased with Iran's progress and appreciate the role that the country has played in leading the Union's Executive Council in recent years," he said, noting that the APPU is ready to support Iran in expanding postal services through holding annual educational courses and facilitating Iran's participation in these courses.

The official invited the country to attend the APPU Postal Business Forum, which is planned to take place in December.

## WFP releases August report on Iran

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

In August, WFP food assistance reached 33,162 beneficiaries, which included Afghan and Iraqi refugees as well as Iranian teachers. Refugees are assisted with a staple food basket, which includes fortified wheat flour (12 kg per person per month) and vegetable oil (810 ml per person per month).

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

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

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

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

WFP supported 388 refugees with disabilities in August across ten settlements, each receiving an additional monthly cash support of IRR 3 million (US\$4.3), on top of their regular aid. In Au-

gust, assistance covered Kerman, Lorestan, West Azerbaijan, Fars, Khuzestan, Markazi, Khorasan Razavi, and Semnan provinces after initially being introduced to two refugee settlements across two provinces.

To enhance the economic resilience and self-sufficiency of 296 refugees (42 percent women) in August, WFP continued its support for 22 income-generating initiatives across 18 settlements. Activities included welding, tailoring, baking, and farming, among others.

Over the past six months, more than 1.2 million undocumented Afghans have returned from Iran to Afghanistan. Meanwhile, about 35,000 registered refugees in designated settlements remain largely protected from immediate return. Supported by WFP, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and other agencies, these communities receive regular assistance and are closely coordinated with humanitarian actors. However, they remain heavily dependent on external support for food, healthcare, and education, making sustained aid essential to their stability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## 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.

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. 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.

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.

امسال آموزش دانش آموزان به سه شکل حضوری، مجازی، و تلویزیونی دنبال می‌شود، اما اولویت ما آموزش حضوری دانش آموزان است. همه مدارس باید شیوه نامه‌های بهداشتی را به طور جدی رعایت کنند تا مشکلی برای دانش آموزان پیش نیاید.

## World Space Week to be marked



TEHRAN – The World Space Week - the largest annual space event in the world - will be observed from October 4 to 10.

The week helps build up the workforce of tomorrow by inspiring students; demonstrates visible public support for the space programme; educates the public about space activities; and fosters international cooperation in space outreach and education.

Each year, a theme is selected by the World Space Week Association Board of Directors in close coordination with the UN Office of Outer Space Affairs. The theme provides broad guidance to World Space Week participants on the content of their programmes. The theme is selected to increase the impact of World Space Week further on all of humanity by using a uniform theme globally.

For World Space Week 2025, the chosen theme is 'Living in Space'. This theme explores humanity's journey toward making space a habitat, emphasizing the innovative technologies, challenges, and collaborative efforts that make this vision a reality.

Event organizers worldwide are encouraged to integrate the theme 'Living in Space' into their World Space Week events. Activities may range from educational workshops and interactive sessions to panel discussions and collaborative projects, all aimed at fostering innovative environmental solutions.

The Iranian Space Agency will celebrate the event to raise public awareness by holding various scientific and educational programs

for different age groups. It has named the days of the week as follows.

- Saturday, October 4, 'Living in Space'
- Sunday, October 5, 'Space habitats, engineering and design'
- Monday, October 6, 'Space climate and Space radiation'
- Tuesday, October 7, 'The Moon, a space travel station'
- Wednesday, October 8, 'Space agriculture and mining'
- Thursday, October 9, 'Life support systems in space station'
- Friday, October 10, 'Space medicine and human physiology'

The United Nations General Assembly declared in 1999 that World Space Week will be held each year from October 4-10. These dates commemorate two events. October 4, 1957: Launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1, thus opening the way for space exploration

October 10, 1967: The signing of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

Holding World Space Week aims to provide unique leverage in space outreach and education, educate people around the world about the benefits that they receive from space, encourage greater use of space for sustainable economic development, demonstrate public support for space programs, excite young people about science, technology, engineering, and math, and foster international cooperation in space outreach and education.

World Space Week consists of thousands of space-related events held by space agencies, aerospace companies, schools, museums, astronomy clubs, and others in a common timeframe to achieve greater student and public impact through synchronization.

TEHRAN TIMES



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SEPTEMBER 20, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*The mind of a wise man is the safest custody of secrets; cheerfulness is the key to friendship; patience and forbearance will conceal many defects.*

**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon:11:58    Evening: 18:22    Dawn: 4:27 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 5:51 (tomorrow)

## What’s in Tehran art galleries



### Painting

\* A collection of paintings by Mahtab Akbarzadeh is currently on display in an exhibit at Binesh Gallery.

Named “I Live in Silence”, the exhibition runs until September 27 at the gallery located at 22 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave.

