

# 'US Betrayed Diplomacy Europe Buried it'

Iranian officials decry UNSC vote as 'illegal' farce, vow snapback will fail



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UN Security Council members veto a Russia-China resolution to delay Iran sanctions reimposition during the UNGA in New York, on September 26, 2025.

## Innocent lives at risk as international community fails on human rights: Pezeshkian

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian returned to Tehran on Saturday after addressing the 80th UN General Assembly in New York, sharply criticizing the international community for its failure to protect civilians from the actions of the Zionist regime.

"The fact that innocent people are being killed while humanitarian aid is blocked exposes the false face of those who claim to defend human rights," he said. ► Page 3

## 'Israel a threat to all', Larijani says in Beirut during commemoration of Hezbollah late leaders

TEHRAN – Iran's top security official Ali Larijani has warned that the Zionist regime poses a threat to all countries in the region, emphasizing that recent developments—including the attack in Qatar—have made Israel's aggressive behavior increasingly clear.

Larijani made the remarks upon his arrival in Beirut on Saturday, where he is attending ceremonies commemorating Hezbollah's fallen leaders, including Hassan Nasrallah and Hashem Safi al-Din.

Speaking to reporters, Larijani said that the purpose of his visit is not only to honor Lebanon's martyrs but also to reaffirm Tehran's support for the country's Resistance movement and its historic role in defending Lebanon. "Lebanon may be a small country, but it has a strong nation. The Resistance was born out of the Lebanese people and today stands as a fortress against Israel, a source of pride for the entire Islamic world," he said. ► Page 2

## Gustavo Petro revives Colombia's Bolivarian legacy

By staff writer

TEHRAN – Colombian President Gustavo Petro has placed his country firmly at the heart of the global struggle for justice, using his appearance at the United Nations General Assembly in New York to call for decisive international action in support of Palestine.

His speech on Tuesday, which invoked Simón Bolívar's legacy of liberation, resonated widely across the Global South and provoked an immediate reaction from Washington.

In his address to the Assembly, Petro rejected what he described as U.S. and NATO-driven "tyranny and totalitarianism," insisting that the world could not remain passive in the face of genocide. "We need a powerful army of the countries that do not accept genocide," he declared. "We must liberate Palestine. I invite the armies of Asia, the great Slavic people who defeated Hitler with great heroism, and the Latin American armies of Bolívar." ► Page 5

## 'My father, then my husband': One woman's sacrifices for Iran

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – Soraya Kazemi is among the thousands of Iranian millennials who lost their fathers during Iraq's invasion of Iran. Her father, a soldier at the time, passed away shortly after being exposed to Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons – weapons that were provided by Germany, and put to use based on American intelligence.

"My father was martyred when I was four. Living without a father was hard. But I learned to live with his memories, even if those memories weren't mine," she explained.

When Soraya was in her early 20s, she met Gholam-Ali Najafi, a young member of Iran's Army. They married in the early 2000s and went on to have three children: two daughters and one son. I asked if she hesitated at all to marry a military man, given her experience of losing her father. "No, I wasn't concerned about the dangers of his job," she replied. "That's because I didn't really think that we would encounter another war after the one with Saddam."



Soraya Kazemi (R) holds onto her late husband's portrait during a ceremony honoring air defense martyrs of war with Israel

Soraya explained that life with a member of the military, nonetheless, still presented its challenges. Gholam-Ali served in the Army's air defense unit, which required him

to move to different provinces and work long hours. "He was a good husband and father, but work was still his number one priority," she said. "He told me that he had a big responsibility as a member of the Army, and he must do anything he can to ensure the safety of the Iranian people."

Despite the birthdays, New Year celebrations, and difficult days she had to spend apart from her husband, Soraya was still thankful that at the end of the day, she had him by her side. But reality had proved different on the Wednesday morning I met her at the headquarters of the northern unit of Iran's Air Defense Force. We were there for a ceremony honoring the seven servicemen martyred during Israel's June war against Iran. One of the martyrs revered that day was Gholam-Ali, Soraya's beloved husband. ► Page 2

## Message on World Tourism Day

By Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpey  
Deputy tourism minister

September 27, World Tourism Day, reminds us of the unique and irreplaceable role of tourism in connecting nations, fostering cultural understanding, strengthening social cohesion, and driving economic prosperity. Today, tourism is not merely a recreational or economic activity; it is a strategic instrument for sustainable development and for building a greener, more humane future for all societies.

This year's UN Tourism theme, "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation," underlines once again that the future of this industry depends on respect for nature, protection of the environment, wise use of resources, and responsibility toward the needs of future generations. ► Page 6



## Martyrdom anniversary of Nasrallah: Intersections of popular and political discourse

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — The first anniversary of the assassination of Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah became a transnational event, bringing together the deep popular sentiment on the one hand and its political and regional dimensions on the other.

