



Pezeshkian Says US and Israel ‘Betrayed’ Trust and Diplomacy

President adds E3 acted on Washington’s orders to resurrect dead UN sanctions against Iran

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President Masoud Pezeshkian delivers a speech at the UN headquarters in New York on September 24, 2025.

PM’s childish behavior toward Hezbollah’s popular base

By Sondoss Al Assad

BEIRUT — Sayyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has reiterated Martyr Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah “was a source of wealth for the Islamic world, not just for Shiites.”

Ayatollah Khamenei has said, “This wealth continues, and Hezbollah’s story endures.”

“His wealth is a great source of wealth for Lebanon and beyond,” Ayatollah Khamenei stresses.

However, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, in the midst of the crucial issues and challenges he must address, launched a preemptive battle over the legality of commemorating the martyrdom anniversary of Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and his deputy Hashem Safieddine.

Salam issued instructions to strictly prohibit the use of public property without prior permission, as Hezbollah intends to illuminate the Raouche Rock (a natural heritage landmark in Beirut) with images of Nasrallah and Safieddine, in addition to organizing a naval parade.

Israeli drones in the dark and the flotilla the world lets bleed

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – In the small hours of Wednesday, activists aboard the Global Sumud Flotilla reported a night of sustained aerial harassment: low-flying drones, at least 13 detonations around vessels, objects dropped on decks, and deliberate jamming of ship radios as crews dived for cover.

All this unfolded while the world’s attention was focused on the United Nations General Assembly’s annual meeting in New York City.

Video from several boats shows a drone making close passes, a bright flash, and a concussion as sailors scramble — not an accident but a pattern of strikes that left multiple vessels damaged and shaken.

Organizers and witnesses say the assaults were precise and deliberately psychological. Activists reported flashbang-style devices detonating near small sailing boats, damage to sails and rigging (the Zefiro was singled out), an unidentified chemical poured on the Yulara, and repeated VHF interference on the Alma, a logistics ship carrying legal observers and prominent passengers.

Ideology with a democratic flavor

By Meysam Rafiee

TEHRAN – Israel presents itself as a beacon of democracy in the Middle East, claiming to be the region’s only democratic structure. However, this self-portrayal stands in stark contrast to its actions. Israel has passed laws and adopted policies that are fundamentally at odds with democratic principles, and under the guise of self-defense, it has committed egregious crimes and indefensible aggressions. This paradox compels observers to question the very meaning of “democracy.” Is it a sacred term that can justify any injustice, or is it a concept with a core meaning that, when violated, renders the use of the word a hollow and meaningless pretense?

The essence of democracy

This analysis aims to delve into the essence of democracy by examining it from a political philosophy perspective. By doing so, we can identify its core principles and evaluate the behavior of the Israeli regime in light of those fundamental democratic ideals.

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Tehran, Moscow hail free trade deal as turning point in economic ties

TEHRAN – Iran’s Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Seyed Mohammad Atabak met Russian Economic Development Minister Maxim Reshetnikov in Moscow during the first joint committee session on implementing the Iran–Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) free trade agreement.

Reshetnikov said 2025 marked a turning point in bilateral economic relations, citing key developments such as the signing of a comprehensive strategic treaty between Moscow and Tehran, the enforcement of the free trade agreement with the EAEU, and Iran’s admission as an observer in the bloc. ► Page 4

Nuclear chief says Iranian facilities damaged in US strikes will be rebuilt

TEHRAN – Iran’s nuclear chief and Vice President, Mohammad Eslami, has said that nuclear facilities damaged during U.S. air-strikes will be fully rebuilt, stressing that Iran’s scientific and technological foundations remain strong and cannot be destroyed by foreign aggression.

In an interview with Sky News in Vienna, on the sidelines of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference, Eslami confirmed that several sites were targeted during the unprecedented June 22 attacks but insisted that Iran’s nuclear progress remains unaffected.

“It is quite normal that during a military attack on facilities, they incur damage and the infrastructure is destroyed,” he said. “What is important is that science, know-how, technology, and industry are long-standing and deeply rooted in the history of Iran.” ► Page 2

Iranian robotics team shines at TEKNOFEST 2025

TEHRAN – Iranian students have secured first and second places in the inventions and innovative technologies area in TEKNOFEST competition, showcasing new Iranian youths’ capabilities in robotics, artificial intelligence, and technological innovations fields.

Hosted by Istanbul, Turkey, from September 17 to 21, the competition aimed for individuals to improve themselves in the field of robotics – electronics – coding, and to design robots suitable for specified tasks.

The Iranian team, composed of Kian Karbalei, Mehrtaash Razgordani, Artin Islampanah, Seyyed Amir-Homan Tabatabaei-nejad, Samyar Reza-Soltani, Ardin Khanalizadeh, Mohammad Reivandi, and Mehdi Reivandi, Mehr news agency reported. ► Page 7

How many lies did Trump tell about Iran in his speech at the UN General Assembly?

By Faramarz Koohpayeh

TEHRAN – The U.S. President Donald Trump’s speech at the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday was less a diplomatic statement than a performance of falsehoods and distortions.

His remarks about Iran were riddled with inaccuracies, exaggerations, and outright fabrications, aimed at portraying the Islamic Republic as a menace while masking Washington’s own destructive record in West Asia.

Below are the three big lies Trump told about Iran during his Tuesday address at the UNGA. ► Page 2



Tehran hosting IranPharma Exhibition

TEHRAN – The 10th edition of IranPharma Exhibition, the largest specialized pharmaceutical event in Iran, kicked off in Tehran on Wednesday, September 24, and will run until Friday, bringing together 743 companies from 28 countries.

With the theme “Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation,” the exhibition is hosted by the Iranian Syndicate of Pharmaceutical Industries at the Grand Musalla in Tehran. The event attracts a wide range of domestic and international companies, associations, and related organizations.

It provides a platform for fostering technological collaboration, showcasing export capabilities, attracting investment in innovative areas, and professional networking.

Side events such as expert panels, business meetings, book exhibitions, and student tours attract significant attention each year.

Some 600 medical equipment companies are active in the country, producing around 99 percent of the medicine supplied to the domestic market.

Exclusive Interview

Global recognitions of Palestine send a message to Washington, says ex-Palestinian official

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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.

Pahlavi is more isolated than before

In an analysis, Javan discussed Reza Pahlavi's isolation and his failure to strengthen his political base. It wrote: What happened in recent weeks and months, especially after the 12-day invasion of Iranian soil by the Israeli army, has revealed the rift among the foreign-based Iranian opposition groups more than ever before and put it in everyone's view. Reza Pahlavi, who had tried for years to introduce himself as a "consensus option," this time, by openly supporting Tel Aviv, not only failed to strengthen his political base, but also lost significant parts of his limited base of supporters. His critics in various opposition groups - from nationalists to republicans and even some figures previously close to the monarchist movement - have interpreted this position as "betrayal of the homeland." Despite all this, Pahlavi is still trying to count on one point of support: the support of the Netanyahu regime, but this reliance is more a sign of the political deadlock and the chronic dependence of the monarchist movement on foreign powers than it is an achievement for him.

Resalat: Opportunities and ways to overcome political risks

In a note, Resalat addressed political and economic risks and said: Despite all the challenges, the Iranian economy remains one of the potentially attractive markets for domestic and foreign investors. Extensive natural resources, exceptional geopolitical location, large consumer market, and young human resources are factors that attract the attention of investors. Political and economic risks have always been a serious obstacle to investment in Iran. Sanctions, instability in economic policies, and volatility of rules and regulations are among the main barriers. To overcome these obstacles, there are several key solutions: first, setting stable economic policies; second, expanding regional and international cooperation. Even under sanctions, it is possible to open ways for capital flows through bilateral agreements, barter trade. Third, creating new financial and insurance platforms. Finally, making Iran's economic environment attractive that will entail a combination of domestic structural reforms in economy and smart economic diplomacy.

Hamshahri: Iran is flexible while preserving its rights

Hamshahri wrote about Iran's approach to the activation of the snapback sanctions

and the behavior of the West. It said: Iran is ready for fair negotiations, but it will resist demands that violate its security red lines. As the snapback deadline approaches, there is a risk of escalating sanctions or even new conflicts. Failure of negotiations could push Iran towards strengthening its alliance with Russia and China. This approach could change the regional balance of power and increase tensions. If the West backs down from its unacceptable demands, there is a possibility of returning to the negotiating table. In this regard, Ali Larijani's remarks in a conversation with members of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture not only demonstrated Iran's diplomatic flexibility but also revealed the complexities and obstacles of the nuclear and security negotiations and indicated Iran's efforts to maintain a balance between diplomacy and defending national interests. As the snapback deadline approaches, the world will watch Iran's next choices and the West's response. Can diplomacy overcome the current impasse, or will the region move towards greater tensions?

Donya-e-Eqtasad: Winner of sanctions return

In an article, Donya-e-Eqtasad discussed the consequences of the return of sanctions. The paper said: It must be noted that the United States will be the most important winner of the return of Security Council sanctions against Iran, because Washington will regain control over these resolutions and will take control of anti-Iran resolutions in the Security Council through the use of the veto. If the United States can gain such effective leverage, it can effectively trap Iran in the Security Council and use it as a means of further blackmail. In such a case, Iran will be forced to pay a higher price for the cancellation of these resolutions. The need to prevent this very negative development requires Iran to try to make the impossible possible in these 7 days. But regardless of the problems that the return of the resolutions will create, the main issue that has received less attention is that the greatest harm of the return of these resolutions will be the serious weakening of hope for the future and the possibility of a positive development in foreign policy, and consequently the facilitation of solving economic and domestic political problems by solving foreign policy issues. In such a case, the crisis that we have been facing for years will be exacerbated.

True Promise IV to be executed with more precision if Israel attacks again: Qalibaf



TEHRAN - Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has praised the success of Operation True Promise III and warned that any new aggression by the enemy would be met with an even more powerful and precise response under Operation True Promise IV.

Speaking in a televised program, Qalibaf commended the bravery of young Iranian fighters who played a decisive role in the latest operation, saying they displayed courage surpassing even the sappers of the Sacred Defense era.

"Our firepower at the launchers was far beyond what the enemy had imagined—whether when we targeted American bases or during the final missile strikes in the early hours of the operation,"

he said.

He noted that Iran's unprecedented missile capability was demonstrated with the precision strike on Be'er al-Sabe (Beersheba), a critical site for the Zionist regime.

From True Promise I to True Promise III

Qalibaf highlighted the progress in Iran's missile program, recalling that during Operation True Promise I, 40 to 50 percent of Iranian missiles were intercepted before reaching their targets. In contrast, during True Promise III, a single missile successfully struck Be'er al-Sabe, underscoring Iran's tactical and technical superiority.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Nuclear chief says Iranian facilities damaged in US strikes will be rebuilt

From page 1 ▶ On June 22, the United States carried out large-scale strikes against three of Iran's main nuclear facilities—Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan—using 30,000-pound bunker-busting bombs. Satellite images released afterward showed significant destruction above ground, though experts acknowledged that facilities built deep under mountains are harder to assess for damage.

Shortly after the strikes, Iran's Foreign Minister admitted that "excessive and serious damage" had been caused. However, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei had emphasized that the attacks did not disrupt the nation's nuclear program.

Reaffirming Iran's right to nuclear development, Eslami dismissed Western allegations that Tehran's uranium enrichment is aimed at weapons production. He stressed that higher enrichment levels serve peaceful needs under sanctions pressure.

"The enrichment percentage, what is presented in public opin-



A satellite image showing two clusters of holes at the Fordow nuclear site in Iran following US strikes on the facility

ion and in the media, is fuelled by politicians, adventurers, and our enemies," he said. "High enrichment is not necessarily for weapons. We need it for our safety systems, sensitive measurement tools, and processes required for managing our reactors. No one is selling us these products, and we have been under sanctions for years."

