

Iran Wrestling Dominate the World

Iran's freestyle and Greco-Roman teams marked a historic milestone in the World Wrestling Championships



Iran's Greco-Roman wrestler Amin Mirzazadeh celebrates for winning gold in 130kg weight class of the 2025 World Wrestling Championships

Pezeshkian says Iran will not 'bow to pressure' after UNSC moves to impose snapback sanctions

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, speaking at a ceremony on Saturday, said Tehran would never surrender to coercion.

“They held a session last night to bring back the snapback — are they going to block our way? Minds and ideas either find a way or make a way,” he said.

“They may be able to strike Natanz and Fordow, but they forget that it is people who build Natanz and greater facilities — and they will do so again,” Pezeshkian added. “We will never bow to greed and aggression. We will not bend before any power.” ▶ Page 2

Snapback is a nail in the coffin of international law!

By Mohammad Ghaderi
political analyst

TEHRAN – On Friday, September 19, 2025, the Security Council predictably failed to approve a draft resolution extending the suspension of anti-Iranian sanctions. The draft was prepared in response to the European troika's move to trigger the snapback mechanism, which would reinstate UN sanctions on Iran.

Several factors contributed to this outcome, but perhaps the most significant was U.S. and Israeli pressure, which led even South Korea—the Security Council president and drafter of the resolution—to abstain from voting. ▶ Page 2

Why did Hezbollah chief call on Riyadh to open 'new page' with the Resistance?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — In a pivotal development, Hezbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem on Friday urged Saudi Arabia to turn a “new page” with the Resistance movements amid rising Israeli aggression that now extends to Qatar.

Speaking on the first anniversary of the assassination of the Radwan Unit leaders, Qassem appealed to “everyone in Lebanon, even those with whom we are nearly hostile,” not to “be servants of Israel, whether knowingly or not.”

He warned that “the entire region is facing an exceptionally dangerous political turning point,” as Israel escalates “criminality and brutality,” violating humanitarian, legal, international, and human-rights norms with “full support from the U.S. administration.”

Qassem called on Saudi Arabia to “restore relations” and “open a new page with the Resistance” through dialogue that “addresses problems, meets concerns, and secures interests.” He insisted this dialogue rest on the fact that Israel—not the Resistance—is the enemy, and that past disputes be set aside.

Gaza war crimes intensify

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The Israeli occupation regime is escalating its atrocities against civilians in the besieged Gaza Strip. Scores of Palestinian civilians have been killed by Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF), as the regime intensifies its terrorist and genocidal assault on Gaza City in an effort to forcibly displace its residents.

According to reporters, people's homes are being attacked “with no prior warning” as IOF infantry and warplanes carry out widespread demolitions of houses to prevent families from returning to their original neighborhoods in the north of the Strip.

The Government Media Office in Gaza confirmed on Saturday that the IOF has forcibly displaced around 270,000 Palestinians from Gaza City toward the southern parts of the enclave, as part of a systematic policy of ethnic cleansing.

Despite the intensity of the attacks, over 900,000 Palestinians remain in Gaza City and the northern areas. Remarkably, the office noted a wave of reverse displacement, with more than 22,000 people returning to their original neighborhoods inside the city.

Fueling 'Greater Israel' with US arms

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – The United States' reported plan to sell billions of dollars in additional weapons to Israel clearly shows that Washington is encouraging Tel Aviv to advance its “Greater Israel” vision.

American and Israeli media have reported that the White House has notified Congress it plans to sell nearly \$6 billion in weapons to Israel.

The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has already approved about \$12 billion in major military assistance to Israel this year. This new package of military aid comes amid Israel's growing isolation over its warmongering in West Asia.

Israel is facing growing global backlash over its airstrike in Qatar earlier this month. On September 9, Israel struck a residential area in Doha where Hamas leaders were meeting to discuss a U.S. proposal for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. While the Hamas leadership survived the attack, five low-ranking Hamas members and a Qatari security official were killed, drawing widespread condemnation even from the UK, Germany, and France, Israel's main Western allies.

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Iran, Spain boost anti-money laundering cooperation as Madrid prepares to host FATF meeting

TEHRAN – Iran and Spain have agreed to strengthen cooperation in combating money laundering, with Madrid set to host the next meeting between Iran and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Antonio Sánchez Benedito Gaspar, Spain's ambassador to Iran, met with Hadi Khani, deputy economy minister and head of Iran's Financial Intelligence Unit, to discuss the exchange of experience and expertise between the two countries.

Khani said Iran's actions against money laundering and related crimes go beyond international recommendations and standards.

He added that Tehran is determined to highlight its progress despite U.S. sanctions and regional risks. ▶ Page 4

World Cleanup Day: combating the global mismanaged waste crisis

TEHRAN – On 20 September 2025, people around the world unite for World Cleanup Day – a global movement that goes beyond picking up trash to confront the waste crisis head-on. This year's focus is on textile and fashion waste, one of the most visible and fast-growing environmental challenges.

Every second, a garbage truck full of clothes is dumped in a landfill or burned. The fashion industry generates 92 million tons of textile waste each year, overwhelming waste systems, polluting waterways, and fuelling the climate crisis.

World Cleanup Day 2025 highlights the urgent need to raise awareness and shift habits toward responsible consumption, strengthen local and global waste management systems, and advance policies and partnerships that build urban resilience. ▶ Page 7



Olympiad medal winners honored

TEHRAN – Winners of international scientific Olympiads were honored in a ceremony in Tehran on Saturday in the presence of President Masoud Pezeshkian.

In the Iranian calendar year that ended on March 20, Iran ranked third in the world for gaining gold medals in international Olympiads.

“Last year, by winning 12 gold medals, we managed to win third place in the world,” ISNA quoted Reza Hosseini, the head of the Young Researchers Club, as saying.

For the next year, the first goal is to maintain being among the top three countries in the world and increase the number of gold medals to more than 15, he added.

Exclusive Interview

Araghchi represents Iran's official stance, Prof. Gärtner says after Macron's controversial remarks

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TEHRAN PAPERS

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

The impact of snapback on Iran

In a note, Ettelaat discussed the impact of snapback sanctions on the Iranian market and wrote: From an economic point of view, Europe has never been able to put the same level of pressure on Iran as the United States. Due to their global dimensions, the U.S. sanctions have disrupted Iran's access to the global banking system, oil sale, and even currency transfers. The main issue is the psychological effect of this decision. When the French president speaks openly about the certainty of snapback, the hidden message is that the sanctions will become a permanent situation. In such an environment, people and businesspersons no longer have any hope of the lifting of restrictions. At the political level, there is also an important consequence. Some countries are inclined to keep the doors of interaction open for economic or political reasons, but if snapback is implemented, a collective decision will be registered against Iran that the lifting of which will be even more difficult than its implementation, because some European countries can oppose and create pressure to prevent the lifting of sanctions. The result of this process is a longer isolation of Iran in the international arena, even if its economic impact is not as great as the U.S. sanctions.

Siasat-e-Rooz: The disloyalty of the West

Siasat-e-Rooz devoted its editorial to the West's breach of promise and wrote: The most important agreement between Iran and the West was the nuclear agreement, but we now see that when we have reached the expiry of the JCPOA, Europe, in cooperation with the U.S., wants to bring back the snapback. The West is disloyal because they do not stand by their word and always try to break their word and renege on treaties or agreements that are even in their favor. The leaders of the three European countries (the European troika of Britain, France and Germany) support Israel, while the Zionist regime is busy killing the people of the region. In return, they put Iran under more political and economic pressure. It is worth noting that due to these unprincipled and hypocritical behaviors the people in Western countries have held great demonstrations against the crimes of the Zionist regime. But the people of these countries that their governments back Israel have demonstrated against Iran because Iran does not have unconventional weapons, including nuclear arms, but it is resolute to defend itself. If an attack is carried out by the enemy, the response of the Iranian armed forces will be decisive, powerful, and devastating.

Snapback is a nail in the coffin of international law!

From page 1 ► European inaction in the face of U.S. demands revealed that the snapback activation was a White House-engineered maneuver, carried out on its behalf by the three members of the European troika.

However, China and Russia have explicitly opposed the European countries' action on at least three occasions during this period, considering it illegal and refusing to accept it. China and Russia seek to convey a clear message to the West that the unilateral decisions of the Americans will no longer be the basis for their actions on international issues.

The behavior of Western countries at this stage, in addition to destroying the rotten remnants of the JCPOA, put another nail in the coffin of international law. Besides exposing the failure of international legal mechanisms to uphold nations' rights, this behavior further entrenched global public distrust of the West.

Although Iran's conduct demonstrated that, despite intense pressure and hostility, it still regards dialogue and diplomacy as the superior option, it remains unwilling to compromise its national interests and security and is determined not to repeat the bitter experience of the JCPOA.

Furthermore, the yes vote of Pakistan and Algeria to the resolution, along with Russia and China, was predictable due to their relations with Iran and showed that Iran is not

Hamshahri: Iran's position on return of sanctions

Hamshahri analyzed the UN Security Council vote on Friday in which 9 out of 15 members did not vote for the suspension of UN sanctions against Iran. It wrote the UN Security Council did not vote in favor of a resolution demanding the continuation of the lifting of UN sanctions against Iran, thus taking another step towards the return of hostile sanctions against the Islamic Republic and doubling the uncertainties about the course of future developments. The increasing trend of European threats regarding the return of UN Security Council sanctions resolutions comes at a time as senior Iranian officials have repeatedly clarified Tehran's position on such threats. One of Tehran's most strategic positions regarding the activation of the snapback mechanism is to find a solution to evade the sanctions through developing regional and international cooperation. Developing cooperation with neighboring and regional countries, especially within the framework of regional and international organizations such as Shanghai, BRICS, Eurasia, etc., will be key to circumvent the sanctions. Iran will not back down under threats and intimidation. Tehran has repeatedly stated that the "threat-oriented" approaches of the West will fail to affect the Islamic Republic's determination to protect its national interests.

Etemad: The need to convince countries about illegitimacy of snapback

Etemad discussed Iran's strategic actions after the possible activation of the snapback sanctions in an interview with nuclear expert Ahmad Shirzad. He said: Iran must formulate a set of economic, cultural, and political measures to continue its development under sanctions. Through active diplomacy, Iran must convince the countries of the world about the illegitimacy of the snapback and related resolutions and encourage them not to cooperate with these sanctions. The role of China and regional countries such as the UAE is key in this regard, and if China refuses to cooperate with the West to implement the restrictions, it will have a significant impact on Iran's international activities. According to Shirzad, purposeful disregard for some European countries and showing the failure of sanctions can force the other side to reconsider its positions and keep Iran proud in continuing its political and economic path. A set of countermeasures must be implemented carefully, step by step, so that Iran can resist potential pressures and maintain its position on the international stage.

isolated in the international arena. Meanwhile, the low weight and position of the countries that voted against the resolution alongside the United States, Britain and France clearly show that the era of American unilateralism in international relations has expired.

To be more precise, although the West is trying to put our country in a special situation by building a consensus against Iran, Tehran's strategy of "active resistance" is intelligently disrupting the West's hostile plans.

Moreover, strengthening ties with neighboring states and Tehran's active participation in anti-Western coalitions—such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization—serve as reliable deterrents against the Western-Zionist axis in the future.

The events that took place at the UN Security Council meeting showed that the balance of power in the world order has practically changed, and that Western powers can no longer continue the model of American unilateralism.

The clear statement of China and Russia in which they announced they will not commit themselves to the return of anti-Iranian sanctions should also be considered a clear sign of the effective role of new international coalitions in the world. In practice, they are seriously challenging the structures of the existing order and promises a change in the geometry of power in the future world.