The commemorations and events that swept Beirut, the Bekaa, and the South were not merely a commemoration of a departed leader; rather, they embodied the continued presence of a figure who had become a unifying symbol for the resistance's supporters and allies. ► Page 5



Exclusive Interview  
South African journalist: Israel's war on media is a 'deliberate massacre'

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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.*

## Farhikhtegan: Hypocritical game between Europe and US

In a note, Farhikhtegan addressed the statements of European officials now that the Chinese-Russian draft resolution to delay snapback sanctions against Iran failed at the UN Security Council. It wrote: These statements show a hypocritical game intended to blame Iran for the failure of the negotiations. Europe put forward conditions for Iran that Iran complied with, but after implementing these conditions, Europe and the United States effectively brought the negotiations to a deadlock by proposing new conditions, including Iran's missiles and its regional influence. In an interview with Israel's Channel 12, Macron claimed that Iran's proposals to stop the snapback were reasonable, but we did not accept these proposals because "Araghchi's words are not the words of the entire Iranian government." These excuses showed that the European side had been proposing conditions from the beginning in order to avoid an agreement and buy more legitimacy in the media to activate the snapback. Moreover, the announcement of such opposition from an Israeli channel also sheds more light on the background of such positions. The activation of the snapback, which will lead to the return of international sanctions against Iran, was designed from the beginning as a tool to put pressure on Iran. Europe and the United States tried to justify this mechanism by proposing unreasonable conditions and then blaming Iran.

### Hamshahri: Importance of nuclear power plants

Hamshahri wrote: In a situation where the Israeli-Western axis has tried in recent years to characterize Iran's peaceful nuclear activities as a military program, Iran's forward steps in nuclear power generation pave the way to mitigate electricity shortage. While Western parties have tried in recent years to turn uranium enrichment costly for Iran, enriched uranium has a variety of applications that have made the importance of continuing this process a strategic advantage. Today, it is clear to everyone that nuclear power plants have a very long lifespan and numerous advantages, and their advantages cannot be ignored. This is while shortage in electricity production and the pollution resulting from fossil-fueled power plants have doubled the necessity of nuclear power plants in Iran; an issue that has become a strategic priority for the Atomic Energy Organization in recent years, and important steps have been taken in this area, both domestically

## IAEA silence showed alignment with Israel in striking Tehran: Iran nuclear chief

TEHRAN – Iran's nuclear chief has strongly criticized the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for failing to condemn June Israeli strikes on the country's nuclear facilities, warning that such silence effectively aligns the agency with the attacks and undermines trust.

Mohammad Eslami, Vice President of Iran and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), made the remarks on the sidelines of World Nuclear Week in Moscow. He said the IAEA's inaction following the strikes was unacceptable and raised serious questions about the body's impartiality.

"The IAEA's refusal to condemn the Israeli regime's attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities means it was coordinated with the military strike — that it is part of the military attack," Eslami told reporters, in comments carried by Iranian media.

He explained that Iran's parliament has enacted a clear law requiring national institutions to act when IAEA-registered and safeguarded sites are attacked. "When our facilities under IAEA supervision are hit and neither the Agency, the UN Security Council, nor the Board of Governors condemns it, what does that mean? It means they are complicit," he said.

Eslami argued that Iran cannot place trust in international institutions that fail to respond to acts of aggression. "This is directly tied to our national security. The IAEA was legally obliged to condemn these attacks. We informed the Agency in writing, reported under the safeguards system, and expected action under its own Statute. Failure to condemn is itself a cause of mistrust," he said.

and in the field of international cooperation.

### Ham Mihan: American goal in negotiation is to convince its public opinion

In an interview with Hossein Beheshtipour, a senior expert on international politics, Ham Mihan discussed Witkoff's goal in negotiating with Iran and wrote: Witkoff seeks to convince public opinion. Public opinion is very important for America; what the American people think, especially when they hear that Iran has made a good offer, but the American side is not willing to negotiate with it. So he immediately says that we are willing to negotiate and that Iran should come and accept direct negotiations and be willing to negotiate. This does not mean that he is really looking for a solution, but rather he is looking to convince public opinion that he is not looking for war and conflict and does not want to show himself as an abnormal person. Negotiations may not necessarily lead to the result we want. Negotiations do not mean that our enemy will definitely want to negotiate and reach an agreement. You can negotiate, but you don't reach an agreement. In this situation, some people say, "What a fool you are to want to negotiate and not reach a result," when negotiation is the result itself, meaning that you show that you are a talker and are looking for diplomatic solutions, but you may not reach the result you want.