Turning to diplomacy, Eslami confirmed that Iranian officials will meet with European countries on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York this week. France, Germany, and the UK have recently triggered a 30-day process to restore "snapback" sanctions unless Iran reopens full access for UN inspectors and re-engages in talks with

Washington before the 2015 nuclear deal expires in October.

However, Eslami was categorical that Iran will not enter direct negotiations with the United States. "There is no need to talk to them," he declared.

"The US government has committed great injustice to the Iranian people, inflicted heavy blows on Iran since the beginning of the Islamic Revolution, and recently launched military attacks against our country," he said. "An enemy is an enemy. While indirect talks were ongoing, they carried out military operations. They came to the negotiating table and then abandoned it, breaking their promises. The US government is full of broken promises, and no one can trust them anymore."

Despite intensified pressure, Eslami concluded by stressing that Iran's nuclear program will continue on its peaceful and irreversible path. "Our achievements are scientific, industrial, and deeply rooted. No military strike or political pressure can take them away."

How many lies did Trump tell about Iran in his speech at the UN General Assembly?



From page 1 ▶

1. Iran is a 'sponsor of terror'

Trump repeated the worn-out American accusation that Iran is the "world's number one sponsor of terror." This claim has long been used in Washington to justify economic warfare, sanctions, and regional aggression.

Yet it ignores the reality that it is the United States that has fuelled instability across West Asia — from the invasion of Iraq and the destruction of Libya to arming Saudi Arabia in its brutal war on Yemen. By reviving this label

before the world, Trump sought to shift attention away from America's own role in spreading violence and extremism.

2. Washington wanted to 'co-operate' with Iran

Trump asserted that he had offered Iran "full cooperation" if it agreed to suspend its nuclear program. This statement is misleading. Iran's nuclear activities are peaceful, legitimate, and monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has repeatedly confirmed that Tehran has not pursued nuclear weapons.

More importantly, it was Trump himself who unilaterally abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA) — an agreement that already placed strict limits on Iran's program. His so-called "offer" was not a genuine gesture of cooperation but an attempt to pressure Iran into surrendering its sovereign rights in exchange for vague promises from a government that had already violated its commitments.

Just days before Trump's UNGA speech, the Security Council failed to adopt a resolution that would have blocked the reimposition of sanctions on Iran. The move followed Britain, France, and Germany's activation of the so-called "snapback" mechanism, accusing Tehran of breaching the JCPOA.

Tehran dismissed the step as "illegitimate," pointing out that the United States had already abandoned the nuclear accord in 2018. Iranian officials accused the European powers of aligning with Washington's sanctions policy instead of fulfilling their own commitments under the deal. They stressed that Iran's nuclear program remains peaceful, and any

scaling back of commitments has been a direct response to Western non-compliance.

3. Iranians have no nuclear capabilities left

Trump falsely boasted that Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity had been "demolished" under his watch. In reality, Iranian officials have repeatedly affirmed that, even after the 12 Day War, the country retains both the technical expertise and infrastructure to rapidly restore and expand its nuclear capabilities. Far from being demolished, Iran's program has continued under international monitoring.

Trump's UNGA speech was not a serious attempt at diplomacy but political theater aimed at intimidating Iran and impressing domestic audiences. By exaggerating threats and recycling baseless accusations, he tried to present himself as the only leader capable of confronting Iran. In reality, his "maximum pressure" campaign failed to achieve its objectives, isolated Washington internationally, and strengthened Iran's determination to pursue its independent path.

Exclusive: US will stop at nothing to assert dominance over other nations, says S. Leone scholar on UN 'snapback' vote

TEHRAN - In a dramatic development at the United Nations last Friday, September 19, 2025, the Security Council voted against a proposal to extend sanctions relief for Iran, paving the way for the automatic re-imposition of previous UN sanctions under the so-called "snapback" mechanism. The proposal, backed by France, Britain, and Germany, failed to pass after receiving only four votes in favor—from China, Russia, Pakistan, and Algeria—while nine members voted against and two abstained.

The countries opposing the proposal included the United States, Britain, France, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Denmark, Greece, Panama, and Somalia. Guyana and South Korea abstained from the vote.

To better understand the rationale behind some of these opposing positions, the Tehran Times conducted an exclusive interview with Sheku Putka Kamara, journalist, Managing Editor/Partner of Expo Times Newspaper and Expo Magazine in Freetown. Kamara shared his insights on Sierra Leone's decision to vote against the proposal, reflecting both regional and diplomatic considerations.

Below is the full text of the interview:

What underlying political or diplomatic factors influenced Sierra Leone and Somalia's decision to support the activation of the snapback mechanism against Iran?

One thing is certain; the U.S. will stop at nothing to create its dominating impact

against other nations. While the Iranian war may be the natural and unavoidable conflict between the Islamic Systems, Sierra Leone as a smaller force is likely to toe the stands of utilitarian perspectives; providing the greatest good for the greatest number. So, factors may revolve around foreign policy etc.

Can you shed light on any economic, military, or diplomatic ties between Sierra Leone, Somalia, and the Western powers backing the snapback mechanism?

Somalia is home to most peacekeepers from Sierra Leone. A number have benefited from such missions. As early as May 2025, 38 Sierra Leonean peacekeeping mission officers returned home from Somalia. This tends to create some professional rift between the two nations as and when reasonably called for.

How is this vote perceived domestically in Sierra Leone and Somalia? Is there significant public debate or media coverage on their countries' stance toward Iran?

Not sure. In fact, save the international agendas, hardly do people, particularly locals talk on such matters. This is to suggest that the topics are not as open as others in so far as general agenda setting is concerned.

What implications might Sierra Leone and Somalia's vote have on their international standing and future relations with Iran and other Middle Eastern countries?

It'd be obvious. A risk factor will always be

at play. The best option will be to take an action that is suitable for Iran; if not, a case of no love lost may be inevitable.

Do you think the decision to vote in favor reflects a broader alignment or realignment in Sierra Leone and Somalia's foreign policy priorities?

Most likely, but the same would be a matter of wait and see.

From your perspective, how might this vote affect the credibility and functionality of the UN Security Council and its mechanisms?

To some extent. Sierra Leone is now seen as an active player. So, it is best practice for the right thing to be done and in the best interest of the country.

Are there historical precedents or patterns in Sierra Leone and Somalia's voting records on Middle Eastern issues that help explain their current position?

Not quite. I'd say that the current status/tend is arguably circumstantial.

Looking ahead, do you think Sierra Leone will maintain a similar stance on Iran-related issues, or is there potential for reassessment?

There'd always be room for some reassessments. This is to suggest that Nation States may be at liberty to review and resubmit positions and standpoints and so Sierra Leone's case may and should not be different.

Pezeshkian says US and Israel ‘betrayed’ trust and diplomacy

President adds E3 acted on Washington’s orders to resurrect dead UN sanctions against Iran

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – In his second address to the UN General Assembly since taking office in 2024, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said the US-Israeli war imposed on Iran earlier this year was a “great betrayal of diplomacy” that has crippled the prospect for regional peace

Pezeshkian stated that the recent assaults on Iran were not isolated events, but rather part of a pattern of Western-backed aggression designed to undermine the nation’s sovereignty. The President held up a book titled “Killed by Israel” and flipped through pages showing some of the over 1000 children, women, and men murdered during Israeli strikes on civilian, military, and nuclear infrastructure.

“These attacked were carried out precisely as Iran was engaged in diplomatic negotiations, exposing the hypocrisy of Iran’s adversaries,” he stated. “This brazen aggression... dealt a heavy blow to international trust.”

Pezeshkian connected the illegal attacks against Iran to the ongoing crisis in Gaza, pointing out that Israel is committing genocide



in the Palestinian enclave with full Western support. “The world has spent the past two years witnessing genocide in Gaza, the forced starvation of frail children, and the massacre of over 65,000 innocent people.”

Turning his criticism towards Europe, the president lambasted Germany, France and the UK for what he described as acting on Washington’s orders to illegally resurrect dead UN sanctions against Iran. He accused them of setting aside goodwill, circumventing law, and engaging in blatant abuse after failing to bring Iran to its knees through a decade of “bad faith” and support for mil-

itary aggression. “This illegal action... lacks international legitimacy and will not be welcomed by the international community,” he declared, describing the move as a desperate attempt to destroy the very nuclear deal (JCPOA) they once celebrated.

Regarding Iran’s nuclear program, Pezeshkian reiterated the statements made a day earlier by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. “I declare once again... that Iran has never sought and will never seek to build nuclear weapons,” he said, grounding this position in both religious belief and a fatwa from the Leader. He contrasted this with

the nuclear-armed states that possess the “largest arsenals” while accusing Iran.

The president juxtaposed Israel’s “delusional plan of ‘Greater Israel’” with Iran’s alternative vision for the region. He articulated a future built not on “peace through power,” which he equated with aggression, but on “power through peace.” This vision, he said, is based on collective security, human dignity, fair resource sharing, and an unshakeable respect for national sovereignty.

Pezeshkian also expressed Iran’s support for regional peace initiatives, including the process between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and hopes for a just end to the war in Ukraine. He welcomed a recent defense pact between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan as a potential foundation for a broader regional security architecture led by Muslim nations.

The heartsurgeon-turned-president concluded his speech with the words of the renowned Persian poet, Saadi: “The children of Adam are limbs of one body... You who are unmoved by the suffering of others, it is not fitting that you be called human.”

The ex-Israeli spy chief and the big question: Zakaria, Cohen, and Iran’s horizon

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – A few days ago, CNN International aired an interview between Fareed Zakaria, one of the most prominent voices in the U.S. geopolitical landscape, and Yossi Cohen, former director of Mossad, Israel’s intelligence service. The question Zakaria posed to his guest— “Will the Islamic Republic of Iran exist in ten years?”— goes beyond mere speculation about the country’s future.

More than an analysis, it carries a projection of desire: the expectation, shared by sectors of power in Israel and the West, that the political order born in 1979 should disappear from the international stage.

This article examines the political and semiotic density of that question, reflecting Israel’s explicit desire to witness the disappearance of Iran’s political system and the implicit complicity of Western media in presenting that desire as objective analysis. Without resorting to demagoguery or propaganda, it considers the limits and implications of such framing, the place Iran occupies in regional and global political imagination, and the instrumental role of major media platforms in transforming normative expectations into seemingly neutral diagnoses.

A question that seeks to command, not understand

Zakaria’s formulation should not be interpreted simply as geopolitical curiosity. In practice, it establishes a normative framework: “Will it continue to exist...?” Rather than exploring trends, it legitimizes the aspiration for Iran to vanish in its current political configuration. Thus, the question not only defines the horizon of possibility but also imposes an implicit political mandate.

It is no coincidence that this type of question recurs in interviews between Western journalists and figures of the Israeli establishment. Far from reflecting analytical neutrality, they reveal the performative character of the encounter: a political desire is produced and legitimized, while space for counterpoints or divergent interpretations is neutralized.

Cohen’s response— “My prediction: it will not exist”— reaffirms that mandate. The disappearance of the Islamic Republic is presented as an explicit objective and, more than a mere prediction, becomes a declaration of intent: Israel does not only analyze, it projects and actively works for that outcome.

The desire to see the Islamic Republic extinguished is central to Israel’s recent political history. Iran’s construction as an existential enemy permeates official discourse, security strategies, and media representations. Iran operates as the absolute antagonist, the reference point that legitimizes and gives meaning to confrontational policies projected into the future.

This desire is not only expressed in media discourse. It has underpinned covert operations, international lobbying, and regional initiatives of containment and pressure. The media question, then, is both echo and extension of that desire: it does not ask, it anticipates and reinforces the architecture of suppression politics. The complicity between interviewer and interviewee is not accidental but structural: international media replicate, amplify, and organize political desire as a framework of the possible, normalizing the fantasy of “the end of Iran.”