Pezeshkian says Iran will not 'bow to pressure' after UNSC moves to impose snapback sanctions

From page 1 ► On Friday, a draft resolution aimed at permanently lifting pre-JCPOA UN sanctions against Iran failed to win the necessary support. Nine members opposed the measure, while Russia, China, Pakistan, and Algeria backed it, and two abstained. Unless a breakthrough occurs, the UN sanctions will automatically re-turn by September 27.

In a statement published after the voting, Iran said the European signatories to the JCPOA (Germany, France and Britain) had rejected a reasonable Iranian offer that prevented the return of sanctions while also addressing European concerns on Tehran's nuclear program. The E3 initiated the process to begin the "snapback" of anti-Iran UN embargoes in late August. Analysts believe London, Berlin, and Paris have proceeded with their plans to appease Washington, which left the 2015 nuclear pact three years after its signing and attacked Iranian nuclear sites back in June.

Elsewhere in his Saturday remarks, Pezeshkian stressed that Iran's real wealth lies not in oil or gas but in its young, creative generation. "If we give talented people space and support, they can solve every problem. The enemy may destroy our achievements, but our scientists and specialists are the true national treasure," he said.

The president said his administration's top priority since taking office has been reforming the education system to identify and nurture talent. "We must raise children who, when faced with obstacles, immediately seek or make a way. No one can block the path of someone with determination and ability," he said.

'Cairo agreement would collapse if sanctions are reinstated'

The most immediate backwash of the potential restoration of UN sanctions is the



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at a ceremony in Tehran on September 20, 2025.

collapse of Tehran's recent co-operation agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), concluded in Cairo earlier this month, according to Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi.

In a phone interview with IRIB News, Gharibabadi dismissed Europe's move as "completely illegal," saying Iran, China, and Russia had presented detailed legal arguments to the Council.

"If nothing special happens in the field of diplomacy and the UN sanctions are reinstated, it would be logical for the Cairo agreement to be completely stopped," Gharibabadi warned. Still, he added that "the path of interaction and diplomacy is never closed."

The Cairo deal, reached on Sept. 9 between Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and IAEA chief Rafael Grossi, outlined practical steps to resume co-operation. It followed a parliamentary vote obliging the government to suspend work with the agency after U.S.-Israeli strikes targeted three Iranian nuclear facilities, which Tehran

and the majority of states in the world said violated international law and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Gharibabadi cautioned against falling into "psychological operations" designed by Western governments, saying reinstated UN measures would not add much to existing U.S. sanctions, which already exceed those under the nuclear accord.

In separate remarks, the Foreign Ministry also declared that while Tehran would continue to pursue its rights through diplomacy, it reserved the right to deliver a "proportionate response" to any unlawful action.

NPT could be scrapped next

Iranian lawmakers have reacted to Friday's voting too. Ebrahim Azizi, head of parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, wrote on X that years of "maximum pressure" have failed, producing only higher costs for Iran's adversaries. "Dialogue is a tool of power, but it is not an endless concession. Those who choose pressure will face

a more decisive response," he warned.

Ali Nikzad, the parliament's deputy speaker, called the snapback attempt "a desperate bid to force Iran into submission to hegemonic powers." Quoting a senior commander, he added: "There are opportunities within threats that do not exist within opportunities."

The strongest response came from the spokesman of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee. Ebrahim Rezayi stated in a post on X that it is now "time to leave the NPT and reconsider some doctrines." This suggestion, however, is not entirely new. Multiple Iranian officials from across the political spectrum have warned since the lead-up to 2025 that a withdrawal from the NPT could very possibly follow a restoration of UN sanctions. The U.S.-Israeli attacks that occurred months later have further hardened Iranians' stance, with many now believing that diplomacy is fruitless when dealing with the West.

Exclusive: Araghchi represents Iran's official stance, Prof. Gärtner says after Macron's controversial remarks

Political expert adds it's fair that Iran demands no new military strikes during renewed talks

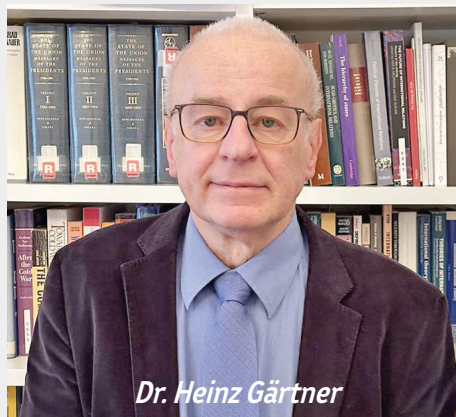
By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – Prof. Dr. Heinz Gärtner, a distinguished scholar of international relations and political science at the University of Vienna, brings decades of expertise on global security, transatlantic relations, nuclear non-proliferation, and West Asian geopolitics.

With a rich academic background that includes prestigious Fulbright Fellowships at Stanford University and Johns Hopkins University, as well as leadership roles at the Austrian Institute for International Affairs and the International Institute for Peace in Vienna, Dr. Gärtner has emerged as a leading voice in analyzing complex international challenges. His award-winning publications, including his acclaimed work on "China and Eurasia," offer deep insights into the shifting dynamics of global power.

The Tehran Times conducted an interview with the professor to discuss the latest controversies regarding Europe's handling of Iran's nuclear issue, including recent remarks by French President Emmanuel Macron who accused Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi of lacking agency. In an interview with Israeli media, the French leader said Europe had rejected a "reasonable" offer from the diplomat which was designed to prevent the return of anti-Iran UN sanctions because he lacks "support" within the "structure".

While Macron's remarks were soon refuted by Araghchi himself, as well as analysts and other Iranian officials, we asked Dr.



Gärtner how common it is for world leader to dismiss a legal and official representative of a foreign country based on claims similar to those of the French president. He also discussed the geopolitical stakes surrounding Iran's diplomatic initiatives, the interplay of regional and global powers, and the broader implications for peace and security in West Asia.

Below is the full text of the interview:

Emmanuel Macron gave a high-profile interview to an Israeli outlet right before a pivotal UNSC meeting on September 19th. From your view, what was the intended message of this media choice, and how does it align with France's diplomatic posture in the region? Was this symbolic, strategic, or purely rhetorical?

In this interview—given before the UN Security Council meeting on September 19—President Macron announced that UN sanctions would be reimposed on Iran.

Macron's main intention, however, was to warn Israel about the risk of losing its reputation and credibility due to the war in Gaza. He also prepared the ground for France's possible recognition of Palestine as a state, underlining that Israel must accept the two-state solution. This message was directed at all states in the [Persian] Gulf region.

Iran remained fully compliant with its nuclear commitments until 2019, maintaining adherence for a complete year after the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA. Even after that period, Tehran continued to keep diplomatic channels open. How do you assess Iran's approach during this time, and how would you evaluate the role and effectiveness of European countries in responding to Iran's stance and in sustaining diplomatic engagement?

The JCPOA is one of the most carefully negotiated arms-control agreements in history. President Trump's withdrawal in 2018 was one of the greatest blunders in international politics of the post-Cold War era. It should not be forgotten, however, that there was an attempt to revive the JCPOA in 2021–22. After President Biden gave the green light, the EU-3 launched negotiations in Vienna in April 2021. By the end of June, 80 percent of the issues regarding Iran's nuclear program and sanctions relief had already been agreed. Iran should have built on these negotiations and accepted the proposal tabled by the European Commission in the fall of 2022.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Guardian Council seeks revisions to espionage law following Israeli-imposed war

TEHRAN – Iran’s Guardian Council said Saturday that a bill toughening punishments for espionage with Israel has been sent back to parliament for final clarification, as authorities intensify a nationwide crackdown on suspected Mossad agents.

Guardian Council spokesman Hadi Tahan Nazif told reporters that the draft legislation — which targets espionage and cooperation with the Zionist regime and other hostile states against Iran’s security and national interests — was originally passed during the 12-day war imposed on the country. “Most of the ambiguities in the bill have been resolved, and only one remains. The Guardian Council has referred this back to the Islamic Consultative Assembly for clarification,” he said.



Iran has been stepping up measures against espionage networks following the Israeli war. In late July, intelligence forces announced the arrest of 20 spies, Mossad operational and support agents, and individuals connected to Israeli intelligence officers in Tehran and

several other provinces.

On June 13, the Israeli regime carried out an unlawful act of aggression against Iran, assassinating senior commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians. Iran retaliated within 24 hours with missile and drone strikes, later escalating

with further operations under True Promise III.

The conflict widened on June 22, when U.S. bombers struck three Iranian nuclear facilities in a blatant violation of international law. Iran responded with a missile strike on Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest U.S. military base in West Asia. The embattled Israeli regime was forced to suggest a unilateral truce on June 24.

Meanwhile, Iran’s Judiciary has pressed ahead with executions of convicted Mossad agents. On Wednesday, the official Judiciary news agency reported that Babak Shahbazi, convicted of espionage and security cooperation with Israel, was executed by hanging after his death sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court.

Towards a new regional order

The Saudi–Pakistan agreement, the end of imperial certainties, and the vindication of the Iranian vision

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The recent defense agreement signed between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan represents one of the most significant developments in West Asian and South Asian geopolitics in the past decade.

It is not merely a bilateral maneuver or a pragmatic response to immediate security needs. On the contrary, the new pact symbolizes the dramatic erosion of the old foundations of Western-imposed security architecture and signals the beginning of a stage in which regional states appear determined to redefine, on their own terms, the framework of their alliances and the nature of their sovereignty.

Any analysis seeking to grasp the significance of this agreement must place it within the sequence of profound crises the region has experienced over recent years, particularly in the wake of the recent Israeli attack on Qatar. The message has resonated deeply: no U.S. ally can consider itself immune to regional violence and instability, nor fully protected by Washington’s proverbial “security guarantee.”

This symbolic and political shock has accelerated the recognition of what Iran has long emphasized: the tutelary presence of external actors, far from providing stability, has exacerbated fractures, mistrust, and the vulnerability of regional states.

For decades, Western—and especially U.S.—narratives placed their allies under a near-sacred umbrella of protection. Military bases, bilateral treaties, arms trade, and diplomatic agreements guaranteed a landscape in which Arab elites could grow or survive under the shadow of the superpower. Yet recent events directly challenge this foundational myth: neither security nor regional order is now ensured by proximity to imperial power.

The Israeli attack on Qatar exposed the cracks in the supposed invulnerability; uneven responses and the absence of strategic consequences for Tel Aviv illustrate the decline of this model. Washington’s “guarantee” is revealed as an impossibility. Viewed from this perspective, the Saudi–Pakistan agreement is far more than a mere self-protection maneuver: it marks a symbolic—and potentially political—rupture with old certainties. Former U.S. allies no longer see Washington’s guarantees as sacred or sufficient.

Those who, out of necessity or inertia, cling to the fading rites of U.S. protection will eventually discover that the collapse of imperial certainties leaves them exposed both to unforeseen threats and to the inexorable erosion of their own independence. The old order is fading;



Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, left, and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Sept. 17, 2025

the construction of a new one has just begun, but its contours are already perceptible.

The strategic history of the Saudi–Pakistan relationship: An Iranian critical reading

The crisis of the old guarantee model has forced regional actors to look inward and recognize one another as legitimate interlocutors

The military relationship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan has deep roots going back to the 1960s. Islamabad sent troops, advisors, and senior officers to Riyadh, participating both in the training of local forces and in the protection of strategic installations. Over the following decades, particularly in the 1980s, Saudi Arabia financed military and religious projects in Pakistan, seeking to consolidate its influence and counter the presence of regional actors such as Iran. Thousands of Pakistani officers served in Saudi bases, reinforcing the kingdom’s dependence on Islamabad as a “human shield” against internal and external threats.