### Javan: Ridicule and demonstrations

Javan wrote about Netanyahu's speech at the UN General Assembly. It said: In his speech, Netanyahu once again tried to justify the crimes of the Zionist army in Gaza and attacks on Islamic countries as actions to combat terrorism. He also claimed that Israel is carrying out these actions on behalf of the world so that other nations can live in peace and security. He even claimed that Tel Aviv is helping the residents of Gaza with humanitarian aid, but Hamas is stealing them, a claim that was met with ridicule and laughter from the audience. As expected, political delegations left their seats and protests took place outside the organization's headquarters demonstrating global hatred of Israel. Netanyahu, holding his usual drawings that presented Iran and resistance groups as threats to world peace. This time he tried to ask questions and with multiple-choice answers that Iran and resistance groups in Gaza, Yemen, and Lebanon are all threats to the international system that must be countered with.

On the future of Iran's cooperation with the IAEA, the AEOI chief was clear: "Our law is explicit, and until its conditions are met, cooperation will not resume. The Foreign Ministry has also set conditions. Any dialogue and agreement reached with the Agency must be pursued on the basis of those conditions."

Turning to ongoing negotiations more broadly, Eslami stressed that Iran views talks as genuine dialogue, not predetermined outcomes. "Negotiation means discussion and agreement. If you declare the result in advance, that is not negotiation. Real talks must have an agenda and produce balanced, fair, and appropriate decisions," he said.

"This is the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Eslami added. "Anyone who speaks of negotiations must demonstrate the will and readiness to act accordingly."

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

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

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

# ‘My father, then my husband’: One woman’s sacrifices for Iran

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – Soraya Kazemi is among the thousands of Iranian millennials who lost their fathers during Iraq's invasion of Iran. Her father, a soldier at the time, passed away shortly after being exposed to Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons – weapons that were provided by Germany, and put to use based on American intelligence.

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*Soraya Kazemi (2nd R) holds onto her late husband's portrait during a ceremony honoring air defense martyrs of war with Israel*

martyred during Israel's June war against Iran. One of the martyrs revered that day was Gholam-Ali, Soraya's beloved husband.

Second Brigadier General Gholam-Ali Najafi had become a well-respected figure within Iran's Air Defense Force over his nearly two-and-a-half decades of service. He was particularly known for dedicating his life to the defenses surrounding the Fordow nuclear site, near the Iranian city of Qom, one of his colleagues told me. "General Najafi had devoted his life to safeguarding Iranian nuclear sites. Most recently, he had become a member of the logistics team," he added. General Najafi was martyred on June 15, the third day of the war, during the enemy's strikes on Fordow. It was unclear to me whether he was repairing the damaged defense systems or operating one of them at the time of the attack.

Years after losing her father, Soraya has now lost her husband to the same forces. Just as Saddam was a proxy attacking Iran on behalf of the U.S., so too was Israel, which struck Iranian nuclear, military, and civilian infrastructure during 12

days of illegal and unwarranted aggression.

"Even when the war had started, I didn't think I would lose my husband. When I talked to him on the phone, he was always in a rush, but he didn't seem scared or anything like that. I later found out that anyone who was in air defense units knew they were the first in the line of fire," she stated. "I cannot tell you that losing my husband hasn't been difficult. We have spent extremely difficult days during the past couple of months. But at the same time, I know Gholam-Ali sacrificed himself for something he loved the most: his country and his people."

Speaking to Soraya and some of the other family members of the martyrs during the ceremony was deeply emotional. Watching the videos that the headquarters had prepared and displayed during the ceremony was also profoundly sad. Like Soraya, I found it difficult to accept that people had died in a war that took place in 2025. But when I looked at all the soldiers present, most of whom had worked alongside the martyrs during those 12 days, I didn't see

sadness, regret, disbelief, or fear. I saw determination.

"There was a soldier who served during the 12-day war. He was completing his two years of mandatory military service, which all able-bodied men in Iran must fulfill," said one of the commanders present at the ceremony. "He was scheduled to be discharged last week. He came to me crying, saying he didn't want to leave because he had heard that Israel might attack Iran again soon. I only discharged him after he made me promise him that I would take him back if another war occurs," he told me.

The commander emphasized that while the military mourns its martyrs, no one believes the fight is anywhere near over. "What they want is for Iran to give up all its power, not just its nuclear capabilities. They want our sovereignty and integrity," he explained. "But I want the people to know that we are ready. We have never been more prepared to defend our country."

He added that since the war halted on June 25, Iran has both increased its strengths, and addressed its weaknesses.

## ‘Israel a threat to all’, Larijani says in Beirut during commemoration of Hezbollah late leaders



*Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani arrived in Beirut on September 27, 2025, met with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri (L), and addressed a press conference (R).*

From page 1 ▶ The Iranian official noted that the interval between his previous visit to Beirut and this one has seen significant developments in the region. "The behavior of the Zionist regime has become much clearer to all nations. What Martyr Nasrallah warned about decades ago is now evident to everyone," Larijani said. He highlighted that regional countries are increasingly seeking mechanisms for cooperation in response to shared threats, calling such collaboration "the correct approach" and affirming Iran's full support for it.