This mandate is far from innocent. It lays the groundwork for the acceptance and even legitimization of political actions—military, economic, diplomatic—aimed at eroding Iran, under the idea that its disappearance would be a “natural,” “desirable,” and “inevitable” variant.

Western media: from description to normative framing

Here, the ambiguous but significant role of Western media becomes evident. CNN and Zakaria—carrying the weight of analytical credibility—legitimize the most radical expression of Israeli desire, and contribute, perhaps unconsciously, to transforming the interview into an act of political invocation. Rather than interpreting context, tensions, or negotiation space, the question installs itself as one seeking confirmation of expectation rather than understand-



CNN Host Fareed Zakaria (L) interviews Yossi Cohen, former director of Mossad

ing historical processes.

In this sense, international journalism operates not as an observer but as an active constructor of the normative: the adversary’s survival is presented as an anomaly rather than a geologically complex phenomenon. Hence, the only “realistic” future in dominant media imagination is disappearance. Merely verbalizing this possibility repeatedly begins to normalize the idea as both legitimate and desirable in regional and global terms.

This journalistic approach highlights how political desire—over facts or plural analysis—shapes international public opinion, displacing evidence and multiple perspectives that should underpin any serious assessment of the region’s future.

Iran and the resilience of facts

Against the tide of international normative desire, the reality of the Islamic Republic demonstrates steadfast persistence and remarkable capacity for reorganization. Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has withstood massive sanctions, covert operations, sabotage, and international blockades, adapting to numerous economic and political crises without losing its essential structure.

Far from anecdotal, this reflects the strength of a political project whose revolutionary vocation has been renewed precisely through resistance and strategic management of adversity. For decades, predictions of “inevitable collapse” have circulated in international media, yet Iran has

transformed its marginality into legitimacy and strength, building social and institutional resilience capable of sustaining an autonomous vision under external pressure.

Rather than fixating solely on “threats,” the country has mobilized internal and regional resources to navigate challenges, maintaining political and cultural continuities that confound critics. This capacity for resilience, confirmed by multiple specialists, shows that the media and diplomatic fantasy of its disappearance is far more probable in discourse than in reality.

The question of Iran’s survival embodies, on its flip side, a logic of exclusion and the legitimization of external intervention. Presenting the transformation or suppression of a sovereign state as desirable operates within a neo-colonial legal framework, where certain states are invited to survive while others must accept condemnation or forced reconfiguration.

This trend is reinforced in Western coverage, where political actors deemed “disobedient” are automatically placed under suspicion, and their continuity depends on the granting or revocation of international legitimacy. The Iranian case clearly illustrates how Western media and political frameworks assume that “normality” requires the country’s disappearance, not its coexistence, adaptation, or redefinition on the global stage.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

SPORTS

Iran defeat Malaysia AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 qualifiers

TEHRAN – Iran will defend their title at the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 after clinching their Finals spot with a decisive 4-0 win against Malaysia in their Qualifiers Group G tie on Wednesday.

Iran finished top of the group with three wins with Malaysia second on six points.

The other match saw United Arab Emirates conclude their campaign in style with an 8-2 win against Bangladesh.

Iran started on the front foot and had Malaysia pinned in their own half but with the hosts defending resolutely, needed a moment of inspiration to find the breakthrough.

That came in the fourth minute when goalkeeper Saied Momeni ventured over the halfway line before creating space for the unmarked Mehdi Mehdikhani to fire into the top corner for the opener.

A lapse in concentration from Malaysia when defending a corner saw them go further behind in the 12th minute as Masoud Yousef’s cleverly taken kick found Mohammadhossein Derakhshani, who easily turned the ball in at the back post.

Iran were reminded that Malaysia were still capable of troubling them with efforts in the dying minutes of the first half, Syahir Iqbal forcing Momeni into a save before Awalluddin Nawi and Syahir again shooting wide from good positions.

After the interval, the pattern of the game remained the same with Iran dominating play but unlike the first half, found the Malaysian defense tougher to breach.

Limited to shots from distance, Iran’s best chance came in the 27th minute from Yousef but Malaysia custodian Syaifuddin Syukri showed good reflexes to block the powerfully struck attempt.

Iran’s persistent pressure was rewarded late in the half with Hossein Tayebi pouncing on a rebound in the 33rd minute before Ali Khalilvand looped a header over Syaifuddin Syukri to seal qualification for the 13-time champions, the-afc.com reported.

Iran advance to 2025 IHF World U17 Championship

TEHRAN – The Iranian men’s U17 handball team qualified for the 2025 IHF World U17 Championship by advancing to the final of the Asian Championship.

In the match held at the Amman Princes Sumaya, Jordan, Tuesday night, Iran defeated Bahrain 37-19 at the semifinal and not only booked their place in the Thursday’s final, but also advanced to the World Men’s U17 Championship.

South Korea also defeated Qatar 36-35 in another semifinals.

The world championship will be held in Morocco from Oct. 24 to Nov. 1.

Iran to compete at 2025 IBSA Blind Football Nations Cup

TEHRAN – Iran will begin the 2025 IBSA Blind Football Nations Cup with a match against Poland on Thursday.

The Nations Cup will be held at the USC Ground in Kochi, India Sept. 25 to Oct. 1.

Team Melli will start the campaign on Thursday, facing Poland and then play England, India, South Korea and Italy in the following days.

This tournament is an official event for the top six countries in the IBSA rankings announced in January 2025.

It is the first official event in the new cycle leading up to the next Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

Following the conclusion of the men’s tournament, India will then host the IBSA Blind Women’s World Championship between 6 and 12 Oct.

Whitehead to join Esteghlal basketball team

TEHRAN – Iranian basketball club Esteghlal have reached an agreement with shooting guard Isaiah Whitehead.

Whitehead is an American professional basketball player, who last played for King Szczecin of the Polish Basketball League (PLK).

He played college basketball for Seton Hall the Brooklyn Nets of the NBA in 2016–18.

In 2016, Whitehead was selected by the Utah Jazz with the 42nd overall pick in the 2016 NBA draft.

Esteghlal, headed by Mehran Shahintab, are going to win 2025-26 Iran Basketball Super League.

Bonyadifard to officiate at 2025/26 ACL Elite

TEHRAN – Iranian referee Mo’ud Bonyadifar has been chosen to officiate at Matchday 3 of the 2025/26 AFC Champions League Elite in October.

Bonyadifar will officiate the match between South Korean Gangwon and Japan’s Vissel Kobe on October 22.

Bonyadifar will be assisted by his countryman Alireza Ildorom and Farhad Moraveji.

Vahid Kazemi has been also chosen as the fourth official.

Iran, Czech Republic; high-stakes quarterfinal awaits

TEHRAN – The 2025 FIVB Men’s Volleyball World Championship underway in the Philippines delivered another thriller as Iran clinched a 3-2 victory over Serbia in a riveting Round of 16 clash, sealing a quarterfinal showdown with the Czech Republic on Thursday. Under the guidance of head coach Roberto Piazza, Iran showed grit, resilience and late-game steel to advance in a tournament already packed with drama.

Looking ahead, a high-stakes quarterfinal awaits at the SM Mall of Asia Arena in Pasay City.

Iran will meet the Czech Republic, a team known for its efficient serving, structured defense, and potent outside attack. The quarterfinals, scheduled for Thursday in the Philippines, promise a tactical battle as Roberto Piazza’s squad aim to translate Round of 16 momentum into a deep World Championship run.

Key to Iran’s success in the next round will be the continued impact of Morteza Sharifi and Porya Hossein Khanzadeh, whose roles have become the cornerstone of the team’s attacking system. Their ability to pressure the opposition’s block and create efficient scoring opportunities will be tested against a Czech side that have demonstrated composure under pressure throughout the tournament.

Fans will be watching closely as two nations with rich volleyball traditions collide in the pitch, with a semifinals berth on the line. The winners of the match will face winners of Bulgaria and the U.S. in the semis.

Iran learn fate at 2025 IBSA Goalball Asia/Pacific

TEHRAN – Iran discovered their fate at the 2025 IBSA Goalball Asia /Pacific Championships to be held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Team Melli are drawn in Group A along with Australia, Thailand, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

Defending champions Iran will play Saudi Arabia in their opener.

Group B consists of Pakistan, South Korea, China, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

The 10-day competition will start at the Sports Complex Liaquat Gymnasium Islamabad from Oct. 16.

Tehran, Moscow hail free trade deal as turning point in economic ties

From Page 1 ► He noted that trade between Iran and Russia grew by 35 percent in May and June 2025 compared with the same period a year earlier, attributing the rise to the free trade agreement and the determination of both countries to expand commercial ties.

Reshetnikov reaffirmed Russia's commitment to the letter and spirit of the accord and voiced hope for faster progress.

Atabak, accompanied by Iranian Ambassador Kazem Jalali, emphasized the role of the private sector in deepening trade and called for removal of obstacles such as financial transaction restrictions and divergent product standards.

He also underlined Iran's commitment to completing the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), saying groundwork for the Rasht-Astara railway had been prepared and construction would start in the coming months.

Iran and the EAEU signed their free trade agreement in St. Petersburg in December 2023. After ratification by member states, it came into effect in May 2025, eliminating tariffs on about 87 percent of goods traded.

The EAEU groups Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia, with Iran, Uzbekistan and Cuba holding observer status.

According to the figures released by Iran's Customs Administration, Iran's exports to member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) rose by 20 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), reaching over \$2.0 billion.

The volume of exports to EAEU countries totaled 5.059 million metric tons—up 21 percent compared to the previous year.

Breakdown of exports includes \$1.121 billion to Russia, \$505 million to Armenia, \$278 million to Kazakhstan, \$111 million to Kyrgyzstan, and \$21 million to Belarus.

Iran also imported 2.174 million metric tons of goods worth \$1.51 billion from EAEU member states in the same period. This marks a 39 percent decline in import volume and a 20 percent drop in value compared to the previous year.

Iranian officials have said that steel and petrochemicals are expected to account for 50 percent of the objectives set under Iran's free trade agreement (FTA) with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), highlighting the sectors' pivotal role in boosting exports and activating trade opportunities in the region.

Iran security chief meets business leaders, pledges support for private sector

TEHRAN – Ali Larijani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, met with the board and private sector representatives of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) on Tuesday, delivering assurances that the government would strengthen support for business activity despite sanctions.

Larijani said Iran remained open to “reasonable and fair” negotiations with the West but stressed that national interests were the red line in talks.

He rejected the notion of a security-driv-

TCCIMA discusses business resilience strategies amid snapback sanctions risk

TEHRAN – Members of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) debated the impact of looming snapback sanctions and ways to boost demand during stagflation at their 30th general assembly, held on the first day of autumn.

The session coincided with President Masoud Pezeshkian's trip to the United Nations General Assembly in New York and came just days before the expected activation of the sanctions known as the “snapback mechanism.”

Private and public sector representatives



On August 15, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, head of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO), said the FTA, which entered into force on May 15, 2025, is unprecedented for Iran, reducing tariffs on 87 percent of traded goods.

He noted that while previous preferential trade agreements with the EAEU had expanded trade volumes, this latest agreement presents a unique opportunity for deeper integration.

“Trade agreements create both opportunities and challenges. The overall outcome is positive for both sides if vulnerabilities are addressed and opportunities maximized,” Dehnavi said. He emphasized that steel and petrochemical industries are major drivers of production and exports, and leveraging them effectively could achieve half of Iran's FTA objectives.

The official called on the private sector to actively engage in Eurasian markets, pointing to research identifying which Iranian products have the highest export potential. “Private companies should focus on maximizing profitability, while policymakers ensure collective benefits such as employment, economic growth, and foreign currency inflows,” he said.