However, from an Iranian perspective, this historical relationship reveals a short-term, dependent policy, focused on external tutelage rather than sustainable regional security. Saudi strategy, based on purchasing loyalties and importing security, reflects the continuation of a logic of subordination to extra-regional powers, particularly the United States. For Iran, this model is not only vulnerable to geopolitical shifts—as demonstrated by the Israeli attack on Qatar—but also fosters sectarian imbalances and internal fractures, weakening regional cohe-

sion and resilience.

The new agreement, while seeking to diversify and strengthen Riyadh’s security, does not entirely break from this historical pattern. The key difference is that the initiative no longer depends exclusively on Washington, acknowledging that external protection alone cannot guarantee stability. Nonetheless, the Iranian critique underscores that Saudi Arabia continues to seek security solutions outside an endogenous regional framework, while Tehran insists that true stability can only emerge from cooperation among regional actors, grounded in shared sovereignty and strategic balance.

The transition towards endogenous security

The political-theological dimension of this crisis is significant. Regional order is no longer granted by U.S. decree. The myth of the “guarantor” has collapsed: protection must now be built locally, through pacts forged in response to concrete risks and threats, not under the fiction of an American pax that exists only in the memory of past generations.

In this sense, Saudi Arabia has chosen Pakistan to erect the first major pillar of its new defensive model. Islamabad, possessing the only nuclear force in the Islamic world and an experienced military apparatus, provides strategic credibility and tactical flexibility. For Riyadh, the alliance with Pakistan is both a military insurance policy and a recognition of the need to diversify alliances and sophisticate its foreign policy in a more volatile and less predictable terrain. The joint declaration mentions cooperation on asymmetric threats, air defense, intelligence, and technological coordination: elements inconceivable without the crisis of confidence in the previous alliance structure.

This shift, however, is not

without a significant paradox: Pakistan maintains strong ties with Iran and, unlike other Islamic powers, has resisted pressures to fully fall into an anti-Iranian orbit. Pakistan shares a long border with Iran, as well as common challenges such as terrorism, drug trafficking, and energy security. Both countries have developed pragmatic cooperation mechanisms even during moments of tension. Islamabad, despite external pressures, has avoided breaking with Tehran.

Thus, the possible—though still remote—tripartite alliance between Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia haunts Washington and Tel Aviv as an unsettling specter. It would demonstrate that the “divide and rule” tactics no longer have their former effectiveness.

The shock caused by the Israeli attack on Qatar exposed the strategic isolation of the Persian Gulf states. The lesson is devastatingly clear: no balance with Washington or Tel Aviv, no opening or concession, guarantees effective protection against regional violence.

Qatar, which had cultivated its image for years as a balanced actor and mediator, was taken by surprise by the realities of power politics. The reverberations quickly reached Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, and beyond: the risk is no longer potential or theoretical, but palpable and urgent.

It is in this space of exposure that the Iranian thesis finds tacit recognition. For decades, Iran has maintained, at considerable international and regional cost, that the region can only achieve peace and stability through locally negotiated solutions, without the omnipresence of the United States or Israel’s disruptive logic. Time has proven Tehran right: the persistence of external agendas has exacerbated insecurity rather than resolving it.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran wrestling dominate the world

TEHRAN – With one day remaining, Iran’s Greco-Roman team claimed the title at the 2025 World Wrestling Championships.

Greco-Roman wrestlers have already secured two gold medals, Gholamreza Farrokhi at 82 kg and Amin Mirzadeh at 130 kg and one silver medal at 55 kg by Payam Ahmadi.

Mohammadhadi Saravi, the 2024 Olympic champion, will have a chance to add Iran’s third gold in the 97 kg category Saturday night.

Iran’s Greco-Roman squad has previously won the World Championship five times, in 1961, 1965, 1998, 2002, and 2013.

Earlier, Iran’s freestyle team claimed the title after a 12-year wait, marking a historic milestone for Greco-Roman wrestling as well.

The freestyle team have won the World Championship title nine times—in 1971, 1973, 1995, 2006, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2022, and 2023. Overall, Team Melli have also earned a silver and a bronze medal as well on fourteen occasions.

Iran to play Tanzania in friendly match

TEHRAN – Iran’s national football team is reportedly set to play a friendly against Tanzania, an African side.

The match is scheduled for January.

Tanzania sits second in CAF Group E of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualification, while Iran has already qualified for the 2026 World Cup.

Team Melli is expected to face Tanzania, currently positioned 107th in the FIFA world rankings, in Dubai.

Amir Ghalenoei’s squad is also scheduled to meet Russia in a friendly in October.

In the latest FIFA rankings released on Thursday, Iran moved down one spot to 21st.

Iran down Jordan at 2025 Asian U17 Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Jordan 42-22 at the 1st Asian Men’s U17 Handball Championship on Saturday.

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

The young Team Melli will meet Qatar in Group II on Sunday.

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.

Pezeshkian congratulates Greco-Roman team on world title

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian has congratulated Iran’s national Greco-Roman wrestling team after it secured the world championship title in Zagreb, Croatia, marking Iran’s first triumph in the discipline in more than a decade.

In a message on Saturday, Pezeshkian praised the efforts of the coaches, technical staff and athletes, calling the victory a testament to “the dynamism of the Iranian nation and the capability

of its youth to reach the peaks of glory.”

Iran topped the team standings with 80 points after the finals and bronze medal bouts in the first four weight categories, ahead of Georgia, Japan, Hungary, and Armenia. The tally did not include the results of the remaining three weight classes, where three Iranian wrestlers had already advanced to the semifinals.

Hassan Rangraz’s men returned to the top of the Greco-Roman wrestling world stage for the second time in its history and the first since 2013.

Persepolis, Chadormalou share spoils at PGPL

TEHRAN – Persepolis were held to a goalless draw by Chadormalou at the Takhti Stadium on Matchweek 4 of the 2025/26 Iran Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) on Friday.

This marked Persepolis’s third draw in four matches.

Elsewhere, Mes were also held to a goalless draw by Shams Azar in Rafsanjan, Aluminum defeated Esteghlal Khuzestan 2-0 in Arak, Fajr Sepasi edged past Zob Ahan in Shiraz, and Malavan lost to Gol Gohar 2-0 in Bandar Anzali.

On Sunday, Esteghlal will host Paykan, and Sepahan will face Tractor in Isfahan.

Iran rout Bangladesh at AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 qualifiers

TEHRAN – Defending champions Iran began their AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 Qualifiers campaign with an impressive 12-0 win against Bangladesh in Group G on Saturday.

Bangladesh offered stiff resistance to 13-time champions Iran in the opening minutes with goalkeeper Jahid Rabbi deflecting Masoud Yousef’s shot onto the bar before blocking Ali Khalilvand’s attempt.

Iran’s persistent pressure bore fruit in the 10th minute, Hossein Sabzi capitalizing on a mistake from Srabon Shakil to score and was quickly followed by the second thanks to a near post flick from Hossein Tayebi, the-afc.com reported.

Tayebi made it 3-0 a minute later, smashing a high ball into the roof of the net from an acute angle with Mohammadhossein Bazayr adding another as Bangladesh struggled to cope with Iran’s power.

Yousef then squeezed a low shot home in the 16th minute before Behrooz Azimi fired home four minutes later for Iran to take a commanding 6-0 lead into the break.

Iran maintained their intensity after the interval with Bazayr rifling in an unstoppable shot in the 21st minute after space opened up for him on the edge of the semi-circle.

AmiHossein Gholami then smacked an effort against the bar as Bangladesh held Iran at bay until the 32nd minute when Mohammadhossein Derakhshani teed up Khalilvand to strike home.

Iran wrapped up an outstanding performance with further goals from Saied Momeni (35th), Tayebi (37th), Mahdi Karimi (37th) and Gholami (38th).

Farrokhi collects gold at 2025 World Wrestling Championships

TEHRAN – Gholamreza Farrokhi of Iran won a gold medal in the men’s Greco-Roman 82kg weight class of the 2025 World Wrestling Championships on Friday.

Farrokhi defeated his Georgian rival Gela Bolkvadze 4-0 in final bout.

He had defeated China’s Li Qingzhe 9-0 in Round of 32, Hungary’s Erik Szilvassy 8-0 in Round of 16, Switzerland’s Ramon Betschart 9-0 in quarterfinals and Croatian Karlo Kodrić 7-1 in semifinals.

The 2025 World Wrestling Championships are being held in Zagreb, Croatia from Sept. 13 to 21.

Iran's steel exports near \$3b in 5 months despite rebar slump

TEHRAN – Iran's steel industry recorded nearly \$3 billion in exports during the first five months of the year, a 10 percent increase from the same period last year, the Iranian Steel Producers Association said.

The volume of iron and steel exports rose 17 percent, equal to 796,000 tons, reversing a decline seen in the first quarter.

Exports of iron ore concentrate jumped 80 percent year-on-year, raising concerns among steelmakers over reduced domestic supply.

In contrast, exports of long steel products continued to fall sharply. Rebar, which accounted for more than 85 percent of long product exports last year, dropped 31 percent over the five-month period.

Meanwhile, a stronger export strategy by Mobarakeh Steel Group companies, including the main plant and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Automotive Sheet, boosted foreign currency revenues by \$122 million from flat steel products. Their total exports reached \$216 million in the same period.

Iran, Azerbaijan push forward joint projects from logistics hub to industrial park

TEHRAN – Hossein Pirmoazzen, deputy head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, said Iran and Azerbaijan are taking strategic steps to advance joint projects ranging from logistics to industrial infrastructure, including a planned logistics hub and a joint industrial park.

Speaking in a meeting with Iran's ambassador to Baku, Pirmoazzen noted that the two projects, agreed during the recent presidential visit to Azerbaijan and endorsed by both governments, remain pending and require determined follow-up.

He said while Baku has shown professionalism in negotiations and drafting agreements, the pace of implementation has been cautious and slow.

The joint industrial park is planned for the Bileh-Savar Free Trade-Industrial Zone, with a proposal to allocate equal land shares from both countries. Pirmoazzen said Ardebil province is ready to provide full infrastructure, including water, electricity and gas, for the project. He added that tax incentives, trade facilitation measures, capital security and access to international markets make the plan an essential response to investment demand in the border region.

He also highlighted the potential of the Ardabil-Baku railway link, describing it as a turning point for agricultural exports and a cost-cutting route to Russia. Improved customs operations, he added, have already reduced waiting times for trucks at border crossings from one week to 48 hours, with expectations of further increases in freight capacity once 24-hour operations begin.

Pirmoazzen stressed the need to move beyond traditional trade methods, which he said drain resources through currency fluctuations, and instead adopt modern approaches to boost both export volume and revenue.

He announced that the next meeting of the Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Commission, chaired by Shahin Mustafayev, deputy prime minister of Azerbaijan, will be held in Tehran next week.

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.

ICCIMA chairman heads to Jordan for Islamic chamber board meeting

TEHRAN – Samad Hassanzadeh, head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), left for Jordan on Saturday to attend the 39th board of directors meeting of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Development.

The 39th board meeting and the 70th session of the chamber's financial committee will convene in Amman on Sunday, with Hassanzadeh representing Iran.

The financial committee includes nine members from the chambers of commerce of Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

The board of directors comprises chambers from Azerbaijan, Chad, Djibouti, Guinea, Iran, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania, Niger, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Turkey, Sudan, the UAE and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation as an observer.

Under the chamber's statute, board sessions are held twice a year.