Larijani also praised the historical ties between Iran and Lebanon, emphasizing that friendship between the two nations has deepened in recent years. "We have always supported the presence of strong, independent governments," he said. "We hope that developments

in Lebanon will always serve the interests of its people and create conditions for forming a strong and independent government."

During his visit, Larijani also met with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam. Moreover, he participated in memorial events honoring Hezbollah leaders and fighters, highlighting the ongoing significance of the Resistance movement in Lebanon's security and political landscape.

At a press conference, Larijani underscored Hezbollah's central role in countering Israeli aggression, praising the late Nasrallah as a visionary who recognized the threat of Israel decades ago and built a movement of young fighters capable of defending Lebanon. "What Hassan Nasrallah understood decades ago is now visible across

the region. He foresaw the danger posed by Israel and put a plan into action that produced a strong, resilient generation," Larijani said.

Addressing speculation that Iran provides Hezbollah with weapons or issues direct orders, Larijani dismissed such claims. "Hezbollah does not need weapons from elsewhere; it is already strong enough. Sheikh Naim Qassem is a respected leader who determines what is in Lebanon's best interest. We support his approach but do not give orders to anyone," he said.

On the possibility of an Israeli attack on Iran, Larijani warned: "We are prepared for all scenarios. But I do not think the Israelis will act so foolishly. If they attack, we will respond decisively." He also welcomed dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Hezbollah, describing it as a "positive and necessary step" given shared

regional threats.

Larijani highlighted the importance of national unity in Lebanon, warning against external attempts to sow internal discord. "The Lebanese are a mature and independent people. There is no need for Americans to act as guardians over Lebanon. Such interference is unacceptable. A proud Lebanese will not give up his interests under foreign pressure," he said.

He also noted efforts to rebuild homes destroyed in Israeli attacks and reiterated Iran's support for Lebanon's sovereignty. "The Resistance is a major asset for the Islamic world, and Lebanon stands strong despite its small size. The determination of its people, especially the younger generation, ensures Hezbollah's place at the heart of Muslim solidarity against Israel," Larijani said.



# ‘US betrayed diplomacy. Europe buried it’

Iranian officials decry UNSC vote as ‘illegal’ farce, vow snapback will fail

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – After a controversial voting at the UN Security Council on Friday, senior Iranian officials have inveighed against the decision to reimpose pre-JCPOA UN sanctions on the country, labeling the move an “immoral and illegal” act of bad faith that undermines international law and diplomacy.

The vote rejected a Russian and Chinese draft resolution that would have extended sanctions relief for Iran for six months, thereby preventing the incoming reimposition, or “snapback,” of all previous UN sanctions. The so-called snapback mechanism was triggered in late August by Britain, France, and Germany (the E3), despite these countries being original signatories to the JCPOA, the 2015 nuclear deal they have worked to dismantle during the recent months of diplomatic disputes over the issue.

Iranian President Masound Pezeshkian, meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in New York, denounced the move as the direct result of American pressure and European capitulation. “The implementation of the snapback mechanism and return of sanctions, despite Iran’s compliance and opposition from Russia and China, is both immoral and illegal,” Pezeshkian stated. He urged the UN chief to use his authority to prevent this action, which he argued rewards American unilateralism and punishes Iranian compliance.

The President also contrasted the swift move to sanction Iran with the Security Council’s continued failure to stop Israel’s ongoing genocide in Gaza, an accusation first put forth against the regime by the International Court of Justice, and confirmed by the UN itself this month. Pezeshkian said there is a glaring double standard in the international body’s application of justice.

Iran’s Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, was even more pointed in his remarks following the vote. Addressing journalists, he laid out a methodical case against the E3 and the United States,



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaks to reporters following the UNSC vote on Friday

placing the blame for the current crisis squarely on their shoulders. “Today’s crisis is the direct result of U.S. withdrawal and Europe’s inaction. The U.S. betrayed diplomacy. The E3 buried it,” Araghchi declared.

He reminded the world that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued 15 consecutive reports confirming Iran’s full compliance with the 2015

after the E3 failed to honor their own economic promises to Tehran.

Araghchi also highlighted the context of “state terrorism” – referring to the June U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities and the assassination of scientists – that Iran endured without a word of condemnation from its European counterparts. Despite this, he noted, Iran continued to

argued, declaring the snapback “illegal, void, and has no standing.” He concluded with a warning: “Military attacks have failed. Snapback will fail, too. The only solution is dialogue... Iran will never bow to pressure. We respond only to respect.”

In a clear sign of Tehran’s displeasure, the Iranian Foreign Ministry announced on Saturday that it has summoned its ambassadors to Germany, France, and the UK for consultations.

The JCPOA, a landmark agreement reached in 2015 after years of negotiation, saw Iran agree to stringent limits on its nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of punishing sanctions. The deal was unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council in Resolution 2231.

The current crisis began in 2018 when the Trump administration unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the agreement and reimposed harsh sanctions. While the E3 initially expressed regret, they ultimately failed to create a financial mechanism to shield legitimate trade with Iran from U.S. penalties, effectively reneging on their own commitments. After patiently waiting for over a year, Iran began a gradual and reversible reduction of its JCPOA obligations.