\* Paintings by Noushin Vedai are on display in an exhibition at Soo Gallery.

The exhibition named “One Night, Thousand Nights” will continue until October 3 at the gallery located at 30 Purmusa St. off Somayyeh St.



\* A collection of paintings by Masoud Zamani is on view in an exhibition at Adapa Gallery.

Titled “The Weight of the Unseen”, the exhibition will run until September 30 at the gallery located at No. 5, Sumesara Alley, Sazesh St., Vali-e Asr Square.

\* Ech Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Mahsa Shemshian.

Entitled “The Above Photograph Features Me”, the exhibit runs until October 3 at the gallery that can be found at 10 Mirza Taraj opposite Dowlat St., Shariati Ave.



\* A collection of paintings by Donya Aalipour is on view in an exhibition at O Gallery.

The exhibit named “Latent Bodies” will be running until September 30 at the gallery, which can be found at 8 Shahin St., Sanai St.

\* Paintings by Kourosh Arish are currently on view in an exhibition at Etemad Gallery 1.

The exhibition titled “Incomplete” will be running until October 7 at the gallery located at 25 Shirudi Alley, Mofatteh St., near Haft-e Tir Square.



\* Aran Gallery is showcasing paintings by Arezou Shahdadi in an exhibition.

The exhibition will be running until October 3 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle-le-Chateau St.

\* A collection of paintings by a number of artists is on view in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

The exhibit will run until September 29 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.



\* Paintings by a large number of artists including Shima Esfandari, Reza Derakhshani, Mitra Kavian, Erfan Mojib, Ladan Boroujerdi and several others are on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

The exhibit will be running until October 3 at the gallery, which can be found at No. 5, Bahrami alley, Mashahir Street, Qaem Maqam Farahani Avenue.



# Iranian educator, writer Samineh Baghcheban passes away at 97

TEHRAN – The distinguished Iranian educator Samineh Baghcheban passed away in Tehran on September 17 at the age of 97.

The funeral ceremony of Samineh Baghcheban, children's writer and pioneer in the education of deaf children, was held on Friday, September 19 with the presence of a number of former students of the Baghcheban School for the Deaf, which she had managed after her father Jabbar Baghcheban's passing in 1966. Her body was buried in the Section for Notable People in Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery, south of Tehran, IRNA reported.

On her passing, the Minister of Education issued a message of condolence. “The late Baghcheban, with tireless efforts and love for knowledge and education, like her esteemed father, was a guiding light for past and future generations,” Alireza Kazemi said.

“She left behind enduring worldly and spiritual contributions not only in the field of education for the deaf but also in all aspects of children's and adolescents' learning and development, which will always be remembered,” he added.

“In addition to her educational activities, the late Baghcheban was a worthy and inspiring role model for teachers and educators, always emphasizing the importance of love for learning and striving to raise students' awareness,” the minister stated.

“Her positive and hopeful spirit, efforts to overcome challenges and problems, honesty, courage, and promotion of human



values were among the special characteristics of this distinguished lady,” Kazemi noted.

Samineh Baghcheban was not just a teacher — she was a cultural pioneer. Her leadership, teaching, writing, translation, and involvement in establishing institutions for the deaf all testify to her brilliance, perseverance, and commitment. She proved that children's literature is not merely for entertainment, but a tool for the cultural and social development of future generations. She is a role model for women who wish to play an active role in social and cultural arenas.

Her well-known father, Mirza Jabbar Asgarzadeh, famously known as Jabbar Baghcheban, established the first Iranian kindergarten and the first school for deaf children in Tabriz. He was also the inventor of Persian lan-

guage cued speech.

The first kindergarten he established was called “Baghche-ye Atfal,” which means “children's garden”. That is why he was given the nickname baghcheban which literally means ‘gardener’ in the Persian language.

He founded a school for the deaf in 1924, located next to his kindergarten. In 1928, he wrote the first Iranian children's book in Persian titled “Baba Barfi,” which means “snow father” in Persian.

Jabbar Baghcheban founded the school for deaf children, and later her daughter Samineh took over leadership of the school and served until 1979. She worked hard for deaf children and helped expand deaf education to other cities.

Samineh Baghcheban was born in Tabriz, northwest of Iran. She completed her Bache-

lor's degree at Teachers College, Tehran, and was awarded a Full-bright scholarship to continue her studies in the United States. She received her Master's degree from Smith College in 1953, and a scholarship for students from the Middle East was established in her name at Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, MA.

She dedicated more than six decades of her life to teaching, teacher training, developing the Baghcheban method of teaching Persian to both Iranians and non-Iranians, writing elementary school textbooks that were used throughout Iran, and writing children's books for both hearing and deaf children.

Her publications include numerous textbooks, professional papers, and articles in Iranian journals. She also translated several books from English to Persian.