The upcoming meeting will address the election of the board and president of the chamber for the next four-year term, Qatar's proposal for a strategic development outlook modeled on the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the impact of such policies on trade and economic relations in Europe, comparisons with other international and regional chamber federations, broader cooperation with Palestine and its business community, the proposal to mark the chamber's 50th anniversary, and the timing and venue of the next meeting.

Hassanzadeh is accompanied by Mohammadreza Karbasi, director general of the Islamic Chamber Research and Information Center (ICRIC), and Sabah Zanganeh, ICRIC board member and former Iranian representative to the Organization of Islamic Conference.

Iran, Spain boost anti-money laundering cooperation as Madrid prepares to host FATF meeting

TEHRAN – Iran and Spain have agreed to strengthen cooperation in combating money laundering, with Madrid set to host the next meeting between Iran and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Antonio Sánchez Benedito Gaspar, Spain's ambassador to Iran, met with Hadi Khani, deputy economy minister and head of Iran's Financial Intelligence Unit, to discuss the exchange of experience and expertise between the two countries.

Khani said Iran's actions against money laundering and related



crimes go beyond international recommendations and standards.

He added that Tehran is deter-

mined to highlight its progress despite U.S. sanctions and regional risks.

Iran-Pakistan economic convergence; a new opportunity under shadow of joint committee: minister

TEHRAN – Following the 22nd Iran-Pakistan Joint Economic Committee meeting in Tehran (September 15-16), co-chaired by Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, and Pakistan's Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, Minister Sadegh published an article on the ministry's news portal. Below is a translation of her piece.

On the eve of new developments in the regional economic order, the Iran-Pakistan Joint Economic Committee has once again provided a platform for developing sustainable cooperation between these two important and influential neighbors in South Asia.

Iran-Pakistan relations over the past decades have always been influenced by regional developments, global politics, and security imperatives. Although political relations between the two countries have always been maintained at an acceptable level, their economic and trade capacities have not been actualized as they should have been. Now, on the eve of new developments in the regional economic order, the Iran-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission has once again provided a platform for developing sustainable cooperation between these two important and influential neighbors in South Asia.

The 22nd meeting of the Joint Economic Committee was not only an opportunity to review the past and chart the future of the two countries' economic relations, but also, by holding an unprecedented joint business conference on its sidelines, sent a clear message to regional economic actors, governments, and observers: Iran and Pakistan are ready to turn their potential capacities into the driving engine of economic and trade cooperation.

Common Capacities; From Transportation to Energy

Along with their long shared border, Iran and Pakistan also enjoy deep cultural and historical commonalities. The adjacency of the two countries in a region that houses the main arteries of energy, transportation, and trade has created a unique position for economic cooperation.

On one hand, Iran, with its vast oil and gas resources, can play a role as a reliable energy supplier for Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan, with its young and growing population and extensive needs in the fields of energy, infrastructure, and trade, can be one of Iran's most important export markets.

This natural convergence, although overshadowed by political considerations and sanctions in the past, can become the driving engine of the two countries' economic interactions in the new regional atmosphere.

Joint Committee; From Formal Diplomacy to Field of Action

The Iran-Pakistan Joint Economic Committee has, over the past two decades, always been a platform for negotiation and agreement in various fields. But what distinguished the 22nd meeting of this committee was the serious entry of the private sector into the process of dialogue and cooperation.

Holding a joint business conference with the participation of 50 Iranian companies and over 100 Pakistani companies, totaling 500 participants, indicated the serious determination of economic actors in both countries to move beyond the traditional boundaries of interactions. Such an event is rarely seen on the sidelines of Joint Committee meetings, which doubles its special importance.

At this conference, economic actors had



the opportunity to closely familiarize themselves with the capacities, needs, and areas of cooperation of the other side and propose solutions for removing obstacles to direct trade, joint investment, and the development of border infrastructure.

Role of Private Sector in Flourishing Relations

One of the key points of this meeting and the business conference was the emphasis on the centrality of the private sector in Iran-Pakistan economic relations. The experience of successful countries in developing bilateral trade has shown that without the presence and initiative of economic actors, government agreements cannot achieve the desired result.

The Iranian companies present at this conference were mainly active in the fields of energy, petrochemicals, food industries, pharmaceuticals, construction, and technical-engineering services. In contrast, Pakistani companies had also entered the arena in the sectors of agriculture, textiles, transportation, and information technology. This diversity of fields indicates the wide range of cooperation capacities between the two countries, which can bear fruit in the form of joint investments or technology exchange.

Logistical Routes and Regional Corridors

One of the important topics discussed in the Joint Committee was the role of Iran and Pakistan in regional transportation corridors. Iran, as a connecting bridge between Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Persian Gulf, and Europe, and Pakistan, as a gateway to South Asia and the Indian Ocean, both have a unique position in connecting trade chains.

The development of joint rail and road routes, facilitating the transit of goods, and establishing modern border infrastructure could significantly reduce the cost of trade and increase the volume of exchanges. In this regard, joint investment in border terminals and utilizing the capacity of Iranian and Pakistani ports as key links in the transit chain were put on the agenda.

Of course, it should not be forgotten that the path to expanding Iran-Pakistan economic cooperation also faces challenges. Economic sanctions against Iran, security considerations at the borders, weaknesses in banking infrastructure for financial exchange, and logistical limitations are some of these challenges.

The 22nd meeting of the Iran-Pakistan Joint Economic Committee commenced in Tehran on September 15, co-chaired by Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadegh, and Pakistan's Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan.

In her opening remarks, Minister Sadegh hailed the meeting as a significant step towards enhancing bilateral economic and commercial ties.

She announced that a roadmap for achiev-

Iran's top anti-money laundering council asked the Spanish envoy to help persuade Madrid and other European governments to support Iran in resolving its challenges with FATF.

The Spanish ambassador welcomed Iran's proposals, praised the FIU's efforts, and pledged to work toward boosting bilateral cooperation in anti-money laundering initiatives.

Spain, the eurozone's fourth-largest economy and the world's fifteenth, is a full FATF member and will host the upcoming session with Iran.

ing a \$10 billion bilateral trade target would be finalized and signed by the relevant ministers within the next three months.

"This goal reflects the strong political will of both nations to deepen cooperation," Sadegh stated. She emphasized that reaching this target would require strengthening banking relations and establishing secure, mutually agreed financial channels.

Highlighting the longstanding fraternal relations between the two nations, Sadegh expressed hope that the meeting would pave the way for expanded collaboration in economic, trade, banking, transit, energy, agricultural, and cultural fields.

She also thanked Pakistan for its supportive stance towards Iran at bilateral, regional, and international levels.

A major focus of the discussions was on improving transport infrastructure.

Minister Sadegh stressed the necessity of developing border facilities, increasing parking capacity at the Mirjaveh and Taftan border crossings, and constructing the Zahedan-Taftan-Quetta railway line.

Other vital projects include launching shipping routes between the ports of Karachi (including Port Qasim) and Gwadar in Pakistan, and Chabahar and Bandar Abbas in Iran, she said.

The recent launching of direct Tehran-Islamabad flights was noted as a positive step, with both sides agreeing on the need to increase flight destinations and enhance aviation cooperation, the minister added.

In a significant regional development, Sadegh revealed plans to launch a monthly ECO train on the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul route, calling it a strategic regional rail project.

Addressing the same meeting, Pakistani Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan expressed his country's readiness to expand cooperation with Iran in the economic, technical, and regional fields.

Echoing the sentiment of cooperation, the minister emphasized the deep historical, cultural, and religious bonds between the two countries.

"The people and government of Pakistan stand with the people of Iran and seek a shared future based on prosperity, security, and development," he declared.

Minister Khan acknowledged that current trade volumes still fall short of the true potential.

He identified specialized committees, joint chambers of commerce, and the joint committee as key to boosting exchanges.

He proposed collaboration in new areas such as border markets, technical and engineering services, livestock, and agriculture, offering to share Pakistan's expertise in irrigation and modern agricultural technology.

Referring to the extensive capacities of the two countries in the energy sector, Pakistan's minister of commerce stated that solar and wind energy could form the basis of strong partnerships for sustainable development in both countries and the region.

He also identified transportation as one of the key areas of cooperation, adding that given the existing capacities in road, rail, and sea transport, developing a transportation network could turn Iran into a gateway to South Asia and West Asia, thereby strengthening the regional roles of both countries.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Fueling ‘Greater Israel’ with US arms

From page 1 ▶ Nonetheless, the reported arms sales show that the Trump administration is turning a blind eye to calls to stop Israel’s warmongering, which has also targeted Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. Reports suggest that Turkey fears Israeli agents could potentially target Hamas members within its borders.

Israel’s continued military attacks, combined with U.S. military support, signal that the Trump administration is assisting Tel Aviv in pressing ahead with its “Greater Israel” vision. Last month, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly endorsed the vision, advocating a plan that seeks to expand Israeli borders into Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

The administration of former President Joe Biden paused



a shipment of 2,000-pound bombs to Israel in May last year over concerns about civilian casualties. However, Trump lifted that hold when he took office in January. Nevertheless, Biden’s pause was not due to sympathy

for Palestinians, as he approved additional military aid. For example, the State Department notified Congress of an \$8 billion proposed arms deal with Israel in January. The pause was largely a political gesture aimed at Pales-

tinians amid protests in U.S. cities over American complicity in Israel’s genocide in Gaza.

Both Trump and Biden have pursued the same strategy toward Israel, fully supporting Tel Aviv politically and militarily but using different tactics. Anti-war protesters branded Biden “Genocide Joe” for his support of Israel, while Trump has been labeled a “fascist” and a “racist” during recent protests in London.

Regardless of who is in the White House, the U.S. is committed to sustaining Israel’s war machine. The latest reports about the Trump administration’s military aid to Israel lay bare U.S. support for Israel’s dangerous regional ambitions and plans to reshape the Middle East according to its own vision.

Gaza war crimes intensify

From page 1 ▶ Despite the intensity of the attacks, over 900,000 Palestinians remain in Gaza City and the northern areas. Remarkably, the office noted a wave of reverse displacement, with more than 22,000 people returning to their original neighborhoods inside the city.

According to reports Palestinian families have found no safe routes while trying to seek refuge in overcrowded tent camps in southern Gaza amid indiscriminate IOF bombings.

Experts also note that many Palestinians are willing to risk death in northern Gaza rather than being forcibly displaced again during this genocidal war.

The Gaza Media Office further warned that the occupation regime is planning to establish “concentration camps,” as part of a policy of forced displacement aimed at emptying Gaza City and its northern areas of residents.

According to medics and reporters on the ground over 50 Palestinian civilians were just killed by IOF fire on Saturday, with 40 of them in Gaza City alone.

Among the dead are six civilians killed in an attack on the Mashahira area, and nine others near al-Shawa Square in al-Tuffah neighborhood in northeastern Gaza City. In western Gaza City, four people were killed and many others were injured when the IOF bombed a residential home in al-Shati refugee camp.

In central Gaza, al-Awda Hospital reported receiving over a dozen individuals following an IOF strike on a group of civilians gathered in al-Nuseirat camp. In the south, Nasser Medical Complex confirmed at least six casualties, all of them were waiting for aid near the city of Rafah.

The Gaza Ministry of Health reported on Saturday afternoon a further 234 casualties over the past 24 hours, including three bodies newly recovered.

This brings the total number of casualties from the U.S.-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza, which began on October 7, 2023, to 65,208 dead and 166,271 injured.

The number of those killed while seeking humanitarian aid has now reached 2,518,



with more than 18,449 injured. In the past 24 hours alone, hospitals have received 4 bodies and 18 wounded civilians from these deadly aid-seeking incidents.

The death toll from starvation continues to climb, with two more deaths reported, bringing the total to 442, including 147 children.