The “snapback” mechanism, a provision within Resolution 2231, was designed to automatically reimpose sanctions if Iran was found to be in violation of the deal. However, the E3’s use of this mechanism is considered highly contentious, as the U.S., having left the deal, claims it no longer participates, while Iran and other signatories argue the European move is an abuse of process aimed at killing the agreement for good.

Iran has said that once the UN sanctions return, it would dump the deal it signed with the IAEA in Cairo, and indefinitely suspend cooperation with the nuclear agency. Lawmakers, however, have asked for more measures, like leaving the Non-Proliferation (NPT) Treaty.

## Russia and China say UNSC vote on snapback a ‘lost opportunity’

The Russian and Chinese delegations at the United Nations Security Council did not mince words following the failure of their draft resolution that called for a six-month sanctions relief extension for Iran, expressing deep regret and placing the blame for the diplomatic collapse on the United States, United Kingdom, and France.

Dmitry Polyanskiy, Russia’s Deputy Ambassador to the UN, criticized those who voted against the resolution for lacking “courage or the wisdom.” He argued that the vote was a clear attempt by the U.S., UK, and France to “definitively dismantle the nuclear deal and to bury the diplomatic path.” He warned that “all responsibility for any consequences of today’s vote ... lies squarely with those states that did not support our draft.”

China’s Deputy UN Envoy, Geng Shuang, expressed “deep regret” and emphasized that dialogue is the “only viable option.” He directly called on the U.S. to “demonstrate political will” by responding to Iran’s offers for talks and halting military threats. He also urged the E3 to “abandon their approach of pushing for sanctions and coercive pressure against Iran.”

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). He detailed how Iran only began scaling back its own commitments a full year after the U.S. illegally withdrew from the deal in 2018, and only

act in good faith, recently signing a new cooperation framework with the IAEA on September 9.

“The E3, having breached the deal, cannot claim ‘significant non-performance,’” Araghchi

## Iran sentences four in Mossad, MKO espionage case

TEHRAN – Iran’s judiciary has handed down preliminary verdicts against four members of a Mossad- and MKO-linked espionage network in Alborz province, sentencing two to execution and imprisonment and the other two to prison terms totaling more than 26 years.

Hossein Fazeli-Harikandi, Chief Justice of Alborz province, confirmed the ruling on Saturday, saying the case was tried following a series of hearings.

The network consisted of two men from Karaj and a couple from Isfahan, who, according to the court, had been recruited through online contacts and trips to a neighboring western country. They reportedly established links with Mossad officers and MKO handlers, underwent training in secure communications, cyber activity, navigation, target identification, and the construction of explosive projec-

tiles and launch systems.

Authorities said the group carried out sabotage operations, including arson at military and public facilities, sending videos of their actions in exchange for cryptocurrency payments.

Fazeli-Harikandi added that in May, while under surveillance, the network received new orders to attack a military facility in Tehran. They were instructed in building curved-flight explosive projectiles, mapping launch points, and documenting their targets. Before carrying out the attack, two members were arrested with ten ready-to-launch explosive devices. Their confessions led to the capture of two other operatives. Security forces later seized additional munitions, explosives, and mortar-making materials from their homes in Karaj, Isfahan, and a safe house in Tehran.



The defendants were charged with moharebeh (waging war against God), collaboration with hostile groups and the Zionist regime, assembly and collusion against national security, membership in a criminal group with the aim of undermining security, and propaganda against the system.

The judiciary chief noted that the suspects were apprehended a month before the June terrorist attack by the Zionist regime on Iran. He stressed that the ruling is preliminary and subject to appeal, with the case to be referred to the Supreme Court if the defendants challenge the verdicts.

into chaos, and international organizations, including the UN Security Council, have not issued a single ruling against it due to U.S. vetoes,” Pezeshkian stated.

Commenting on broader human rights issues, he added, “The spectacle unfolding in the region reminds us that proclamations about human rights and women’s rights are often nothing more than rhetoric.”

Pezeshkian emphasized that during his UN visit, he held extensive talks with many European nations to present Iran’s positions. “We spoke with numerous European countries,

and they expressed opposition to the Zionist regime’s behavior in the region,” he said. He further noted that discussions over the snapback mechanism were reaching positive outcomes, but U.S. opposition blocked final agreements.

Addressing U.S. policies toward Iran, Pezeshkian said, “America seeks a weak and submissive Iran. Today, the nuclear issue is used as an excuse; tomorrow, they will find another pretext. The Iranian people have realized that through unity and solidarity, Iran will be built stronger than ever.”

# IRAN IN FOCUS

SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## SPORTS

### Iran could make history at 2025 FIVB World Championship

TEHRAN – The 2025 FIVB Men’s Volleyball World Championship was poised to be a landmark event for Iran’s national team, with a promising squad and a favorable draw that many believed would pave the way for a historic medal.