Dehnavi also noted that export opportunities vary across member states, highlighting Russia as one of the most lucrative markets for Iranian products and promising further studies to optimize engagement in the region.

According to Elham Haji Karimi, head of the Iran-EAEU FTA secretariat, the agreement, signed in December 2023 after more than two years of negotiations, covers 11 chapters, including trade in goods, technical measures, sanitary standards, rules of origin, customs cooperation, dispute resolution, government procurement, and sectoral cooperation in transport, energy, automotive industries, and free trade zones.

en approach toward the chamber, calling it a civil institution, and proposed establishing a direct channel between the council's secretariat and ICCIMA.

He pledged to create conditions enabling private sector growth under sanctions.

In the session, 16 business leaders voiced concerns and proposals.

ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh said economic stability required structural reforms and warned against investor flight, urging adjustments in currency policies to boost repatriation of foreign currency.

highlighted dual challenges facing the economy: stimulating demand in a recessionary environment with high inflation, and devising resilience strategies for businesses to withstand renewed sanctions pressure.

Attaollah Ashrafi Esfahani, vice chair of TCCIMA's agriculture and food industries committee, warned that the farm and food chain is under unprecedented stress.

He said repeated power outages and energy shortfalls in recent months had made damage to the production units, inflicting heavy losses on agriculture and industry.

Iran, Uzbekistan target 2m tons of rail trade by 2026

TEHRAN – Iran and Uzbekistan have set an ambitious target to more than double their rail freight exchanges to 2.0 million tons by 2026, the head of Iranian Railways said after talks with his Uzbek counterpart.

Jabbarali Zakeri, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI), told Narzullaev Zufar Giyasovich, chairman of Uzbekistan Railways, that once conditions for wagon transit are fully in place, the target can be achieved.

The goal marks a sharp rise from the 476,000 tons moved between the two countries in the first eight months of 2025.

The two officials discussed boosting trade volumes and easing transit, with Zakeri stressing the importance of setting joint tariffs to strengthen cooperation and lift freight flows.

He described Uzbekistan as a strategic hub on the East-West corridor with strong potential for expanded links.

Zakeri said Iran's exports and Uzbekistan's transit shipments through Iran to open waters have both increased this year.

He noted that 1,300 loaded wagons are currently stationed at the Sarakhs border, ready to move into Uzbekistan, underlining the corridor's growing dynamism.

Narzullaev, who visited Iran's rail terminals including Sarakhs, welcomed the cooperation and confirmed Uzbekistan's readiness to receive Iranian cargo wagons via Turkmenistan.

Both sides voiced hope that the talks would lead to a surge in transit, exports, imports and wagon exchanges between the two countries and their neighbors.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Head of Iranian Railways Jabbarali Zakeri (R) and Narzullaev Zufar Giyasovich, chairman of Uzbekistan Railways

He also announced the official opening of Uzbekistan's Trade House in Tehran, which he said would facilitate trade. The number of joint Iranian-Uzbek companies has grown 2.5 times in the past five years, reaching 261. These companies are active in sectors such as construction, petrochemicals, food, agriculture, and building materials.

The Uzbek minister concluded by reaffirming his country's commitment to broadening economic and trade cooperation with Iran across multiple sectors.

On April 23, Iranian industry, mining and trade minister said that the cooperation between the private sectors of Iran and Uzbekistan will continue at an accelerated pace.

Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov: “We assure Iranian traders that if they invest in our industrial zones, they will be exempt from taxes and customs duties, and the government will provide necessary infrastructure and guarantee the repatriation of profits.”

Mohammad Atabak made the remarks in a meeting, at the place of the ministry in Tehran, with an Uzbek trade delegation led by the head of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan (CCI).

During the meeting, the minister emphasized that the perspectives of the private sectors and entrepreneurs of both countries are being reviewed in expert working groups.

He added that several agreed-upon goods with Uzbekistan have been supplied and dispatched by Iran.

The minister further stated that these exchanges and interactions at the level of the private sector in both countries will continue at an accelerated pace. The economic and production capacities of Iran and Uzbekistan fully enable increasing the current level of trade exchanges between the two nations to higher levels.

Also, in a meeting with Uzbekistan's Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment Shokhrukh Gulamov, at the place of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) in Tehran on April 20, ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh said his country's private sector is ready to pursue joint invest-

ments in Uzbekistan and called on Tashkent to implement a reciprocal visa waiver to ease travel and boost tourism between the two countries.

He said that the mutual visa exemption would facilitate travel for businesspeople and citizens while supporting the development of tourism.

Hassanzadeh further stated that the upcoming preferential trade agreement between Iran and Uzbekistan, expected to be signed next month during the joint economic committee meeting, could raise the level of bilateral trade cooperation.

He added that the current trade volume—nearly \$500 million—does not reflect the true potential of the two countries. “The Iranian Chamber, as the representative of the private sector, is ready to take all necessary steps to boost trade volume,” he said.

He emphasized that Iran's government and private sector are committed to expanding relations with all countries, particularly neighbors. “Historical, religious, and cultural ties can pave the way for broader economic, cultural, and academic cooperation,” he said.

Hassanzadeh welcomed Uzbekistan's move to scrap a \$400 transit fee for trucks, calling it a positive step for expanding cooperation along the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC).

The ICCIMA head further reiterated the call for Uzbekistan to lift visa requirements for Iranian citizens, noting this would particularly support collaboration in medical tourism, healthcare services, and pharmaceutical production, where Iran has strong capacities.

Highlighting investment interests, he said Iran's private sector is especially keen to invest in Uzbekistan's textile and garment industries. “As the private sector's representative, the Iranian Chamber seeks the necessary support for these investments,” he said.

Hassanzadeh concluded by expressing hope that closer cooperation between the two chambers of commerce would push bilateral trade volume to \$1.0 billion.

Abdollah Mohajer Darabi, a member of the Iranian Chamber's board of directors, also addressed the meeting, noting the long-standing trade ties between Iran and Uzbekistan. He said both countries are eager to expand cooperation and emphasized the need to eliminate existing gaps in the trade relationship.

He announced that Iran's trade office in Tashkent would open by late May, adding that advancing trade ties without a dedicated joint financial and banking mechanism would not be possible.

Uzbek Deputy Minister Shokhrukh Gulamov praised the history of the Iranian Chamber

and its nationwide network, noting the shared roots between the two nations. He voiced readiness for cooperation across all sectors identified by the Iranian side.

Gulamov said over 100 Uzbek companies, led by the country's chamber of commerce president, would participate in the Iran Expo — a reflection of Iran's significance for Uzbekistan.

He welcomed Iranian private sector investment and stressed the need to raise bilateral trade volume to \$5.0 billion, citing the ample capacities available for cooperation between the two countries.

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

Mousa Aghaei said that the sales office was launched in cooperation with the Mazandaran Chamber of Commerce and the Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Chamber.

He noted that the initiative would significantly enhance bilateral cooperation.

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

He emphasized that while Uzbek citizens and government officials are eager to collaborate with Iranian businesses, challenges such as FATF-related restrictions, transportation issues, and high tariffs have hindered trade expansion.

Highlighting Iran's advantages in engineering services, construction materials, industrial production, agricultural equipment, and knowledge-based products, Aghaei noted that a recent meeting with Uzbekistan's ambassador to Iran included discussions on Iran's entry into Uzbekistan's knowledge-based market. He said the ambassador welcomed the proposal enthusiastically.

Meanwhile, a senior Uzbek delegation welcomed Iran's proposal to establish a joint investment fund during a high-level meeting with the National Development Fund of Iran, as both countries explore broader economic cooperation spanning energy, infrastructure, and mining.

On April 20, Shokhrukh Gulamov, Uzbekistan's Deputy Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade, met with Mostafa Seyed Hashemi, Deputy Chairman of Iran's National Development Fund (NDF), and Reza Abbaspour, Deputy for International Affairs, in Tehran. The two sides discussed avenues to expand bilateral trade and finance collaborative projects.

Seyed Hashemi emphasized the cultural and geographic proximity between the two nations and noted that bilateral trade in the past year reached approximately \$450 million, with Iran exporting \$368 million worth of goods and importing \$81 million. He said the positive trade balance of \$287 million points to strong potential for further growth.

Highlighting that Iran currently holds less than a one percent share in Uzbekistan's \$36 billion import market, Hashemi proposed a roadmap to increase exports and foster integrated supply chains. He underscored the NDF's experience in financing major infrastructure, energy, and transportation projects and formally proposed the creation of a bilateral investment fund to finance industrial, export-oriented, and tech-based ventures.

Global recognitions of Palestine send a message to Washington, say ex-Palestinian official

Khalid Abd al-Majid says wave of Palestinian recognition is fruit of people’s sacrifices

TEHRAN- As international momentum builds up behind the recognition of the Palestinian State, several Western countries—France, Canada, Britain - have officially recognized the Palestine State. The move, which coincides with the latest UN General Assembly resolution reaffirming Palestinian rights, marks a significant shift in global diplomacy, though questions remain over whether it constitutes a symbolic gesture or a genuine strategic transformation.

To gain deeper insight into the implications of these developments, the Tehran Times conducted an exclusive interview with Khalid Abd al-Majid, a veteran Palestinian politician and former Secretary-General of the Palestinian Popular Resistance Front. As a career political and resistance figure, he has closely followed the trajectory of Palestinian diplomacy since the Oslo era, while remaining a vocal advocate for armed resistance against the Israeli occupation.

In the interview Abd al-Majid provides a critical assessment of the recent wave of recognitions, the political and diplomatic messages sent by the UN General Assembly, and the extent to which these steps may influence U.S. policy. He also weighs in on the future of the proposed two-state solution, the fragmented Arab response, Israel's likely counter-measures, and the central role of Palestinian civil society and diaspora communities in broadening international solidarity.

Below is the full text of the interview:

How do you assess the moves by certain Western countries, including France, Canada, and Britain, who officially recognized the State of Palestine at this particular time? Do you see



it as a strategic shift or merely a symbolic step?

There is no doubt that France, Canada, Australia and some other countries have recognized the State of Palestine and the Palestinian rights as a new development and a transformation in the policy of these Western countries. But it is not a strategic transformation.

Yes, it is a symbolic and even a hypothetical step. There are many factors that led these countries to take this step. This is a political victory for Palestine and it is the fruit of the sacrifices of the Palestinian people, the sacrifices of the Palestinian resistance and the path of the Palestinian national struggle that led these countries to recognize the State of Palestine, as well as the internal developments in each country in response to the humanitarian crisis that is taking place in Palestine.

In your view, what political and diplomatic messages does this collective recognition by a number of countries at the UN General Assembly carry?

The political and diplomatic messages that the United Nations General Assembly carried out are messages to the Zionist entity in the first place, and even to the American position that re-

fuses to recognize the Palestinian rights.

When the Oslo Accords were signed, there was an unrealistic hope that the Palestinian Authority would turn into a state, but unfortunately it did not.

We are betting on the struggles of our people, on the sacrifices of our people, on the resilience of our people, but we believe that what happened in the General Assembly is important and fundamental in order to stop the crimes committed in the Gaza Strip, in order to suppress the Israeli narrative, and in order to end the war crimes committed by Netanyahu.

Do you believe this development could affect the U.S. position or put pressure on Washington to change its policy toward Palestine?

The new development in regard the recognition of the Palestinian State is undoubtedly affecting the international community within the framework of the United Nations and affecting the policies of many countries, but it does not greatly affect the United States because the United States is a partner of the Zionist entity. It is clear that the recognition by the Western countries, especially the European Union countries, Britain and many oth-

er countries sent a message to the United States that there is a dispute about this situation and we believe that the change of the policy of the United States towards the Palestinian cause will not happen seriously unless this Zionist project is broken.