This sharp rise in deaths and injuries comes as the World Health Organization warns that Gaza’s hospitals have collapsed.

Why did Hezbollah chief call on Riyadh to open ‘new page’ with the Resistance?

From page 1 ▶ Stressing that “the Resistance’s weapons are aimed at Israel, not at Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, or any other entity,” he cautioned that “pressuring the Resistance only benefits Israel, and once the Resistance is gone, other countries will be next.”

He added, “What happens after the strike on Qatar differs from what happened before it,” demanding a shift in outlook. The Israeli attack on Doha, he said, “exposed everything and made everything clear,” and warned that further Israeli military ad-

ventures “become inevitable if we continue on the same path.”

Qassem’s outreach does not signal a reassessment of Saudi actions in Lebanon and the region, which he still views as intrusive. Instead, it reflects a reprioritization: engaging Saudi Arabia to redraw regional balances through Islamic-Arab unity and contain conflicts, and encouraging internal Lebanese dialogue as the best path to overcome divisions.

In urging rational discourse over confrontation and understanding over exhaustion, Sheikh



Naim Qassem conditions any dialogue on the shared premise that “Israel” is the enemy—a fact

Saudi Arabia already recognizes.

With regional capitals now aware that the Resistance’s decline would leave them vulnerable to Israeli strikes, this step, if embraced, could inaugurate a new political phase in Lebanon and the wider region, outmaneuvering those who merely claim to care for the nation.

Sheikh Qassem’s address lives up to the strategic tenor of the pivotal speeches delivered by the late Sayyed Nasrallah.

Portugal to officially recognize Palestine Sunday

Lisbon has announced it will officially recognize the State of Palestine on Sunday, ahead of a high-level conference at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

This decision positions Portugal among a growing number of Western nations shifting their foreign policy to support Palestinian statehood.

The Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed the move in a statement released on Friday. The recognition is set to occur just one day before the UNGA conference, where several other countries are expected to follow suit.

Prime Minister Luís Montenegro, along with President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, consulted with parliament before finalizing the decision, marking the culmination of nearly 15 years of debate in the country’s parliament.

The proposal for recognition was first introduced by the Left Bloc political party in 2011, reflecting a long-standing commitment to supporting Palestinian rights.

Portugal’s decision comes

amid mounting international criticism of Israel’s military actions in Gaza, which have resulted in over 65,000 dead Palestinians and a worsening humanitarian crisis.

The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry recently concluded that Israel’s actions in Gaza amount to genocide, a finding that has prompted increased global calls for accountability and support for Palestinian statehood.

In Lisbon, pro-Palestine demonstrations have been a regular occurrence, with thousands of protesters taking to the streets to demand an end to the ongoing violence and occupation.

These demonstrations have played a crucial role in influencing public opinion and political leaders, contributing to Portugal’s decision to recognize Palestine.

The decision aligns with a broader international trend, as several other countries have announced plans to recognize Palestinian statehood in the coming days.

France, the United Kingdom,



Pro-Palestine protests in Portugal, drawing thousands, have helped shift public opinion and pressured leaders toward recognizing Palestine.

Canada, and Australia are among the nations expected to make similar announcements during the UNGA conference. These countries join a coalition of over 140 UN member states that have already recognized Palestine as a sovereign state.

The United States and Israel have strongly criticized these moves, with Israeli officials arguing that such recognitions re-

ward terrorism and undermine efforts for peace.

Yet many observers stress that recognition alone is not enough. Without concrete measures—such as ending the Gaza siege, halting settlement expansion, and enforcing accountability under international law—they warn that symbolic gestures risk leaving the realities of occupation and daily suffering unchanged.

CPJ condemns ‘unprecedented massacre of journalists’ in Yemen by Israel



Israeli attacks on two newspaper offices in Yemen earlier this month killed 31 journalists, making it the second deadliest attack on the press ever recorded by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Al Jazeera reported.

The CPJ reported that Nasser al-Khadri, editor-in-chief of September 26, one of the outlets targeted, described the killings as an “unprecedented massacre of journalists”.

The Israeli attack also indicates that Israel’s deadly practice of targeting reporters

and newsrooms labelled as spreading “terrorist” propaganda has become firmly established throughout the Middle East, the CPJ report said.

“Israel’s attack on Yemen echoes previous strikes on Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran, where it has repeatedly failed to distinguish between military targets and journalists, justifying its assassinations by smearing journalists as terrorists or propagandists, without credible evidence,” read a CPJ statement.

Former New Zealand PM calls Gaza war ‘genocide’

New Zealand’s former prime minister Jacinda Ardern has called on “those with power” to take action in the face of the ongoing “genocide in Gaza.”

“There is a path to stopping the genocide still happening daily before us: more countries must recognize Palestinian statehood; any cooperation that facilitates military action must end; humanitarian aid needs to urgently reach the trapped and starving; and medical care must be available for the injured, the malnourished, and for the expect-

ant and new mothers,” she wrote in an op-ed for the Guardian.

Ardern joins a growing chorus of international experts, world leaders and organizations saying that Israel’s actions in Gaza meet the definition of “genocide” under international law.

But Israel — which strongly denies accusations of genocide — has dismissed even a recent UN report accusing Israel of committing “genocide” in Gaza, calling it fake.

MI6 admits covert links to HTS during Syria’s regime change

The outgoing chief of Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), Richard Moore, has confirmed that London maintained clandestine communications with the extremist group Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) before the fall of Bashar al-Assad.

Speaking in Istanbul on Friday, Moore described establishing a “backchannel” with HTS—still officially designated a terrorist organization—as allowing Britain to “get ahead of events” during Syria’s political transition.

HTS, which many consider the rebranded version of al-Qaeda in Syria, was formally dissolved after its leader, Ahmad al-Sharaa, assumed power in December 2024, but its senior operatives continue to dominate Syria’s government.

Al-Sharaa, also known as Abu Mohammed al-Jolani, was captured as a senior al-Qaeda commander in Iraq in 2006 and released from U.S. custody in 2011, yet remains unapologetic for his past attacks.

According to reports by independent journalist Kit Klarenberg, the UK’s engagement with HTS was facilitated by Inter-Mediate, a shadowy “conflict resolution” NGO founded by Jonathan Powell, now National Security Advisor to Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

According to leaked documents, the firm

maintains an office inside Syria’s Presidential Palace and worked closely with MI6 and the Foreign Office to groom HTS for political legitimacy. Critics warn this constitutes a flagrant violation of Britain’s counter-terrorism laws, which criminalize dealings with proscribed groups.

The partnership between HTS and Western intelligence agencies had long been suspected. Former US ambassador Robert Ford disclosed that in 2023, a UK NGO sought his help to rebrand HTS from a terrorist entity into a political actor. Inter-Mediate’s consultations reportedly ensured the extremist group’s military seizure of Damascus would align with London’s strategic interests.

This revelation raises serious questions about Britain’s role in Syria, echoing the CIA’s Timber Sycamore program, which, from 2012 onwards, funneled weapons, funding, and training to rebel groups fighting Assad—many of which later merged with extremist factions like HTS.

The program exposed how Western interventions intended to shape Syria’s political landscape often empowered the very groups classified as terrorists, underscoring the risks of covert operations that prioritize regime change over stability and civilian protection.

Sumud Flotilla activists defy threats to break Israel’s Gaza blockade

After a night of storms, shafts of sunlight revealed a compact armada of more than 50 vessels in Tunis — the Global Sumud Flotilla — loaded with food, medical supplies, and volunteers from over 40 countries preparing to steam toward Gaza to challenge Israel’s long-running naval blockade.

The mission’s urgency hardened after two separate incidents on September 9–10 in which flotilla organizers posted video they say shows drones striking docked boats in Tunisian waters; Tunisian authorities have disputed the account and opened inquiries.

Israel’s far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has urged officials to treat participants as “terrorists” and to seize vessels — a threat the flotilla calls intimidation

and rights groups say risks criminalizing humanitarian action.

Organizers and volunteers argue the voyage answers a mounting humanitarian emergency in Gaza, where health authorities report over 65,000 killed and aid agencies warn of famine and collapsing services.

For many on board, moral urgency outweighs the risk: “We have been watching a livestreamed genocide...no concrete action by governments — so it’s up to us,” one volunteer told Unicorn Riot while awaiting departure in Tunis.

As the flotilla departed Tunis, its leaders described the voyage as both rescue and testimony: a civil-society push to force corridors for aid while the world watches.

Tehran Day designated to highlight capital’s historical, cultural and tourism assets

TEHRAN – Tehran’s provincial Cultural Council has designated Mehr 14 (Oct. 6) as “Tehran Day” to commemorate the city’s historic role in the establishment of Iran’s constitutional system and its designation as the national capital.

The decision was announced at a council meeting chaired by Tehran’s interim Friday prayer leader, Seyyed Mohammad-Hassan Aboutorabifard, and attended by provincial governor-general Mohamad-Sadegh Motamedian.



Motamedian said the new commemoration day would be used to highlight Tehran’s historical, cultural, and tourism assets. “Tehran Day is an opportunity to reintroduce the historical, cultural and tourism capacities of the Iranian capital,” he said, calling for seminars, photo exhibitions and guided tours to mark the occasion.

The council said the date was chosen to coincide with Oct. 6, 1906 (14 Mehr 1285 in the Iranian calendar), when the first session of the National Consultative Assembly was held at Golestan Palace after the signing of the constitutional decree by Qajar ruler Mozaffar ad-Din Shah.

Iran, Iraq to improve ties through tourism roadshow

TEHRAN— Iran-Iraq ties in cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts fields are improving in spite of regional and international crises, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri has said.

Speaking on the threshold of holding Iran-Iraq tourism roadshow, which will be held in Iraqi cities of Basra, Baghdad, and Karbala with participation of Iranian travel agencies during October 6-9, he said that plans are on the agenda to make land borders more active and facilitate pilgrimage, tourism, and health travel, ILNA reported.

The minister said: “Deepening relations between cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts is a priority for us, and these relations will be emphasized during this event and during the meeting with my counterpart and the activation of these ties.”

Given the international developments, including the possibility of activating the trigger mechanism, he said: “Iraq is less affected by regional crises with Iran due to its deep cultural, pilgrimage, economic, and political ties with our country, and this increases the importance of strengthening cooperation.”

On the importance of the upcoming Iran-Iraq tourism roadshow, he said that many Iraqi tourists currently visit Iran for pilgrimage and tourism purposes.

Also, Iranians frequently travel to Iraq, he said, adding that this two-way interaction has great potential for development.

Gartak ancient site, a hidden treasure of Ilam history

TEHRAN—The Gartak ancient site in Sirvan county, Ilam province, holds the secrets of the lives of ancient people and is a hidden treasure of the history of Ilam, Habibollah Mahmoudian, a specialist in prehistoric archaeology, has said.

He told ISNA that the Gartak site, which includes an ancient cemetery and a human settlement area, is located seven kilometers off the city of Ilam.

He explained that the Gartak site is located on the slopes of Mount Gachan and is bordered by the river on three sides, north, east and west, and by the mountain on the south. Its vegetation is pasture and forest, and elderberry trees at the bottom of the cemetery cover part of the area.

The archaeologist pointed out that the cemetery is located in a higher place than the residential area and connected to the mountain slope. Rubble and cobblestone cover the entire area and pits from unauthorized excavations can be seen in it, he added.

“The height of this place is 15 meters compared to the surrounding land and its area is about 500 × 1000 meters. The soil in this area is clay and limestone.”

Mahmoudian continued that the surface studies at this site have revealed a variety

The assembly was the first step toward drafting Iran’s constitution and formally designating Tehran as the country’s capital, according to the council.