However, the team’s journey ended unexpectedly in the quarterfinals after a 3-1 loss to the Czech Republic, leaving fans and analysts reflecting on what could have been.

Placed in a relatively easy group with Egypt, Tunisia, and the Philippines, Iran’s path to the later stages appeared straightforward. Yet, the team were taken by surprise in their opening match against Egypt, and a nervy win over the Philippines exposed early vulnerabilities. Despite a thrilling comeback against Serbia, one of Iran’s best performances of the tournament, the loss to the Czech Republic highlighted several persistent issues, particularly in mental fortitude and tactical execution.

One of the most significant critiques following Iran’s early exit was the team’s psychological resilience. As pointed out by Mahmoud Afshardoust, a former volleyball federation official, “Our team need to work on mental strength. As coach Piazza said after the game, this is an area where we must improve.” The mental side of the game played a crucial role, especially when Iran failed to capitalize on important leads during the match against the Czech Republic, notably in the second set, a pivotal turning point. This lack of composure under pressure ultimately cost them the match.

While the players themselves must shoulder part of the blame, the role of the coaching staff has also come under scrutiny. Critics have pointed to coach Roberto Piazza’s in-game management, specifically his delayed substitutions, which may have contributed to the team’s inability to maintain momentum in high-stress moments.

Despite running a professional and structured training program, his tactical adjustments during critical phases were seen as inadequate. However, his overall vision and discipline indicate that with better support from the federation, Iran’s long-term prospects remain promising.

Despite the early exit, finishing among the top eight teams in the world is still a notable achievement on paper.

However, considering the favorable circumstances, many see this as a missed historic opportunity. Looking ahead, Iran’s future success depends on improving key aspects of their game, particularly defense, receiving, and mental preparation. As noted by Afshardoust, “We had a great chance, and a historic moment was within our reach, but unfortunately, it didn’t materialize.”

If lessons are learned from this campaign and the necessary adjustments are made, the team can emerge stronger in future competitions.

### Iran’s motto at 2025 Asian Youth Games unveiled

TEHRAN – Iran’s National Olympic Committee (NOC) has unveiled its official motto for the 2025 Asian Youth Games.

The motto is “Hope of Iran” in the Games.

Iran handball federation president Alireza Pakdel is the Games’ chef de mission.

The third Asian Youth Games will mark the first time Bahrain hosts an Asian Games event for the youth category, welcoming participants from 45 countries who will compete in 24 sports and 253 competitions across various venues in the country.

The third edition of the Games, a pan-Asian multi-sport event to be held in Bahrain from Oct. 22 to 31, 2025. It will mark the first time the edition to be held since the last in 2013.

### Hassan Yazdani to miss Islamic Solidarity Games

TEHRAN – Iranian freestyle wrestler Hassan Yazdani will be absent in the 2025 Islamic Soli-

darity Games.

Yazdani underwent shoulder surgery following his silver medal achievement at the Paris 2024 Olympics.

Iran’s freestyle wrestling coach, Pejman Dorostkar, announced that Yazdani is not yet ready for returning to the mat.

The wrestler has previously missed the 2025 World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia, to minimize the risk of re-injury.

Yazdani won a gold medal in the 74kg weight class at the 2016 Rio Olympics and secured two silver medals at subsequent Olympics—Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024—in the 86kg category. Nicknamed “The Greatest,” Yazdani plans to continue his career in the 92kg or 97kg division.

### Mohun Bagan seek venue shift for Sepahan’s tie

TEHRAN – Mohun Bagan Super Giants, who are scheduled to travel to Iran for their second AFC Champions League group-stage fixture against Sepahan SC on September 30, has requested Asian Football Confederation to shift the venue.

All Mohun Bagan players have been granted e-visas for Iran but the Indian team is going to face Sepahan in neutral field.

AFC has not accepted the request and now the decision rests with Mohun Bagan: whether to travel to Iran or not.

If they skip the fixture, the consequences could be severe. Last season, Mohun Bagan had refused to travel to Iran due to political unrest in the country. On that occasion, the AFC refrained from imposing sanctions but forfeited the club’s remaining group-stage matches.

This time, while the context is different, there is a possibility that the AFC could take a stricter stance, although the final call will depend on discussions between the two parties.

### Yousefinezhad joins Halden Toppåndball handball team

TEHRAN – Iran international handball right back Amin Yousefinezhad is Halden Toppåndball’s newest signing.

The 29-year-old player has over 50 international appearances for the Iranian national team.

The 1.96-meter right back has solid international experience from RK Metalurg Skopje, Espérance Sportive de Tunis, and over 50 international caps for Iran.

Head coach Victor Skillhammar highlights Amin’s physique, agility, and experience as valuable additions to a young HTH squad.

He will also be an important replacement for Jørgen Jansrud, who is unfortunately out for the entire season.