What role could these new recognitions play in reviving the proposed two-state solution?

The role that these recognitions can play is a real mechanism in achieving the goals of the Palestinian people in establishing an independent state on their lands with Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital. And this mechanism has not existed until now, and therefore we believe that the practical implementation of the proposed solution in these decisions requires a new balance of regional and international campaigns. We believe that the solution can be implemented if the mechanism is established and there would be a serious Arab and Islamic position in taking practical steps in the face of the Zionist entity and a serious position by the countries that have recognized Israel. But there is no doubt that Israel has lost many of its friends in the world. It has lost at popular level and even at official level.

How do you interpret the stance of some Arab states toward these developments?

During the war on Gaza (since October 2023), Arab countries have taken a position that has created a barrier between Arab countries and the Arab League, and there is no real coordination between these countries to support any political approach that would support the Palestinian cause or even a serious position on the international recognition of the Palestinian rights and the Palestinian State.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Ideology with a democratic flavor

Reviewing the actions of West Asia’s sole democracy in Gaza

From page 1 ► Democracy is fundamentally a system of collective decision-making rooted in equality, particularly in the distribution of political power among citizens. This concept goes beyond a simple procedural framework, as it requires that individuals are treated as equals in organizing their shared lives, especially when faced with disagreement. This equality is vital because it ensures the political process reflects the collective will rather than the interests of a select few. Without it, democratic institutions risk becoming tools that perpetuate power imbalances.

Philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Rawls provide foundational perspectives on the role of equality in a democracy. Rousseau believed that a social contract establishes equality, ensuring citizens are bound by the same conditions and enjoy the same rights. Any deviation, where laws favor specific individuals or groups, would corrupt the general will and undermine the legitimacy of the political system. He was skeptical of representative democracy, believing it could create power disparities.

John Rawls emphasized that all citizens, regardless of their economic or social status, must have equal opportunities to exercise their political rights. He advocated for institutional measures, such as public funding for elections and restrictions on campaign contributions, to prevent wealth from dominating the political process and ensure politics is “set free from the curse of money”. While other perspectives also highlight political equality as a central criterion for judging democracy, some scholars, like Steven Wall, argue that the link between equality and democracy might be contingent rather than a necessary, constitutive one. Similarly, Ryan Cox suggests that power inequalities are problematic not because they are social inequalities, but because they can be used to gain greater consideration for those with more power.

When equality is absent, democratic structures can become a “mockery of democracy”. Rousseau would argue that if laws serve particular interests rather than the general will, the social contract is violated, and the state loses its legitimacy. This facade can exist even with democratic institutions if they are manipulated to favor specific groups. According to Rawls, without the fair value of political liberties, democratic structures fail to deliver justice, becoming undemocratic in substance despite their formal appearance.

The self-definition of Israel as a “Jewish and democratic state” creates inherent conceptual tensions. Critics argue that the 2018 Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People grants preferential status to one ethnic-religious group, directly contradicting the universal democratic principle of equality. This has been linked to systemic discrimination against Arab and other minority populations in various sectors, including infrastructure, justice, education, and land rights. The ability of Arab citizens to participate equally in Israeli democracy is limited by restrictions on their right to run for office and organize political parties. Some scholars have described Israel as an “ethnocracy” or “Herrenvolk democracy,” where access to power is determined by a stratified ethnic order. The control over the West Bank and Gaza, where millions of Palestinians live under military rule without voting rights, also challenges Israel’s democratic credentials. Proposed judicial reforms in Israel, which aim to weaken the Supreme Court, are seen as a form of “populist democratic backsliding” that threatens the separation of powers.

Organizations like Freedom House, which claim to defend democracy, have been criticized for political bias in their democracy ratings. Some scholars suggest these ratings favor countries with strong ties to the United States. This bias is attributed to financial and personal links between Freedom House and the U.S. government, with a significant portion of its income coming from U.S. government grants and many board members having held high positions in the U.S. Department of State.

Both Freedom House and Polity IV mea-

sures contend that Israel has a very high level of democracy, a characterization that is sharply contradicted by many scholars and observers. This critique highlights that these measures often ignore or discount the role of Israel’s largest minority group, the Israeli Arabs. The conclusion is that these quantitative measures imperfectly measure Israeli “democracy,” and the scores are so simplified that they are virtually meaningless.

Israel’s documented atrocities in Gaza

In Gaza, Israel faces extensive condemnation and numerous allegations of committing serious human rights violations, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, with international courts, UN bodies, and human rights organizations documenting these actions with substantial evidence and statistics. Multiple prominent human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and leading Israeli groups such as B’Tselem and Physicians for Human Rights Israel, have concluded that Israel has committed genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Their findings cite mass killings, the creation of unlivable conditions, systematic destruction of infrastructure, and forcible displacement as deliberate and coordinated policies aimed at destroying Palestinian lives and society in Gaza. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) found plausible evidence that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza in January 2024, ordering Israel to take measures to prevent genocidal acts, while the UN special rapporteur on human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories stated in March 2024 that “reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating the commission” of acts of genocide had been met. Amnesty International’s December 2024 report further identified a systematic pattern of conduct indicating genocidal intent, including repeated direct attacks on civilians, indiscriminate strikes, massive destruction of civilian objects, mass forced displacement, torture, and the refusal to allow adequate humanitarian aid, explicitly stating Israel committed “killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, and deliberately inflicting on Palestinians in Gaza conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction” with the “specific intent to destroy Palestinians”. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, including intentionally using starvation as a method of warfare and directing attacks against civilians.

Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Andreas Kravik recently stated that the country would uphold the International Criminal Court’s (ICC) arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and would arrest him if he entered Norway. As a member of the ICC, Norway is legally bound to cooperate with the court’s decisions, demonstrating its commitment to international law.

The human cost of the conflict in Gaza is stark, with more than 45,000 Palestinians killed by Israel as of January 8, 2025, and nearly 70% of them being women and children. By April 5, 2024, approximately 14,500 Palestinian children had been killed. The Gaza Health Ministry reported that Israeli military attacks since October 7, 2023, have resulted in the deaths of 61,000 Palestinians, including at least 18,000 children, and more than 152,000 wounded, with tens of thousands more missing, primarily women and children; these figures notably exclude those who have died from starvation, dehydration, and lack of medical care. In one week alone, following October 2023, 6,000 Israeli airstrikes across Gaza killed over 3,300 civilians and injured over 12,000, with these strikes hitting protected locations such as hospitals, markets, refugee camps, mosques, educational facilities, and entire neighborhoods, which UN special rapporteurs asserted were indiscriminate and amounted to a war crime. Investigations have revealed that Israel bombed areas it had previously instructed civilians to evacuate to, dropping 2,000-pound bombs in these “safe zones”.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Israeli drones in the dark and the flotilla the world lets bleed

From page 1 ► Videos and first-hand testimony captured the sound of drones, the concussive bangs, and the panic of crews seeking shelter.

This campaign follows earlier incidents that, together, suggest an escalation rather than an accident. In early September, the flotilla said one of its ships was struck by a drone in Tunisian waters; Tunisian authorities initially disputed the claim, but investigations and footage kept alive fears that extra-territorial forces were attempting to disrupt a declared humanitarian convoy.

The latest strikes occurred as the convoy transited southwest of Crete toward Gaza — a journey intended to deliver food and medical assistance to civilians in Gaza.

The legal case against these strikes is clear. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea guarantees freedom of navigation on the high seas; civilian vessels in international waters cannot be attacked absent lawful justification such as self-defense or a declared, lawful blockade.

The Fourth Geneva Convention obliges parties to permit and protect relief consignments to civilians in need (Article 59).

The San Remo Manual and customary international humanitarian law further require that any naval enforcement be declared, proportionate, and directed solely at legitimate military objectives. Indiscriminate or punitive action against humanitarian ships is inconsistent with the law of the sea and IHL.

At the level of grave criminality, the Rome Statute criminalizes intentionally directing attacks against civilians and the use of starvation of a civilian population as a method of warfare.

If non-violent, civilian Sumud vessels were targeted or rendered non-operational to prevent relief from reaching Gaza, those acts fall squarely into the kinds of conduct the international criminal framework was designed to investigate. Accountability, not obfuscation, is the legal and moral requirement.

Institutional reactions have been insufficient. The UN human rights office urged an independent investigation and accountability; the UN special rapporteur, Francesca Albanese, demanded “immediate international attention and protection.”

Italy claimed it has redirected a navy frigate to shadow the convoy and publicly warned that any operation must comply with international law and protect its nationals aboard. Those moves are necessary—but patchwork naval escorts and statements will not deter nightly drone harassment or replace a legally enforceable mechanism to safeguard

humanitarian passage.

Politically, the episode is both revealing and shameful. U.S. envoy Tom Barrack recently admitted bluntly that “Israel is attacking ... Tunisia,” invoking the flotilla incidents within a wider pattern of coercion.

Whether one interprets that as candor or unintended admission, the practical effect is clear: when states or their proxies treat humanitarian missions as pressure points, the rules that protect civilians are hollowed out and the risk of impunity rises.

The Sumud flotilla is doing what many governments will not: it is putting humanitarian intent into action and bearing witness.

While delegates declaim in New York, people on these boats face the real choice between delivering aid and being effectively silenced by drones, jamming, and sabotage. The legal instruments to protect them exist; what is missing is collective political will.

The UN and states claiming fidelity to international law should move beyond denunciations: order an impartial investigation, establish protected maritime corridors for humanitarian consignments, and impose real consequences on those who weaponize the sea against civilians. Anything less is not merely diplomatic timidity — it is a moral abdication.

Barrack’s threats could be a prelude to a resumption of hostilities, according to some analysts, on the eve of the Lebanese Army’s submission of the required monthly report on the progress in implementing the first phase of the disarmament plan.

According to an informed source, Barrack’s statements came after a series of harsh criticisms from the Israeli lobby that holds him responsible for his lack of firmness with Lebanese officials, which encourages them to evade.

of Raouche with the image of Martyr Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

Nawaf Salam is not concerned at all with the conditions of the Raouche area or the Rock itself, as much as he is concerned with highlighting his hostile stance toward what Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah represents.

If Nawaf Salam is pushing the army to forcibly disarm the resistance front, then it is not surprising that he obstructs the honoring of its most prominent leader instead of defying the recent threats by US envoy Thomas Barrack.

only inform the Beirut Governorate of this gathering in order to attain an information notice, not a permit.

Nawaf Salam’s defiant behavior reveals Washington’s fear of a repeat of the scene of the massive popular presence supporting the resistance in the capital, as happened during the funeral last February.

Indisputably, the only party Nawaf Salam’s cherishes is who brought him to his current position. Hence, he found himself forced to comply with an American and Saudi request to prevent Hezbollah from lighting the Rock

PM’s childish behavior toward Hezbollah’s popular base

This is an opportunity to point out that the Prime Minister is a judge and a jurist, but he is unaware of the significant difference between natural landmarks and government facilities and buildings.

According to Article 1 of the Lebanese Public Property Law, the use of these natural features for an activity other than the establishment of permanent facilities or investment is open to all, like the beach.

The law further stipulates that the organizer is only required to

Iran-Saudi Arabia ties serve interests of both countries, Salehi-Amiri says

TEHRAN – Iran’s Minister of Cultural Heritage, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, said strengthening relations with Saudi Arabia is in the interests of both nations, speaking at a ceremony marking Saudi National Day at the Espinas Palace Hotel in Tehran on Tuesday.

According to Mehr news agency, he said: “We are optimistic about the relationship with Saudi Arabia in terms of having many common approaches and future interests, and we consider this relationship to be in the common interests of the two countries.”