Officials said the annual event will be marked with cultural and educational programs intended to emphasize the capital’s role in Iran’s modern history.

The Persian Constitution of 1906 was the first constitution of the Sublime State of Iran (Persia) and a result of the Persian Constitutional Revolution.

“Within the framework of the new approach, in addition to air travel, land routes for family, pilgrimage, tourism and health tourists will be more active. Of course, borders such as Shalamcheh are currently active.”

Salehi Amiri added: “In the early October meeting with the Iraqi Minister of Tourism in Baghdad, emphasis will be placed on increasing the flow of tourists by private car to Iran and Iraq and accepting Iraqi health tourists in medical centers in the provinces of Khuzestan, Ilam, Kermanshah, West Azarbaijan and East Azarbaijan.”

He called the Iraq roadshow as an important opportunity for introducing Iran’s potentials in Iraq’s great market and said: “The Ministry of Cultural Heritage’s policy is to distribute tourism opportunities fairly throughout the country, rather than focusing on just a few specific provinces.”

About 3.5 million Iraqi tourists travel to Iran annually for pilgrimage and health, and the same number of Iranians travel to Iraq mainly for the purpose of pilgrimage.

According to what the head of the Iranian Air Travel and Tourism Service Association had previously announced, an increase in the number of incoming and outgoing tourists to both Iran and Iraq is on the agenda.

Iraq is the most important source of tourists entering Iran, and in recent years, more than half of the foreign tourists entering Iran have been Iraqis.

of cultural artifacts. “These artifacts include pottery, shell fossils, charcoal, bone, and crude glass. Shell fossils are seen on the cemetery surface, which are likely related to people’s beliefs. Also, the use of stone mortars was common at this site.”

He explained that the potteries discovered from the area are mostly medium and coarse in thickness. “Plant materials and soft sand were used for the chamotte of the pottery, and most of them are fully baked. These potteries are wheel-made and unglazed. The pottery paste is pea-colored, brick-colored, brick-colored, and local gray, and some have a pea-colored clay coating. The decorated pottery is divided into two categories: added striped patterns and carved patterns.”

The archaeologist said: “Most likely, the existence of rubble and cobblestone in the area, indicates that it has been a human settlement. Agricultural activities have completely disrupted and destroyed its original surface texture, and many graves in the cemetery have been disturbed by unauthorized diggers.”

He added that the area’s proximity to the water springs and plenty of natural resources are considered the most important factor for human settlement.

Rageh Canyon: A natural wonder, photographer’s paradise in southern Iran

By Afshin Majlesi

RAFSANJAN (Kerman province) – Nestled just 20 kilometres south-east of Rafsanjan in Iran’s Kerman province, Rageh Canyon is one of the country’s most striking natural landscapes.

Stretching for nearly 20 kilometres with depths that reach up to 70 meters, this geological masterpiece offers visitors a rare opportunity to walk through a living textbook of natural history while experiencing breathtaking scenery.

Formed over thousands of years by the persistent flow of the Guivdary River, the canyon is carved into soft sedimentary layers that reveal remarkable patterns and shapes. Erosion has sculpted towering walls, jagged cliffs, natural arches, and pinnacles that create a dramatic labyrinth.

It is amazing that the contrast of sunlit rock formations against deep shadows gives the canyon an ever-changing palette of colors throughout the day, making it a paradise for photography and nature observation.

For adventure seekers, Rageh Canyon is a destination that combines exploration with tranquility. Hiking trails allow visitors to descend into the canyon floor, where the river still flows seasonally, creating pockets of lush vegetation amid the arid desert surroundings. The echo of the wind through the gorge and the occasional call of desert wildlife accentuate the sense of isolation and wonder.

The canyon is also a significant geological site, drawing researchers and eco-tourists alike. The layers exposed along its cliffs tell the story of ancient floods and shifting earth, offering insights into the region’s natural history. For those with an interest in astronomy, the clear desert skies above Rageh Canyon provide one of the finest settings in Iran for stargazing, with minimal light pollution and an uninterrupted horizon.



Canyoneering and hiking

Hiking in Rageh Canyon requires good physical fitness and carrying essential equipment. It is strongly recommended to travel with a local guide familiar with the area and to bring proper shoes and clothing. In some sections, you will need to cross the river, which adds an exciting element to the adventure.

Stargazing in the desert sky

One of the most attractive activities in Rageh Canyon is stargazing at night. Because it is far from the light pollution of cities, the desert sky here is remarkably clear and full of stars. Each year, astronomy tours are held in the area, giving enthusiasts the chance to enjoy the star-filled desert sky.

The nights in Rageh Canyon provide an exceptional opportunity to view the Milky Way, comets, and other celestial objects. If you are interested in astronomy, do not forget to bring binoculars or a telescope. For overnight stays, you should bring proper camping equipment or use the nearby eco-lodges.

Photography

With its unique rock formations, flowing river, and starry skies, Rageh Canyon is a paradise for photographers. Photography is one of the most popular activities among visitors. Whether you are a professional or an amateur, you can capture stunning images of

this natural wonder.

The best times for photography in Rageh Canyon are early morning and late afternoon, when the golden light of the sun adds a special glow to the cliffs. Nighttime is also perfect for photographing the starry sky. Remember to bring extra batteries, memory cards, and a tripod for night photography.

A habitat for rare birds and animals

Beyond its natural beauty, Rageh Canyon is home to a variety of animals and bird species. Its pristine environment provides an ideal habitat for wildlife.

Birds such as eagles, pheasants, and partridges live here, and if you are lucky, you may spot nests carved into the cliffs where eagles reside. The canyon is also located just a few kilometers from the Bidiuiyeh Protected Area, a sanctuary for gazelles in Kerman province, and locals have reported sightings of gazelles in the region.

Travel guide

For a safe and enjoyable trip to Rageh Canyon, it is important to follow safety tips and carry essential supplies. Since the area is untouched and far from urban facilities, you must travel well-prepared.

Always check the weather conditions before your trip, and avoid visiting the canyon during rainy or stormy days due to the risk of

floods and falling rocks. Traveling with a local guide familiar with the area is highly recommended, and it is best to leave the canyon before nightfall. For a comfortable experience, you can book hotels in advance through the Persian Hotel website, ensuring proper rest after an adventurous day.

Essential items checklist

The must-have items for a trip to Rageh Canyon include sufficient drinking water, snacks, proper hiking shoes, seasonal clothing, a sun hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, a first aid kit, and a trash bag. Do not drink water from the river, as it is contaminated with copper and can cause poisoning.

Accessibility to Rageh Canyon has improved in recent years. From Rafsanjan, the journey takes less than half an hour by road, making it an easy day trip for travellers already exploring Kerman’s cultural and historical attractions, such as the Bam Citadel, Shahdad Kaluts, or the Shazdeh Garden in Mahan. Local guides and tour operators offer excursions that include canyon trekking, photography tours, and even overnight camping experiences.

Visiting Rageh Canyon is not only about admiring nature -- it is also about immersing in local culture. Rafsanjan is home to many ancient sites, historical monuments and mansions, museums and art galleries, to name a few. It is also renowned worldwide for its pistachios, and many tours combine a trip to the canyon with visits to pistachio orchards, offering tastings and insights into traditional farming practices that have shaped the region’s identity.

Whether you are a nature enthusiast, photographer, adventurer, or cultural traveller, Rageh Canyon promises an unforgettable excursion. Its vast silence, raw beauty, and geological grandeur make it one of Iran’s most captivating natural wonders.

Italian mayor urges tourism fair to reconsider Israel’s participation

TEHRAN – The mayor of Rimini, Jamil Sadegholvaad, said on Wednesday that Israel’s participation in the Rimini tourism fair was “inappropriate” given the war in Gaza.

Sadegholvaad, together with the president of the Emilia-Romagna Region, Michele De Pas-

cale, said in a joint statement they had written to Maurizio Ermeti, president of the Italian Exhibition Group (IEG), asking the organizer to reconsider Israel’s stand at the TTG Travel Experience scheduled for Oct. 8-10.

The dramatic developments affecting Gaza

now make it necessary to reconsider its presence, Sadegholvaad said, La Presse reported on Thursday.

He added that it was “not ethically and morally acceptable” to promote as vacation destinations “places of war, terror, and death.”

World’s largest hand-made cave, an unknown heritage in Fars province

ferent, and a layer about five meters thick with low resistance is surrounded between two other layers; because it is possible to cut and extract this layer with simple tools, stonemasons have cut and pulled out large and small pieces of rock from among these layers, and to prevent the destruction of the cave, after every 10 meters of advancement, the stonemasons have left a large column to maintain the stability of the rock mass of the cave ceiling.

As this excavation and the creation of columns continued over decades, a cave with 100 stone columns was formed, which is a spectacular and amazing human work.

This cave has 12 entrances and its length is 200 meters and its width varies from 60 to 130 meters which covers totally about 20,000 square meters and average height of three meters.

When the stone breakers picked up the stones, after a few meters ahead, they had caused some pillars because of prevention of destroying the cave. So, this would have

caused the cave to be replicating beautiful. There are 100 stony pillars which due to stones’ quality they fall into two categories.

The first category includes pillars which has numerous gaps and crevices, because of absence of a good quality of the stones, they did not separate; the second category includes pillars without gap and crevice, so its stone have quality and they were not picked up due to prevention of falling the roof.

The white lime stones and plasticity of this cave were used for the adornment on the doors and on the splendid, important buildings.

Some natural factors such as floods and earthquakes have also been effective in destroying part of the cave over the years; but what now calls everyone to watch is a beautiful cave with 100 carved columns that amazes the viewer.

According to the head of Jahrom Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, this cave has a good location and is easily accessible for tourists.

Ali Lotfipour said this cave is located within the city of Jahrom and is less than 15 minutes away from the city center. The path to the cave is completely asphalted and suitable, and access to it is easy, he added

Lotfipour said the cave’s proximity to the accommodation infrastructures such as eco-lodges and hotels has created appropriate conditions for tourists to visit.

He added that the city’s hotels have a capacity of about 200 tourists, and there is also a capacity of nearly 200 people in eco-lodges and other places.

Lotfipour continued that the cave has been illuminated, but due to a shortage of manpower in the Cultural Heritage Department, conditions have not yet been met to assign full-time guard to this iconic heritage of Jahrom.

He pointed out that the measure to register Sang Shekanan cave as the world’s largest hand-carved cave has a significant impact on attracting domestic and foreign tourists.

Jahrom is located 186 kilometers southeast of Shiraz.

Raising voices, inspiring hope: MAHAK highlights Childhood Cancer Awareness Month



Arash Ahmadian (L), chief executive officer of MAHAK, speaks at a press briefing on Saturday, September 20, 2025.



A view of MAHAK hospital in northern Tehran

By Mehdi Garshasbi

TEHRAN - Every September, the world comes together to mark Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, a time to honor the courage of children battling cancer, support their families, and reaffirm our collective commitment to advancing care and research.

The gold ribbon, the international symbol of childhood cancer awareness, reminds us of the preciousness of every child's life and the shared responsibility we hold to protect it.

For the Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer, widely known by its acronym MAHAK, this month carries special meaning.

For over three decades, MAHAK has stood beside thousands of children and families, providing comprehensive treatment and support free of charge. Yet, the fight against childhood cancer requires more than medical care—it calls for awareness, collaboration, and action from all sectors of society.

This year, Childhood Cancer International (CCI) and the International Society of Pediatric Oncology (SIOP) are joining forces in a global campaign to inspire action, break down barriers, and promote the gold ribbon as the universal symbol of childhood cancer awareness.