## “Yellowface” appears at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN- A Persian translation of American writer Rebecca F. Kuang's book “Yellowface” has recently been published by Majazi Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Elham Gerami.

«Yellowface» is a sharp, satirical novel published in 2023 that critically examines issues of race, cultural appropriation, and social media influence within the publishing industry. The story explores how marginalized voices are exploited and how superficial diversity efforts often mask deeper systemic problems.

Kuang conceived the idea for “Yellowface” in 2021, drawing from her personal experiences as an Asian American author. She was motivated by incidents where her identity was used superficially or dismissed, fueling her desire to critique how the industry commodifies marginalized authors. She aimed to expose the superficiality of diversity initiatives and the exploitation of cultural authenticity for profit.

The plot centers around June Hayward, an unsuccessful writer who witnesses the death of Athena Liu, a successful Chinese-American author. Seeing an opportunity, June begins to insert herself into Athena's life, editing her unpublished manuscript—a historical story about Chinese laborers during World War I. As June reworks the story, she develops a sense of ownership and finally publishes it under a pseudonym, Juniper Song, adopting an Asian-sounding name and hiding her true ethnicity to maximize suc-



cess and avoid backlash.

The novel's success sparks controversy. Critics and social media users accuse June of cultural appropriation and plagiarism. Kuang's satire vividly exposes how online outrage, especially on Twitter, amplifies superficial debates about race and authenticity. The story critiques the industry's obsession with “diversity” as a marketing tool, often reducing marginalized voices to commodities. It explores how performative activism and social

media outrage shape public narratives, often distorting or oversimplifying complex issues.

Critics responded positively. Kirkus Reviews called it a “biting critique of the publishing industry,” while The Guardian praised Kuang's wit. Amal El-Mohtar of “The New York Times” described it as “viciously satisfying,” though sometimes blunt. NPR highlighted its gripping, fast-paced nature, and the Chicago Review of Books appreciated its dark humor and incisive critique. Some critics, like The Washington Post, felt it occasionally relied too heavily on Twitter-style arguments and lacked character depth.

“Yellowface” received numerous awards, cementing its cultural significance. It was named one of the top ten audiobooks of 2023 by Libro.fm and included in Time magazine's “100 Must-Read Books of 2023.” It also won Amazon's Best Book of the Year. Other honors include the Foyles Books of the Year, the Waterstones Book of the Year (shortlisted), and the New England Book Award for Fiction. Its success extended into 2024, earning awards such as the American Book Award and the British Book Awards' Fiction Book of the Year.

The novel's influence is further evidenced by its upcoming adaptation. In late 2024, Lionsgate Television acquired the rights to develop a limited series, with Karyn Kusama attached as director and executive producer. This adaptation promises to bring Kuang's sharp critique of cultural appropriation, authenticity, and social media influence to a broader audience, further amplifying the novel's impact.

## Together For Palestine: Star-studded concert at Wembley Arena raises £1.5m

A charity event at Wembley Arenain London, England, has raised £1.5m to support Palestinian-led organizations working on the frontline of the Israel genocidal war against Palestine.

Benedict Cumberbatch, Riz Ahmed, and Richard Gere were among the stars lending their voice to Together For Palestine on Wednesday, organized by songwriter, artist and activist Brian Eno, Sky News reported.

It comes days after a two-year UN investigation found Israel has committed genocide in Gaza, which it denies.

High-profile names from across the globe and spanning the generations were there, with musicians, actors, sportspeople, journalists, and poets contributing to the show.

Actress Florence Pugh spoke on stage, telling the crowd: “Silence in the face of such suffering is not neutrality, it is complicity. Empathy should not be this hard and it should have never been this hard”.

Hollywood actor Gere was joined on stage by medics who have served on the ground in Gaza, urging the audience to use their voices by “speaking the truth with generosity and love, that's how you change things”.

Bridgerton star Nicola Coughlan called on other artists to speak up too, saying: “There are many artists that I love, and I know you love, who have hundreds of millions of followers, and they're saying nothing.”

Broadcaster Louis Theroux spoke movingly about his time making a documentary in the

West Bank, saying the people of Palestine were “subjected to a kind of slow, grinding, relentless violence”.

Music-wise, a live ensemble featuring Damon Albarn, Paul Weller, Adnan Joubbran, Hot Chip's Alexis Taylor, and Nadine Shah performed a specially composed musical piece, and Neneh Cherry, Greentea Peng, and Bastille singer Dan Smith united for a rendition of Cherry's hit song 7 Seconds.

A pre-recorded version of Annie Lennox's Why was played, with revised lyrics to reflect the horrors of the Israel-Hamas war and there was an exclusive filmed performance by Bristol band Portishead.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))