Salehi-Amiri expressed his pleasure at attending the Saudi National Day ceremony and said: “I congratulate the ambassador and the government of Saudi Arabia on this occasion and wish this country’s progress and prosperity.”

Pointing to the high position of Saudi Arabia in the Islamic world and the importance of hosting the pilgrims, he said: “Saudi Arabia is worthy of respect as the host of the Two Holy Mosques and a friend and brother to us. Last year, 86,000 Iranians performed Hajj rituals and more than 200,000 performed Umrah pilgrimage. We appreciate Saudi Arabia’s hospitality to the pilgrims and hope that the relationship between the two countries will expand day by day and this bond will deepen.”

He emphasized the political and regional dimensions of mutual ties, adding that Iran’s view of Saudi Arabia is important not only because of the country’s special status, as the custodians of the Two Holy Mosques, and its hosting of pilgrims, but also because of the strategic commonalities between the two sides in the political



and regional arenas.

Salehi-Amiri added that fortunately, the political relations between the two countries and the relations between them have taken a growing path, and continuous consultations between the high officials of the two countries are always ongoing.

“We are optimistic about this relationship in terms of having many common approaches and future interests, and we consider this relationship to be in the common interests of the two countries, and we believe that through these relations, sustainable and desirable development can be achieved at the regional level.”

Referring to the common regional threats, he emphasized: “I would like to use this opportunity to draw your attention to the threats of the Zionist regime against the region. The actions of this regime are a common threat to all countries. The Zionist regime does not consider the existence of strong relations between the countries of the region to be in its interests and always tries to obstruct these relations.”

The minister appreciated Saudi Arabia’s clear positions regarding the inhumane actions of the Zionist regime in the region.

Deputy minister congratulates artisans for success at Uzbekistan handicrafts festival

TEHRAN – Iran’s deputy minister for handicrafts and traditional arts congratulated Iranian artisans on Tuesday for winning top awards at an international handicrafts festival held in Kokand and Rishtan, Uzbekistan.

Maryam Jalali-Dehkordi, deputy minister of handicrafts at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said in a statement that the achievement represented an example of “effective cultural diplomacy” and a positive contribution to ties with neighboring countries.

“Iranian artisans’ outstanding success in Kokand, marked by winning top prizes, is not only an artistic accomplishment but also a significant achievement in cultural diplomacy and strengthening bonds with neighboring states, particularly Uzbekistan,” Jalali-Dehkordi said.

She praised the participation of Iranian

artisans from various provinces, describing it as part of the ministry’s strategy to promote cultural assets and advance regional diplomacy.

Awards included “Best Artisan” for Ali Akbar Ramezani, “Best Female Potter” for Zahra Aslani, and “Traditional Pottery Revivalist” for Karim Haghighi-Shirdareh, CHTN reported.

“The world today looks at Iranian handicrafts with respect, and these honors are the result of the dedication and creativity of our hardworking artists,” Jalali-Dehkordi said.

The festival, held from Sept. 19 to 21 in the Uzbek cities of Kokand and Rishtan, featured participants from more than 70 countries and hundreds of international and local artists. Iran was represented by a 20-member delegation of artisans, the report said.

55 Iranian hotels nominated for Green Label Award

TEHRAN— A total of 55 hotels from 15 provinces and one from Kish Free Zone will compete in the first round of awarding the Green Label for Iranian Hotels, Mohammad Jahanshahi, the Secretary of the National Committee for Nature Tourism, has said.

He told Mehr News agency that the first round of awarding the Green Label for Iranian Hotels was developed by the Tourism Department of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in cooperation with the Iranian Hoteliers Association with the aim of improving sustainability indicators in the tourism supply chain, and its first round has reached the judging stage in cooperation with Department of the Environment and a group of experts.

Jahanshahi said: “Nearly 60 hotels from 15 provinces and Kish Island have registered and are competing in this event. Also, the Green Hotel Award will be awarded on basis

of the hotels’ performance and program in four indicators of optimizing water consumption, energy (electricity and gas), waste management, and social interactions with a focus on the local community.”

He stated that Mazandaran, Khorasan Razavi, Tehran and Fars provinces have the most participation in the first round of this competition, and from a group perspective, three hotel groups have had serious participation in this round.

Jahanshahi continued that the green hotel label in different countries is one of the achievements of the last two decades of global tourism, which is considered a factor in expanding the social responsibilities of this industry in relation to the environment and local communities, along with economic issues.

Archaeologists uncover early Elamite burial near Persepolis in southern Iran

TEHRAN – Archaeologists have discovered evidence of an early Elamite jar burial and traces of kiln waste at Tol-e Roubahi Kenareh, less than two km south of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Persepolis in southern Iran.

The finds were made during a project to define the boundaries and propose a protective buffer zone for the site, located in Marvdasht county, Fars province, the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (RICHT) said in a statement carried by ISNA.

Fazlollah Habibi, head of the Tol-e Roubahi Kenareh excavation team and an archaeologist at the Persepolis World Heritage Base, said the work aims to identify the settlement limits of the mound and to establish a preservation zone.

“Tol-e Roubahi [Kenareh] is one of the significant prehistoric settlements of the Marvdasht plain associated with the Banesh period (early Elamite).



It lies less than two kilometers south of Persepolis and about 1.5 kilometers northwest of the well-known site of Tol-e Bakun,” Habibi said.

He added that the project’s objectives include mapping the ancient settlement, designing protective measures against environmental and human threats, documenting discoveries, and assessing damage and environmental changes. Techniques include test trenches,

drone imaging, DGPS surveying and laboratory analysis of surface finds, he said.

Funding for the project comes from the Persepolis World Heritage Base, and the results will support emergency conservation, long-term preservation planning, and research into settlement patterns in the Marvdasht plain during the third millennium BC, Habibi said.

Thirteen test trenches mea-

suring one by one meter have so far been dug, yielding significant results, including the jar burial and dense cultural deposits of kiln waste.

Habibi said surveys indicate that contrary to earlier assumptions of a roughly square site measuring 100 by 100 meters, Tol-e Roubahi extends east-west with an estimated length of at least 200 metres and width of 100 metres, underscoring its greater scale and importance than previously believed.

Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, was founded by Darius the Great around 518 BC as the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire. The vast terrace and palatial complex, located 60 km northeast of Shiraz, was destroyed by Alexander the Great in 330 BC. Its ruins, including the Apadana Palace and the Hundred-Column Hall, are regarded as one of the world’s foremost archaeological sites.

National taskforce formed to address subsidence threat to Isfahan monuments

TEHRAN – Iran’s government cabinet has approved the formation of a National Taskforce to Combat Subsidence, which will operate under the supervision of the First Vice President, to safeguard Isfahan’s historical monuments and world heritage sites, Amir Karamzadeh, head of the Isfahan Cultural Heritage Department, said.

According to Mehr news agency, he referred to the dimensions of the land subsidence crisis in the historical texture of Isfahan and the measures taken by the province’s Cultural Heritage Department to combat this phenomenon.

“The issue of subsidence has been considered not only from the perspective of scientific circles but also at the level of the country’s macro-management, and Isfahan’s landmark buildings are seriously at risk.”

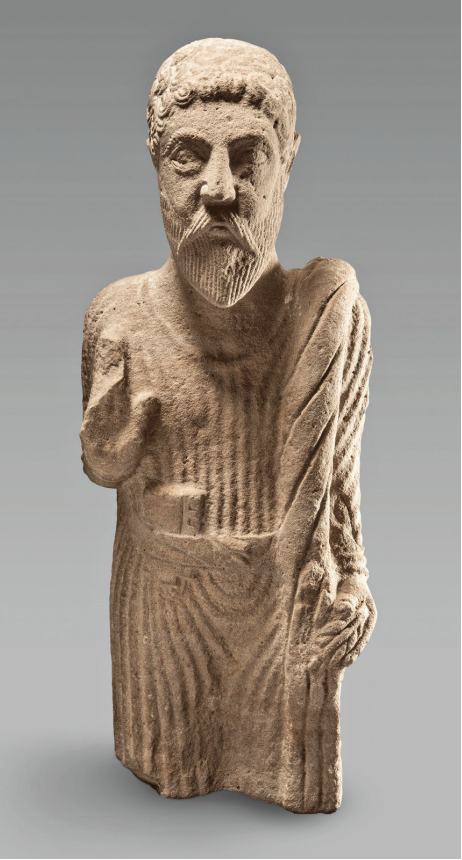
Although the announced subsidence rates in the historical areas of Isfahan have been set based on the scientific and

expert studies, he added: “We have investigated the issue of subsidence in the field and in detail in cooperation with the Watershed Management Organization and the Governorate’s Crisis Headquarters. Subsidence in the historical texture actually occurs, and its origin is the drying up of the Zayandeh River and the loss of material flow in the city.”

These aquifers fed underground water resources for centuries, but today, with widespread extraction and the cessation of the flow of the Zayandeh River, the underground aquifers have been emptied, resulting in holes in the ground that lead to subsidence, he pointed out.

“This taskforce will operate under the chairmanship of the First Vice President and is intended to provide basic solutions to contain this crisis. The formation of such taskforce shows that the issue of subsidence has gone beyond the borders of a province and has become a national concern.”

Echoes of the Past: Elymaean Worshipper Stone Statue



Being kept at the National Museum of Iran, this finely carved limestone figure depicts a man with distinct, stylized features: short, tightly curled hair arranged in semicircular ringlets, large, arresting eyes, and a long, pointed nose complemented by a full beard and mustache. His posture is one of reverence. His right arm is bent at the elbow, hand raised with an open palm in a classic gesture of worship, while his left arm hangs at his side, clasping a vegetal element—likely a palm frond or sacred branch, a common attribute for worshippers in the Parthian world.

His attire offers a remarkable glimpse into Elymaean culture. He wears a knee-length, round-necked tunic with long sleeves, cinched at the waist by a simple belt. Over this, a long, twisted sash or shawl is draped over his shoulder, falling across his chest and down his back. A fascinating detail is the rectangular object fastened to his belt, featuring holes and a ring. This is interpreted as a ceremonial key, designed to be inserted into a lock plate. The sculptor paid careful attention to the drapery, carving parallel vertical folds that break into U and V shapes below the belt to elegantly follow the contours of the body’s anatomy.

Although the lower legs and knees are lost to time, evidence of the statue’s construction remains. Two small holes with traces of iron rods beneath the tunic indicate that the legs were crafted separately and attached with metal supports—a sophisticated technique for the period. Based on comparable figures, it is almost certain he would have been shown wearing the long trousers characteristic of Parthian dress.

Ultimately, this statue is a powerful example of a widespread artistic and religious tradition. The raised right hand and open palm are a familiar motif in the art of late Parthian-era Mesopotamia, identifying him unequivocally as a worshipper. Through its exquisite craftsmanship and iconic pose, the figure provides a direct and tangible connection to the spiritual practices and artistic conventions of the ancient Elymaean people.

The Elymaeans, a semi-independent state frequently under Parthian domination, thrived from the 2nd century BCE to the early 3rd century CE in the rugged Zagros Mountains of southwestern Iran (Khuzestan). The Elymaeans were likely descendants of the ancient Elamites, worshipping a syncretic blend of Semitic and traditional Elamite deities, which is reflected in their distinct artistic and cultural identity. Renowned for their wealthy temples, which even Seleucid kings attempted to plunder, they controlled vital trade routes and maintained a persistent autonomy despite Parthian hegemony. Their kingdom was a vibrant crossroads, blending local traditions with Hellenistic and Parthian influences. The political history of Elymais, known from classical sources and numismatic evidence, is one of shifting alliances and recurring conflicts with the Seleucid and Parthian empires. This statue of a worshipper is a direct product of that sophisticated and unique culture. The final end of the Elymaean kingdom came in approximately 221 CE when it was conquered by the Sasanian king Ardashir I, marking the end of its distinct political identity and its absorption into the highly centralized Sasanian Empire.