In 2025, the global campaign led by CCI and SIOP will build on insights gathered in 2024 and turn them into solutions, showcasing regional initiatives that are reduc-

ing inequalities in access to care and advancing research.

Main goals of the campaign

- Raise global awareness about the challenges faced by childhood cancer communities worldwide.
- Mobilize the international community — including governments, NGOs, healthcare professionals, and the public — to engage in ICCD 2026.
- Promote the gold ribbon as a lasting, global symbol of solidarity and awareness.

According to the World Health Organization, some 400,000 children are diagnosed with cancer annually, which means three children are diagnosed with cancer every four minutes.

Of these cases, around 90 percent occur in low- and middle-income countries, where only a fifth of diagnosed children survive. In contrast, children born in high-income countries have a more than 80 percent chance of surviving childhood cancer.

The difference in survival rates is one of the most significant inequalities across cancer types.

MAHAK was established in 1991 as a non-governmental and non-profit organization under the Department of Social Affairs for NGO activities at the Ministry of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The noble idea of founding MA-

HAK was initiated by Saideh Ghods, inspired by her personal experience of caring for her daughter, who was diagnosed with cancer, and recognizing the challenges faced by families in similar situations.

From the very beginning, with the support of a group of volunteers, social work activities were carried out in public and university hospitals, while preparations for registering the charity had already started in 1989.

Since the founding members believed that a charity could not achieve its goals through the efforts of a limited group of benefactors alone, MAHAK was officially registered in 1991 to reach a broader base of donors and expand its comprehensive support throughout the country.

The abbreviated name "MAHAK" is derived from the Farsi translation of its mission: "The Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer." Its logo, a leaf symbolizing life, depicts a child and family standing upon it with hope.

Since its inception, MAHAK has relied solely on public donations, benevolent intentions, and voluntary contributions. Organizing charity bazaars, distributing donation boxes, and expanding its membership base have been among the key measures taken to mobilize civil society's support.

Within less than a decade, MAHAK succeeded in improving children's recovery rates by applying scientific and specialized methods

in caring for patients and their families, while also earning the trust and support of the public, as well as the tireless efforts of volunteers.

MAHAK has always strived to preserve the dignity of children with cancer and their families, ensuring that they undergo the treatment process with hope and that families remain focused solely on their child's recovery without additional concerns.

MAHAK's activities fall into three main categories: Charity, Hospital, and Research. These efforts exclusively serve children with cancer in areas such as medical care, prevention, treatment, healthcare, and welfare services.

MAHAK's slogan, "Help us and let us help you," reflects the essential role of civil society in supporting humanity with love and compassion.

By 2025, MAHAK had provided comprehensive support to over 45,000 children with cancer and their families across Iran. At the same time, MAHAK's hospital engaged eminent oncologists and physicians to determine treatment protocols and provide medical consultations.

In the field of research, MAHAK has collaborated with numerous national and international research centers, including the Gustave Roussy Research Center in France, as well as the Royan Institute, Avicenna Research Institute, and the Cancer Institute in Iran.

World Cleanup Day: combating the global mismanaged waste crisis

From page 1 ► TEHRAN - On 20 September 2025, people around the world unite for World Cleanup Day – a global movement that goes beyond picking up trash to confront the waste crisis head-on. This year's focus is on textile and fashion waste, one of the most visible and fast-growing environmental challenges.

Every second, a garbage truck full of clothes is dumped in a landfill or burned. The fashion industry generates 92 million tons of textile waste each year, overwhelming waste systems, polluting waterways, and fuelling the climate crisis.

World Cleanup Day 2025 highlights the urgent need to raise awareness and shift habits toward responsible consumption, strengthen local and global waste management systems, and advance policies

and partnerships that build urban resilience.

Textile waste fuels the triple planetary crisis: it clogs drains and worsens urban floods, pollutes rivers and oceans, harms biodiversity, and releases greenhouse gases that drive climate change.

By tackling textile waste, World Cleanup Day moves cities closer to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

Background

On 8 December 2023, the United Nations General Assembly, in its seventy-eighth session, unanimously adopted resolution 78/122 "World Cleanup Day", which proclaims 20 September as World Cleanup Day. The resolution invites all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, other international and regional

organizations, and other relevant stakeholders – including civil society, the private sector, and academia – to observe World Cleanup Day through activities aimed at raising awareness of the role clean-up efforts play in sustainable development. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) facilitates the observance of the Day.

Over the years, many national, regional and local governments and communities have been undertaking clean-up activities globally. World Cleanup Day represents the reflection on their achievements. The clean-ups serve as a reminder of the collective responsibility we share in preserving and maintaining a clean and healthy environment as well as sustainable waste and resources management.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iranian zoos to be monitored online

The Department of Environment (DOE) will launch an online monitoring system in zoos across the country, the Department of Environment's director general for hunting and fishing has said.

"Putting in place the necessary infrastructure for this plan is underway; newly constructed zoos are supposed to have an online monitoring system, and the old ones must launch the system as soon as possible," IRNA quoted Ali Teymouri as saying on Saturday.

Teymouri stated that all provincial departments of environment must supervise the zoo online systems to register all animal species entering or leaving the zoo, casualties and causes.

باغ وحش های کشور آنلاین پایش می شوند

مدیرکل حفاظت و مدیریت شکار و صید سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: پایش آنلاین باغ وحش های کشور جزو برنامه های سازمان است و در حال تهیه زیر ساخت برای اجرای آن هستیم.

علی تیموری روز شنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار علمی ایرنا افزود: باغ وحش هایی که جدید احداث می شوند باید حتما سیستم پایش آنلاین داشته باشند، مجموعه های قدیمی نیز باید هر چه سریعتر این سیستم را راه اندازی کنند.

وی اظهار داشت: باید تمام ادارات کل استان ها آدرس سیستم آنلاین باغ وحش ها را دریافت کنند تا ورود و خروج گونه ها از باغ وحش، ورود گونه های جدید، تلفات و دلایل آن را ثبت و به صورت آنلاین در جریان قرار گیرند.

Some 4,300 Afghan refugees deported from Iran per day: UNHCR

TEHRAN - Between September 11 and 17, an average daily return of 4,300 Afghan refugees from Iran was registered, UNHCR reported in a press release on Friday.

Daily returns rose sharply after June 13, with additional spikes recorded after June 25. Since then, the trend has declined, the report added.

The average daily return between September 11 and 17 was 4,300, which is substantially lower than the previous week's 7,400. Nevertheless, the current level remains well above the first quarter of 2025, when the daily average was approximately 3,500.

As of September 17, over 1.79 million Afghans returned from Iran since March 20, 2025, and over 2 million since the beginning of the year, bringing the total returns from both Iran and Pakistan in 2025 to over 2.7 million.

Returns by documentation status

From September 11 to 17, headcounted slip holders made up 33% of total returnees, with 35% of total deportees being headcounted slip holders. Looking at the broader period since March 20, approximately 44% of total returnees and 44% of total deportees are headcount slip holders.

Deportations

In 2025, 1.24 million returns — or 60% of the total — were deportations.

Of these, over 816,000 Afghans were deported after June 13.

July 2025 recorded the highest monthly deportation figures in the past three years, with a total of 460,000 individuals deported.

During the reporting period from September 11 to 17, over 30,400 individuals were deported, 75% of whom crossed through the Islam Qala border point and 25% through Zaranj border point. The proportion of deportees out of the total returns in the reporting week was 62%.

Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees

A meeting of the local core group of Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) was held in Tehran on September 3.

The head of the National Organization for Migration, Nader Yar-Ahmadi, in cooperation with the Director-General for International Environmental and Sustainable Development Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mohammad Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi, co-chaired

the meeting, ISNA reported.

Dutch Chargé d'affaires to Iran, as the head of SSAR group, Stefan Priesner, UN Resident Coordinator in Iran; and representatives from different international institutions including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as representatives from the embassies of Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey, Switzerland, Denmark, and South Korea participated in the meeting as the members of SSAR.

Addressing the meeting, Yar-Ahmadi said Iran has hosted Afghan refugees for almost five decades, including the massive wave of Afghan migration into the country in recent years. However, the contribution of the international community, Western countries, and SSAR member states has been inadequate and ineffective.

For his turn, Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi highlighted the country's unparalleled humanitarian measures, particularly in hosting refugees, saying that the international community, including European countries, has failed to fulfill their international commitments and responsibilities under international refugee law. They have negatively affected the conditions by adopting political and selective approaches, as well as imposing unilateral sanctions and coercive measures against the government and people of Iran.

The representative of international organizations, like the UN resident representative, elaborated on outstanding actions taken by the country in dealing with the large number of refugees who are residing in Iran.

During the meeting, the UNHCR representative proposed holding trilateral talks with Iran and Afghanistan. The Iranian officials voiced the country's readiness to hold quadrilateral talks with the presence of Pakistan, stressing that the trilateral talks would require greater coordination.

The Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) was drafted in 2012 by Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan, with the support of UNHCR. The strategy advances a regional approach to solutions and promotes burden and responsibility-sharing for refugees at the regional and global levels.

DOE develops first AI-powered environmental protection platform



TEHRAN - The Department of Environment has developed the first bilingual platform based on artificial intelligence in line with digital transformation and facilitating access to environmental laws and regulations.

Given the increasing importance of environmental protection and the necessity for awareness of the laws and regulations in this field, the Department of Environment has designed and prepared a bilingual artificial intelligence platform for environmental laws and regulations for the first time in the country, IRIB quoted Omid Hajati, a DOE official, as saying.

"This platform, using artificial intelligence technologies and automatic updating capabilities, enables smart search, subject classification, content analysis, and accurate legal answers in Persian and English," he added.

Users can easily access the full text of environmental laws, regulations, circulars, and approvals, if needed, the official stressed.

"This artificial intelligence platform will be usable not only for experts and specialists of the Department of Environment, but also for

researchers, academics, environmental activists, relevant executive agencies, and the general public, and we hope that it will be an effective step towards promoting environmental protection culture and compliance with relevant laws and regulations."

The first national congress on artificial intelligence in agriculture, natural resources, and the environment was held on September 4–5 in Shiraz, Fars Province.

With the theme 'intelligent technology, green land, and sustainable future,' the two-day event was hosted by Shiraz University, focusing on the role of AI in addressing challenges in the three fields of agriculture, natural resources, and environment, ISNA reported.

The congress was centered around productivity and promotion of natural and agricultural industries, smart management of water resources and climate, meteorology, climate change and ecosystem, sustainable agriculture, smart agriculture, big data and agricultural development, biodiversity and pests, remote sensing of natural resources, nature management, improvement of food quality and security, smart robotics, technological education, as well as ethical research in agriculture.

It also included presenting articles, technical lectures, posters, holding educational workshops, and panels to boost relations with industry. On the sidelines of the event, knowledge-based companies operating in AI and the environment fields showcased their latest achievements.



SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Overlook and forgive the weaknesses of the generous people because if they fall down, Allah will help them.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:57 Evening: 18:21 Dawn: 4:28 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:52 (tomorrow)

Fredrik Backman's new novel "My Friends" available in Persian

TEHRAN – The Persian translation of the book "My Friends" written by the Swedish author Fredrik Backman has been released in the bookstores across Iran.

Elaheh Alavi has translated the book and Tadaee Publications has brought it out in 456 pages, Mehr reported.

Originally published in 2025, the book is a New York Times bestseller. The author of "A Man Called Ove" returns with an unforgettablely funny, deeply moving tale of four teenagers whose friendship creates a bond so powerful that it changes a complete stranger's life twenty-five years later.

Most people don't even notice them—three tiny figures sitting at the end of a long pier in the corner of one of the most famous paintings in the world. Most people think it's just a depiction of the sea. But Louisa, an aspiring artist herself, knows otherwise, and she is determined to find out the story of these three enigmatic figures.