### Iran U20 crowned champions of 2025 World Beach Wrestling

TEHRAN – Iran’s U20 team won the title of the 2025 World Beach Wrestling Championships in Greece.

The Iranian team won two gold and two bronze medals in the event.

Ramtin Ravanbakhsh in 90kg and Mersad Shakeri in +90kg won two gold medals. Mohammad Hossein Nikpour in 70kg and Sajad Hosseini in 80kg claimed two bronzes.

Iran team won the title with 77 points, followed by Moldova (57) and Ukraine (55).

Iran U17 had also won the title in the competition.

The event took place at the foot of legendary Mount Olympus at the Aloha Beach Bar in Katerini, Greece, on September 25-26.



## Agriculture exports jump 32% as sector shows recovery

Tehran – Iran's agriculture exports rose by 32 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended in late March), Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Qezeljeh said on Saturday.

According to the official, the sector grew by 5.6 percentage points last year, rebounding from a negative 2.4 percent contraction to reach positive growth of 3.2 percent.

Speaking at the opening of the National Conference on the New Crop Year, Nouri said the improvement exceeded the 5.5 percent growth target set under Iran's Seventh National Development Plan.

The trade deficit in agriculture also narrowed by \$3.0 billion, improving from minus \$11 billion to minus \$8.0 billion, he said.

"This is a big step in the economic development of the agricultural sector," Nouri added, noting that the gains marked a shift in both production and external trade.

The minister credited farmers' management and resilience during drought conditions, saying no food shortages occurred and domestic demand was met, including during the New Year season without reliance on public funds.

The minister outlined several outcomes in the latest crop year, including a reduction in foreign currency demand for basic imports from \$16.4 billion to \$8.0 billion, saving \$1.0 billion in debt repayments, a 27 percent rise in sugar output moving toward self-sufficiency, a 12 percent increase in fish farming, and a 27 percent expansion



in aquaculture.

He said Iran is planning for self-sufficiency in tropical fruits, especially bananas, to reduce import dependency. Distribution of farm inputs in rural and nomadic areas rose by 22 percent, while the penetration of subsidized inputs among villagers increased by 29 percent.

Other achievements included a seven percent increase in raw milk production, a 54 percent rise in tropical fruit output, a 15 percent growth in input production, a 69 percent expansion in insurance coverage, and participation in 230 international events.

Future plans include self-sufficiency in meat production and reducing import reliance, Nouri said, though challenges such as water scarcity remain. He emphasized the use of modern technology to boost efficiency in water use and resource management.

## Sponge iron export up 41% in 5 months on year

TEHRAN- The value of Iran's sponge iron export rose 41 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA).

As ISPA reported, the country's sponge iron export also indicates 53 percent rise in terms of weight during the five-month period, as compared to the same time span in the previous year.

Direct reduced iron (DRI), also called sponge iron, is produced from the direct reduction of iron ore (in the form of lumps, pellets, or fines) into iron by reducing gas or elemental carbon produced from natural gas or coal. Many ores are suitable for direct reduction.

While Iran is fighting the U.S. severe sanctions on its economy, and the country's different in-

dustrial and economic sectors have been affected by the limitations and difficulties caused by the sanctions condition, the country's mining sector is moving forward noticeably, overcoming such barriers.

Among the mining sector's different products, sponge iron is an outstanding example, as the production of this item is rising more and more in the country.

Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Iran's largest metals and mining holding, has stated that one of the most important reasons for the increase in sponge iron production in Iran is the establishment of new sponge iron plants, adding that in recent years, with its new strategy and with the participation of the private sector, the organization has been able to launch several projects to produce sponge iron.

## Nearly 79m passengers moved by public transport fleet in H1

Tehran – Nearly 79 million passengers traveled across Iran's roads in the first six months of this year using the country's public transport fleet, the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization said.

Dariyush Bagherjavan, head of the organization's passenger transport office, said more than 7.38 million intercity trips were recorded, reflecting a 17 percent increase compared with the same period last year.

He called the surge a clear sign of growing public demand for road-based public transport.

He added that intercity bus and coach trips rose by more than 20 percent in September

## Annual inflation rises to 37.5% in September

Tehran – Iran's annual inflation rate reached 37.5 percent in the last month of summer (August 23-September 22), up 1.2 percentage points from the previous month, the Statistical Center of Iran said.

The consumer price index (CPI) stood at 384.6, marking a 3.8 percent rise compared with a month earlier.

Year-on-year inflation, or point-to-point inflation, was 45.3 percent, meaning households paid nearly half as much more for a comparable basket of goods and services

compared with the same month last year.

Monthly inflation for households was 3.8 percent, with food, beverages and tobacco rising 5.2 percent, while non-food goods and services increased 3.0 percent.

The annual inflation rate ranged from 36.8 percent for the wealthiest decile to 38.4 percent for the lowest-income group, with the inflation gap between the richest and poorest widening to 1.6 percentage points from 1.0 percentage point the previous month.