Iranian robotics team shines at TEKNOFEST 2025

From page 1 ► TEHRAN – Iranian students have secured first and second places in the inventions and innovative technologies area in TEKNOFEST competition, showcasing new Iranian youths' capabilities in robotics, artificial intelligence, and technological innovations fields.

Hosted by Istanbul, Turkey, from September 17 to 21, the competition aimed for individuals to improve themselves in the field of robotics – electronics – coding, and to design robots suitable for specified tasks.

The Iranian team, composed of Kian Karbalei, Mehrtash Razgordani, Artin Islampahan, Seyyed Amir-Homan Tabatabaei-nejad, Samyar Reza-Soltani, Ardin Khalizadeh, Mohammad Reivandi, and Mehdi Reivandi, Mehr news agency reported.

All middle school, high school, university, and above-certified students (bachelor's degree, associate's degree, master's degree, doctorate) studying in Turkey and abroad could participate in the competition. Open education student applications were not accepted in all categories.

Under the leadership of the Turkey Technology Team Foundation (T3 Foundation) and the Ministry of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Turkey, TEKNOFEST – the world's largest



aviation, space, and technology festival – brought together millions of technology enthusiasts in Istanbul.

It provided a unique opportunity to showcase innovations and exchange knowledge. Eligible Project Areas included Inventions and innovative technologies, University research and student projects, Knowledge-based and industrial products, and Startup concepts and creative tech solutions.

Competitors with 980 projects from 56 countries, including Germany, South Korea, Uzbekistan, Russia, the Netherlands, India, Iran, the Philippines, Malaysia,

and Paraguay, participated in the event.

Recent achievements

The Iranian team named Timrad, from Khatam University, secured the first place in the Robocup 2025 Rescue Simulation League, leveraging their advanced scientific knowledge and technical expertise in artificial intelligence and robotics; the competition was held from July 15 to 21 in Salvador, Brazil.

Aichi Institute of Technology, Japan, and International Institute of Information Technology – Hyderabad, India, ranked second and third, respectively, IRNA reported.

The five-day competition brought together 2,000 participants from 40 countries. The event hosted six leagues, including RoboCup Soccer, RoboCup Rescue, RoboCup Junior, RoboCup Industrial, RoboCup @ Home, and RoboCup Flying Robots.

Iranian students aged 7-17 won second place among seven countries in the Kazakhstan RoboLand 2025, which was held from March 27 to 29 in the city of Karaganda.

The event brought together over 750 young inventors from seven countries, Kazinform News Agency reports.

The International festival drew the participation of 362 teams from Kazakhstan, Bulgaria, Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan to compete in 23 categories.

Over 2,000 children took part in elimination trials, and over 400 teams competed in the qualifying round to reach the RoboLand 2025 finals.

Roundtable discussions on the digital transformation of education: Trends and prospects were held as part of the festival to focus on the digitization of the educational process and share best practices on STEM education development.

Water year ends with some 40% less rain

TEHRAN –The previous water year (September 22, 2024 – September 22, 2025) came to an end with 142.3 mm of precipitation, showing a 39.4 percent drop compared to the long-term figure of 234.9 mm.

Within the last week of the summer, the volume of rainfall increased, and the country received 2 mm of rain, which indicates 76.9 percent more than the average long-term amount of 1.2 mm. However, it could not compensate for the rainfall deficit as precipitation was less than normal all year long, ISNA reported.

During the last month of the summer, 4.1 mm of rainfall was registered across the country, compared to the 4.2 long-term figure, a decrease of 2.5 percent.

Throughout the summer, recorded rainfall amounted to 8 mm, showing a 27.9 percent decline in comparison to the long-term figure of 11.1 mm.

Rainfall in all provinces has been less than normal. Sistan-Baluchestan and Hormozgan provinces have recorded the lowest amount of rainfall, receiving 72.5 and 70.2 percent less rain than normal, respectively.

Tehran province is also among the provinces that have experienced a significant decline in precipitation. Tehran's long-term average rainfall stands at 280.4 mm, while in the previous water year, it only received an average of 144.2 mm, which indicates a 48.6 percent Reduction.

According to official statistics, groundwater levels and dams' storage have noticeably dropped, and water stress is being felt more than ever in densely populated areas, threat-

ening water security, increasing the likelihood of land subsidence, and intensifying drought.

Iran is facing an unprecedented water crisis that threatens not only its agricultural sector but also regional stability and global food markets. Over the past decade, rivers have shrunk, dams are under stress, and groundwater reserves are being depleted faster than they can naturally recover. This scarcity impacts daily life, industrial activity, and the country's geopolitical standing.

Scale of the problem

Iran's water resources are under severe strain. Major rivers such as the Zayandeh Rud and Karun have seen dramatic reductions in flow, jeopardizing ecosystems and local agriculture.

With nearly 90% of freshwater allocated to farming, declining water availability has led to crop failures, a decrease in arable land, and increased dependence on imported food.

Cities including Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz face intermittent water rationing, affecting households, industry, and essential services. Iran shares several river basins with neighboring countries, making water scarcity a regional concern.

Tensions over shared resources have increased, while Iran's growing reliance on food imports places pressure on international markets, affecting prices and supply chains beyond the Middle East.

Government response and public concerns

Authorities have implemented measures such as dam projects, water transfer ini-



tiatives, and incentives for water-efficient irrigation. However, these efforts are often uneven or insufficient. Public protests, particularly in southern provinces, underscore the urgency and social impact of the crisis.

Opportunities for Sustainable Solutions

Experts argue that Iran must adopt integrated water resource management, invest in modern irrigation, and plan agriculture based on water availability and climate projections. Cooperation with neighboring countries could also prevent cross-border tensions and create a framework for sustainable resource sharing.

Iran's water crisis is more than a domestic challenge—it is a test of governance, resilience, and diplomacy. Effective management today can stabilize the economy, secure food supply, and enhance Iran's role as a regional leader.

In contrast, failure risks increased migration, economic disruption, and heightened regional tensions. The coming years will determine whether Iran can turn this crisis into an opportunity for innovation and cooperation or allow it to escalate into a multifaceted disaster.

SOCIETY

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Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Iran attends 21st APPCED on 'climate resilience'

TEHRAN – An Iranian delegation led by Somayyeh Rafiei, MP and the vice president of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on Environment and Development (APPCED) executive committee, participated in the 21st APPCED, held in South Korea on September 23.

Hosted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, the main theme of the conference was 'Together, for Climate Resilience'.

The event served as a platform for parliamentarians from the Asia-Pacific region to exchange ideas and best practices, as well as promote joint efforts on environmental issues. It also aimed to strengthen regional partnerships and parliamentary leadership to build a more resilient future.

Discussing the urgency of climate change and its impacts, particularly on vulnerable nations, highlighting the need for increased international support, through accessible climate finance mechanisms, were among other discussed issues.

On the sidelines of the conference, Rafiei and Woo Won-shik, the Speaker of the National Assembly of South Korea, held a meeting. The two sides underlined the importance of boosting collaborations and sharing expertise in different fields, such as the environment.

APPCED was founded in June 1993 by the Korean Parliamentary League on Children, Population, and Environment (CEP) following the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

It aimed to organize meetings among member states to address sustainable development issues and seek joint measures against environmental concerns.

Iran played host to the 17th and 19th General Assembly of APPCED in 2014 and 2018.

The 20th Executive Committee Meeting of APPCED was held on June 14-15 in Seoul, South Korea, in 2023.

Environmental diplomacy

Being transboundary, many complicated environmental challenges can be addressed

through environmental diplomacy, which means negotiations among two or more countries.

Environmental diplomacy is used globally to settle problems such as conflicts over sources of energy, water, and climate change, IRNA reported.

The fact that all the countries share the same environment necessitates fostering environmental diplomacy to settle disputes over water resources, environmental pollution, and climate change impacts.

Environmental diplomacy is an effective and required tool to mitigate and eliminate the severe consequences by fair distribution of responsibilities among involved countries as they present their national interests and solutions.

Sand and dust storms (DSDs) are a typical example of meteorological hazards in West Asia, where many countries are involved, as some generate them and some others are affected by them.

SDSs hit countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Iran, and sometimes parts of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and even Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Removing pollution from the Aras River and securing the Hirmand River water rights, as well as some wetlands, are other examples where environmental policies have been used to resolve the conflicts.

Therefore, to mitigate climate change impacts and achieve sustainable development goals, environmental policy is required to be strengthened to help Iran, as well as its neighboring countries, benefit from available resources and secure our rights at the international level.

These dust particles have devastating impacts on respiratory health and ecosystems; they result in the closure of airports, schools, and offices, affect electricity transmission infrastructures, and bring about economic losses.

Intl. Congress on Cancer Prevention slated for October

TEHRAN – Organized by the University of Zanjan, the second International Congress on Cancer Prevention is scheduled to take place from October 1 to 2, aiming to foster research collaborations with national and international educational institutions, NGOs, and ministries.

The congress will be centered around eight topics, including nutrition, genetics and technology, training and developing culture, artificial intelligence, psychological science modeling, sport sciences, and economics, IRNA reported.

The event also aims to raise public awareness, prevent and reduce cancer in the country, and improve community health.

A total of 161 out of 189 submitted articles were referred for judging. Ultimately, 101 articles by local and foreign scholars from Canada, the Netherlands, Turkey, India, Taiwan, Germany, and Armenia were accepted to be presented in the congress; 32 articles will be delivered as lectures, and 69 will be presented in the form of posters.

The congress will also host 24 key lecturers, including those from neighboring and European countries.

Preventive measures

The health ministry is planning to implement a comprehensive screening program for the early detection of the three most common, but preventable cancers (namely breast, cervical, and colon) in the country.

The program will be initially piloted in the three pilot provinces of Qom, Isfahan, and Mazandaran within the framework of the family physician program.

The target groups are the individuals aged 30 to 70 and, in some cases, those who are 40 to 75 years old, ISNA quoted Jafar Jandaqi, an official with the health ministry, as saying.

Both early and advanced tests for breast, cervical, and colon cancers are available. Six or seven months into the implementation of the program, it will be expanded all over the coun-

try, he noted.

Forty percent of the cancers can be avoided; early detection through screening will increase the chance for successful treatment and improve the life expectancy of the patients, he added.

While in other countries, screening program will only target high risk groups, like those with a family history in cancer, the health ministry intends to implement a comprehensive screening program for the aforementioned cancers throughout individuals' lives, from birth to the final years of life, within the Primary Health Care (PHC) system to be able to define treatment, and home-based palliative and care services to those in need of these services, Jandaqi noted.

The screening program will involve different service packages, including prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation packages. The health ministry will utilize modern technologies such as artificial intelligence to further promote diagnosis and offer services, the official said.

According to the health ministry, cancers are the leading causes of premature mortality in the country.

Cancers account for more than 55 thousand deaths annually. Some 34 thousand deaths out of 122 thousand premature deaths (under 70 years of age) and 11 thousand deaths out of 85 thousand very premature deaths (under 50 years of age) are caused by various cancers.

The latest national cancer census shows that the number of new cancer cases in Iran is expected to increase to 160,000 by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026), indicating an increase of 43 percent.

The first 10 most common cancers in Iran are breast, prostate, colon, stomach, lung, bladder, thyroid, uterus, brain, and spine cancers. The most common cancers of Iranian women include breast, colon, thyroid, stomach, uterine, leukemia, ovary, brain and spine, lungs, and esophagus. Around 250,000 Iranians are now living with cancer.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

56% of motorcycles running in only 5 provinces

Some 56 percent of the total motorcycles in the country are running in only five provinces.