Twenty-five years earlier, in a distant seaside town, a group of teenagers find refuge from their bruising home lives by spending long summer days on an abandoned pier, telling silly jokes, sharing secrets, and committing small acts of rebellion. These lost souls find in each other a reason to get up each morning, a reason to dream, a reason to love.

Out of that summer emerges a transcendent work of art, a painting that will unexpectedly be placed into eighteen-year-old Louisa's care. She embarks on a surprise-filled cross-country journey to learn how the painting came to be and to decide what to do with it. The closer she gets to the

painting's birthplace, the more nervous she becomes about what she'll find. Louisa is proof that happy endings don't always take the form we expect in this stunning testament to the transformative, timeless power of friendship and art.

Fredrik Backman, 44, is a renowned author, blogger, and columnist known for his heart-felt storytelling and memorable characters. Over the years, he has gained international acclaim for his compelling novels that often explore themes of love, loss, community, and human resilience. His notable works include "A Man Called Ove" (2012), which became a worldwide bestseller and was later adapted into a successful film, as well as "Things My Son Needs to Know about the World" (2012), "My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry" (2013), and "Britt-Marie Was Here" (2014). In addition, his sports-themed novels "Beartown" (2017) and "Us Against You" (2018) delve into the complexities of small-town life and the struggles of community loyalties. His more recent works, "Anxious People" (2020) and "The Winners" (2022), continue to showcase his talent for blending humor with profound insight into human nature.

Backman's books have achieved remarkable success in his home country of Sweden, often reaching number one on bestseller lists. His stories have resonated with readers worldwide, leading to translations into more than 25 languages. His ability to craft emotionally rich narratives has established him as one of the most influential contemporary authors, captivating audiences across the globe with his unique storytelling style.

Iranian artworks promote peace, friendship at "Color and Narrative" exhibition in Yerevan

TEHRAN- The collective exhibition "Color and Narrative," showcasing works by 86 Iranian artists, was inaugurated at the Blue Mosque in Yerevan, Armenia on Friday.

Organized by the Cultural Attaché Office of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Armenia, in collaboration with the Daya Cultural and Artistic Center and the Avaye Nasr Iranian Cultural Institute, the event coincided with International Peace Day and Armenia's Independence Day.

During the opening ceremony, Mohammad Asadi Movahed, Cultural Attaché of Iran in Armenia, expressed gratitude to the Armenian government and people for their ongoing support of joint cultural and artistic endeavors. He emphasized the shared historical and civilizational ties that serve as a foundation for strengthening bilateral relations.

"The rich cultural and historical backgrounds of Iran and Armenia provide a fertile ground for developing relations across various fields, especially culture and the arts. Events like this act as bridges to deepen friendship between our nations," he stated.

He also highlighted the significance of International Peace Day, asserting: "Arts and culture know no borders; they can unite nations and convey messages of peace and friendship to the world."

Furthermore, he condemned the silence of global powers regarding injustices and crimes



committed against the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza. "Nations rooted in culture and civilization have always sought peace and tranquility for humanity. Those who resort to violence and slaughter are strangers to civilization," he added.

The exhibition will run until September 22, and will feature complimentary puppet-making workshops for interested visitors.

The exhibition aims to promote messages of peace through art, with puppets serving as "Messengers of Peace" alongside other artworks illustrating inner peace, environmental harmony, and reflections on war.

A day earlier, on September 18, another exhibition titled "Friend-

ship Through Art" was inaugurated at the Armenian Artists' Union. These two cultural events represent Iran-Armenia's second joint exhibition series this year, drawing artists and audiences from Yerevan and beyond.

The organization of these two cultural events in Yerevan underscores the vital role of art in fostering cultural and people-to-people ties between Iran and Armenia.

The active participation of artists reaffirmed that the language of art remains the most effective bridge for friendship among nations and the promotion of global peace.

Iran and Armenia share a rich and deeply rooted cultural relationship forged over centuries of

historical, civilizational, and religious connections.

This longstanding bond is reflected in shared traditions, linguistic affinities, and mutual appreciation for arts and crafts. Both nations have historically supported each other's cultural heritage through joint exhibitions, collaborative artistic projects, and cultural exchanges that promote understanding and friendship.

As neighboring countries with intertwined histories, Iran and Armenia continue to build a resilient cultural partnership that not only preserves their unique identities but also promotes peace and dialogue between their peoples.

Cuban diplomat praises Iranian children's play



TEHRAN- Alejandro Fuentes Febles, the Head of the Consular Section at the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba in Tehran, expressed high praise for the collaborative, movement-based, and imaginative performance titled "What Is It? What Was It?" by the Orange Theater Laboratory, directed by Sajjad Aqababai.

During his visit on Friday, he described this artistic activity as a valuable effort to foster growth and development among children.

In his remarks, he emphasized: "Through this theater, children learn how to express themselves, better understand their identities, and establish more effective connections with others. In an era where children are more engaged with technology than ever before, activities like this are crucial for

enhancing their social skills."

He also highlighted the global potential of this artistic approach, stating: "Such activities should be expanded both educationally and internationally. We in Cuba are also ready to host this group in Havana."

Furthermore, due to popular demand, the performance, which is being performed in open spaces at the Tehran's Art Hall, has been extended until November 6. The show is scheduled on Wednesdays in Persian, Thursdays in English, and Fridays in Persian.

The cast includes Leila Joneidi, Amin Mirzabaqeri, Nasim Loqmani, and Zohreh Salem, performing in Persian and English, alongside Maryam Mirzai, Negin Asqarzadeh, and Monireh Valipour, performing in French.

"From Palestine" project reveals globally-significant comic art from Gaza and the West Bank

The Lakes International Comic Art Festival (LICAF) has announced its "From Palestine" project, which includes a programming strand at its annual comics gathering in Bowness-on-Windermere later this month, from September 26 to 28.

The festival will see the launch of three new comics by artists from Gaza, to be published by LICAF, following up on the previous publication of the highly acclaimed collection of cartoons, "Safaa and the Tent," by Safaa Odah, translated by Nada Hodali, Downthetubes reported.

All four titles will be on sale at the festival and all profits from the sale of these works will go to the creators.

Palestinian cartoonist and caricaturist Mohammad Sabaaneh, an active member in the Cartoon Movement, will be launching his book, "30 Seconds from Gaza," in English, at a special event over the weekend that will also see the launch of the "Qusasat" comics anthology, "Strategies of Surviving" by Abod Nasser, and "Waiting Rituals" by Khaled Jarada.

At a summer camp near Bethlehem in August 2025, 13 young Palestinian artists created a new digital anthology called "Qusasat" (Snippets), co-led by Mollie Ray from the UK. This was the culmination of a new collaboration between LICAF and the Power Group in Bethlehem, supported by The Amos Trust.

The anthology includes the work of Hana Ibrahim Mhni, Dalia Nidal Dar Abed Alhai, Tuleen Hanna Asmari, Shahd Izz Aldeen Alruzze, Nermin Anees Naifeh, Natalie Alz, Karma Ihab Barghothi, Ward Nayef AL-Hantouli, Majd Rafat Wahbeh, Abdalrahim Mutaz Zalloum, Mohammad Majed AL-Raie and Dima Iyas Nassar.

Sliman Mukarker, co-founder of Power, will be on stage to help launch this brilliant new anthology, with a free copy of the anthology for every audience member.

Strategies of Surviving is a powerful work by talented animator and illustrator Abod Nasser, which will only be available in very limited numbers. He says of his work that his sketches are not meant to evoke pity "nor to scenes of war and suffering", but are about the Gazan in understanding life... "When he was forced to reinvent it from scratch."

"This special edition is a wonderful opportunity to show Gazans as dreamers, not just as breaking news," says Abod Nasser. "I am truly grateful for this opportunity."

LICAF is also proud to have been working with one of the Palestinian comics scene's leading lights, Khaled Jarada, who is also from Gaza, now based in Paris, who will join the event online to discuss his new comic, Waiting Rituals, a carefully constructed "concertina comic", mentored by UK artist Lucy Sullivan.

Last, but by no means least, award-winning

cartoonist Mohammad Sabaaneh will talk about his most recent book, 30 Seconds from Gaza, recently published in English by Olive Branch Press, which will formally launched at LICAF at this event hosted by Paul Gravett.

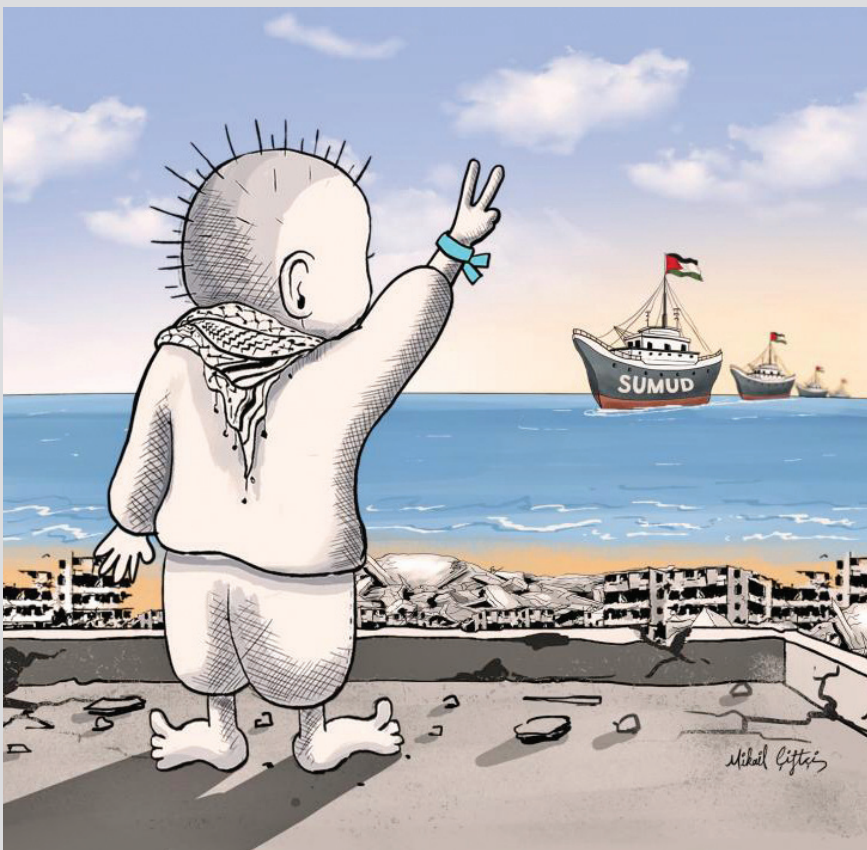
Capturing and drawing scenes from videos posted on social media was a decision Sabaaneh made as a way to archive moments and information that are expected to be banned and erased later. Sabaaneh's political cartoons portray a world in which injustice is unending, but so is the resilience of the Palestinian people. "30 Seconds from Gaza" is an artistic triumph and a powerful testament to Palestinian sumud (steadfastness). It is proof of art's capacity to make visible what oppressors want the world to forget.

"Safaa and the Tent" – limited copies of the first edition available at the Festival and through the LICAF Etsy store – "Qusasat and Waiting Rituals" are published by the Lakes International Comic Art Festival and will be available to buy via From the Festival.

All profits from the sale of the books published will go to the comic creators involved.

"We're honored to present these powerful works by such a range of Palestinian talents at a very troubled time," says Festival Director Julie Tait. "LICAF has highlighted the challenging and important work of a wide range of diverse creators since its launch in 2013, and this year is no different."

Cartoon of Day



Global Sumud Flotilla

Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Turkey