Of all 32.9 million vehicles in the country, motorcycles amount to 11.6 million, accounting for 35 percent of the total vehicles moving in the country.

Some 56 percent of motorcycles are plying the roads in 5 provinces of Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Fars and Khuzestan.

There are 2 million motorcycles in Tehran, 1.3 million in Khorasan Razavi, 1.2 million in Isfahan, 916,000 in Fars, and 564,000 in Khuzestan.

۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت ها در ۵ استان تردد دارند

بنابر آمارها، ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت ها تنها در ۵ استان تردد می کنند. از ۳۲ میلیون و ۹۰۰ هزار دستگاه انواع وسایل نقلیه در کشور، ۱۱ میلیون و ۶۵۰ هزار دستگاه یعنی معادل ۳۵ درصد را موتورسیکلت ها شامل می شوند.

تهران بزرگ، خراسان رضوی، اصفهان، فارس و خوزستان ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت های کشور را در خود جای داده اند.

تهران بزرگ با حدود ۲ میلیون دستگاه موتورسیکلت، خراسان رضوی ۱.۳ میلیون دستگاه، اصفهان ۱.۲ میلیون دستگاه، فارس ۹۱۶ هزار دستگاه و خوزستان با ۵۶۴ هزار دستگاه موتورسیکلت بیشترین موتورسیکلت های کشور را به خود اختصاص دادند.



SEPTEMBER 25, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Knowledge is the missing goal of a believer, so obtain it
event from a man of discord.*
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:56 Evening: 18:15 Dawn: 4:32 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:55 (tomorrow)

Iranian shorts competing in Encounters Film Festival

TEHRAN- Four Iranian short films are competing in the 30th edition of the Encounters Film Festival, currently underway in Bristol, England.

"Black Scarf" by Alireza Shah-Hosseini, "Razeh Del" by Maryam Tafakory, "Pear Garden" by Shadab Shayegan and "Night of Passage" by Reza Rasouli are on screen at the different sections of the festival, which will run until September 28.

In "Black Scarf," a dedicated teacher spends his final day in a remote, abandoned village. As his students, gather around him, they request a special favor that unexpectedly alters their lives.

"Razeh Del" is a joint production of Iran, Italy, and the UK. The 2024 film, 27 minutes, is about two girls who sent a letter to the first-ever women's newspaper in Iran, titled "Zan," in 1998. While they waited to get published, they considered making an impossible film. Using citations and image intervention, "Razeh Del" journeys through parallel histories of war on images of women.

A joint production of Iran and Germany, "Pear Garden" is about six-year-old Lily, who visits her grandma after her surgery. At night, she notices her grandma's shadow near a tree with unusual, fruit-like pods. Curious, she takes some seeds from the tree and gently places them on her grandma's scars, hoping that they will help her heal and feel better.

In "Night of Passage," three friends from Tehran are left near the Austrian border by their smuggler and must spend the night in the Slovakian woods until the next vehicle arrives. Despite the dangers and hardships of their journey, their hope for a better future keeps them moving forward. As the

night unfolds, they face unexpected and life-altering events that test their resilience and unity. The story captures their struggle and determination as they navigate the uncertainties of their dangerous passage, highlighting themes of hope, survival, and the unpredictability of fate.

Encounters is a globally celebrated short film festival held each September along the picturesque harborside in Bristol, a designated UNESCO City of Film. Recognized as a qualifying event for BAFTA, BIFA, and the European Film Awards, Encounters brings together filmmakers and enthusiasts from around the world.

Rooted in Bristol's tradition of radical independence, the festival prides itself on being inclusive and welcoming. Encounters fosters a community united by a shared love of film and creativity.

Founded in 1995 to commemorate the centenary of cinema, the festival has grown to showcase thousands of innovative and boundary-pushing works, supporting emerging talents along the way. Its alumni include visionary filmmakers such as Denis Villeneuve, Lynne Ramsay, Rungano Nyoni, Julia Ducourmau, Charlotte Wells, Ruben Ostlund, Joachim Trier, Molly Manning-Walker, Radu Jude, and many others.

The festival's program features inspiring talks from industry leaders, with past keynote speakers including Hayao Miyazaki, Ray Harryhausen, Andrea Arnold, and Matt Groening.

More than just a celebration of film, Encounters is a vibrant space where chance encounters and spontaneous conversations have sparked countless creative collaborations.

Iran participates in inaugural BRICS Literary Award with three authors

TEHRAN – Iran has introduced three writers to represent the country at the inaugural BRICS Literary Award, a newly established global event.

Reza Amirkhani, Majid Gheisari, and Mansour Alimoradi are the Iranian nominees whose names have entered the long list of the event, SNN reported.

The BRICS Literary Award was founded last November by the BRICS member states. The award aims to strengthen cultural ties among member nations and to honor their traditional values and literary diversity.

Eligible works, whether in their original language or in new translations, must reflect the cultural heritage and lived experiences of their peoples. The final winner will receive not only a diploma and a special medal but also a prize of one million Russian rubles.

From the very beginning, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken an active role in this international event. According to the award's regulations, each BRICS member country may nominate three writers for the competition. In its first edition, Iran put forward three of its prominent literary figures.

The Iran Book and Literature House, in collaboration with the Cultural Counsellor's Office of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Russia, collected and submitted the nominated works to the BRICS Award Secretariat. This initiative has been part of broader efforts to support the translation and international publica-



From left: Mansour Alimoradi, Reza Amirkhani, and Majid Gheisari

tion of Iranian literature.

Reza Amirkhani, 52, is a contemporary Iranian novelist. "His Ego" is one of Amirkhani's most well-known works, having been reprinted 38 times. It has been translated into Arabic, Russian, and Turkish as well.

Amirkhani is a bestselling novelist in his homeland. His book "Salvation" was selected as the best novel in 2018 at the 11th Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards, Iran's most lucrative literary prize.

Majid Gheisari, 58, is an Iranian writer and novelist. He has won the International Eurasia Award from Russia for the premier novel "Three Priests" in 2018. Majid Gheisari has been a referee at various literary festivals in Iran.

Mansour Alimoradi is a writ-

er, poet, and cultural researcher. He has carried out extensive research on the local culture of his birthplace, Kerman Province. His other works include a short story collection, a poetry collection, and several novels. He has won numerous awards at domestic festivals for more than 15 years.

Moreover, Masoud Ahmadvand, head of the Cultural Center at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Russian Federation, is on the board of directors of the event.

The Board of Directors is the main body of the Award's strategic management and determines the composition of national expert councils and juries, and forms the Secretariat for operational management.

The BRICS Literary Award goes

beyond being merely a literary event; it serves as a platform for cultural diplomacy. By nominating its distinguished writers, Iran has introduced its literary culture and identity to the global community, created new opportunities for the translation and dissemination of Iranian works, and contributed to strengthening cultural ties among the BRICS nations.

The new award celebrates authors whose works showcase the traditions and cultural diversity of BRICS nations. The prize aims to help BRICS countries deepen mutual understanding by showcasing their history and traditions through literature.

A short list of the finalists will be released in October and the winner will be announced in November in Moscow.

Shahab Hosseini's 4th film as director "The Last Act" will hit silver screen across Iran

TEHRAN – The feature film "The Last Act," a joint production of Iran and the U.S., directed and produced by Shahab Hosseini will hit Iranian cinemas from October 1.

A 2022 production of the Seven Skies Entertainment company, the film has been screened in over 15 international festivals and gained several nominations and awards in the past three years, ISNA reported.

The film has won the Best Film awards at the Toronto International Nollywood Film Festival, the Gladiator Film Festival, and Web3 International Film Festival.

An adaptation of the play "Dernier Acte" by French novelist Gilbert Cesbron, the film's story is based on true political events that often happen in many territories, but it was written anonymously without geographical specifications. Cesbron's work is characterized by a great sensitivity to human suffering and an unwavering optimism about the possibility of change and progress.



Shot in the U.S., it tells the story of a government criticizer who is prosecuted and arrested while visiting his family. The conversation between the writer and one of the authorities leads to an unexpected ending.

Gia Mora, James Wagner, Armin Amiri, Mohammad Motalagh, Shelby Seiler, Esmaeel G. Adivi, Shailene Farabi, and Danill Vederikov are in the cast.

Shahab Hosseini, 51, is an actor, producer, director, and screenwriter. He is known for his collaborations with Iranian Academy Award-winning director Asghar Farhadi in "About Elly" (2009), "A Separation" (2011), and "The Salesman" (2016). His accolades include a Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Actor, a Silver Bear for Best Actor, and a Crystal Simorgh for Best Actor.

He has played in over 60 films and 15 TV series in more than 20 years. He has also directed four feature films, a play and a TV show. "The Last Act" is his second directing experience in the U.S. following "The Writer Is Dead".

Malta stands in solidarity with Palestine through art, culture

The Ministry for Culture, Lands and Local Government of Malta, together with Arts Council Malta and Heritage Malta, will be organizing "Qalbna Maghkom", an event of solidarity and awareness on the situation in Palestine, following Malta's official recognition of the State of Palestine.

"Today, the struggle for awareness and humanity cannot be excluded from the cultural sphere. When we conceived the idea of 'Qalbna Maghkom', we wanted art to become a voice of solidarity and reflection," The Minister for Cultural Heritage, Lands, and Local Government, Owen Bonnici, stated.

"With Malta having officially recognized the State of Palestine, this event reaffirms our commitment to pursue peace through dialogue. Moreover, the Grand Master's Palace will be open free of charge to all those attending," Lovin Malta quoted Bonnici as saying.

"We approached groups who hold this cause close to their

hearts, among them Moviment Graffiti, Justice for Palestine, and the Embassy of Palestine in Malta, so that together we could strengthen this message of solidarity and hope. This event offers a space for reflection and solidarity through art," the minister added.

Arts Council Malta Chief Executive Luke Dalli explained: "We felt the need to support this event because we firmly believe that art has the power to stir awareness, to bring people together and that in moments like these, culture can become a bridge between our nation's values and the aspirations of a people who have long sought recognition and peace".

"We do not see this event merely as an evening of performance, but as a moment when art becomes a universal language of unity and hope. We see it as a moment of moral and social responsibility, a moment where a small country like ours can show that its heart is large enough to stand with the Pales-

tinian people," he noted.

Heritage Malta's Chief Executive, Noel Zammit, remarked: "When war is only something your ancestors have lived through or something you hear about on the news happening to people far away, it is impossible to truly grasp its cruelty. This is why, through some of the sites and museums under its care, Heritage Malta works to remind us of the horrors of war and the need to strive for peace. The agency's participation in this event further underlines its commitment to ensuring that humanity learns from its mistakes, leaving wars to stain the pages of history, but not the present nor the future".

The event will take place on Saturday, September 27, from 6:30 p.m. onwards at the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta.

Under the artistic direction of Daniel Cauchi and Yanis Azzopardi, the program will include Akshara, a multidisciplinary exhibition by Benji Cachia; a performance by Jolene Samhan and her band; readings of Palestinian au-

thors' works presented by Inizjamed; a photography exhibition by Rene Rossignaud with images direct from Gaza; a performance by the Palestinian Youth Group; and the installation "Lest We Forget" by local artist Michell Borge.

The ongoing Israeli assault on Gaza has continued relentlessly into its 717th day on Monday, marked by indiscriminate aerial and artillery bombardment. With full political and military backing from the United States and a deafening silence from the international community, Israel's campaign has resulted in widespread destruction and mass civilian casualties.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry, the death toll since Israel launched its genocide on the Strip in October 2023, has risen to 65,283 Palestinians, with 166,575 injured and over 9,000 still missing. Famine conditions have already claimed hundreds of lives, and over 2 million people remain forcibly displaced amid total infrastructural collapse.

Cartoon of Day



Trump

Cartoonist: Fares Garabet from Germany