# Iran spotlights free trade zones as bridge for BRICS digital economy integration

TEHRAN – At the BRICS 2025 meeting in Hangzhou, China, Iran highlighted the role of free trade zones in strengthening digital economic integration among member states, according to the Secretariat of Iran's Free and Special Economic Zones High Council.

Esfandiar Shahmansouri, deputy for economic development and investment at the council, represented Iran alongside legal deputy Meysam Safarzadeh, IRNA reported.

He described Iran as a "cross-roads of East and West" and said its free zones, with access to CIS and Eurasian markets, could become key regional logistics and trade hubs.

He pointed to southern free zones such as Kish, Qeshm, Chabahar and Arvand, which connect to Persian Gulf markets, as well as northern zones like Anzali, Aras and Maku, which link to Russia and Eurasia. The railway network connecting these hubs, he said, provides the fastest and most cost-effective north-south trade route.

Iran's proposals for deeper BRICS cooperation included developing joint transport corridors and free zones, investing in energy and bunkering projects, expanding knowledge-based industries and innovation centers, promoting medical tourism, and easing financial and banking exchanges.

On the sidelines, Iranian delegates met with BRICS country representatives and senior Chinese free zone officials, submitted draft memoranda of understanding, and advanced talks on a cooperation agreement under the supervision of Reza Masrour, Iran's top free zone official.

Back in April, Iran's Agriculture Minister said the country's relations with BRICS members are set to deepen, following Tehran's active participation in the 15th BRICS Agriculture Ministers Meeting.

Speaking at a press conference on the outcomes of the event, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeli said Iran's proposals were positively received and approved by all BRICS member states, and were included in the summit's final declaration.

Among the key proposals submitted by Iran were the creation of a sub-working group on fisheries, the establishment of a union of agricultural research institutes, and the formation of a vaccine producers' consortium.

The Iranian delegation also pushed for expanded financial cooperation, investment, and trade among BRICS countries, he added.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Iranian delegation held bilateral talks with agriculture ministers from Brazil and India. The two sides discussed expanding exports of Iranian products such as caviar, pomegranates, apples, kiwis, and dried fruits to Brazil. It was agreed that export barriers would be addressed and necessary protocols developed.

Ghezeli said that while Iran is on track to achieve self-sufficiency in meat production, it may still use Brazil's infrastructure to export halal meat to Muslim countries in the region.

He also noted that Iran is working to boost exports of livestock and poultry products using domestic capacities, while continuing imports of key animal feed ingredients such as corn, soybeans, and oil.

The minister said the trip included a visit to the Port of Santos—the largest port in South America—where Iranian trade accounts for around seven percent of the port's 180-million-ton



annual capacity. Santos officials expressed readiness to cooperate with Iranian firms on establishing a dedicated terminal and joint investment projects.

Ghezeli also met with Iranian businesspeople based in Brazil and international companies active in agriculture, which he said would pave the way for deeper economic and trade engagement in the future.

The National Conference on the Capabilities and Investment Opportunities of Free Trade and Economic Zones, which was held in Tehran earlier this month, bringing together government ministers and private-sector representatives, senior officials said that Iran's government is moving to overhaul its free trade zones by focusing on privatization, exports, and greater private-sector participation.

The secretary of Iran's High Council of Free Trade Zones said many restrictions on the zones had been lifted, making them valuable tools under sanctions if their legal advantages were restored.

He outlined six strategic priorities, including expanding regional cooperation, establishing a new model for border free zones, completing a financial system, rolling out a smart transformation plan and digital economy charter, strengthening exports, and reforming legal frameworks. Improving governance and easing business activity were also listed as key goals.

The official added that the government is working to launch an international stock exchange in the free zones by year-end and is seeking investors. Other plans include creating a technology park in one of the zones and expanding international transport corridors in cooperation with relevant ministries.

Also speaking at the forum, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran's Kish technology park was a promising start.

He compared Iran's vision for its free zones to China's Shenzhen, noting their potential despite sanctions.

"Sanctions have created pressure, but we must not adopt an apocalyptic outlook or think surrender is the only option," he said. "Sanctions were meant to paralyze Iran, but the country stands firm."

Araghchi stressed that free zones play a vital role as "economic lungs" when sanctions restrict the country's trade.

He said Iran remains an attractive destination for investment, with the Foreign Ministry aligning diplomacy with development goals. Talks with the International Atomic Energy Agency were progressing toward a new framework that would address Iran's concerns, and negotiations with three European states were also continuing.

He emphasized that while diplomacy is important, the government must strengthen domestic capabilities, including free zones, without waiting for foreign talks.

Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh said financing export-oriented projects and supporting free zones are priorities for his ministry. "The path to development passes through free trade zones," he said, criticizing Iran's history of government intervention.

He argued that privatization and export-focused strategies, with a strong role for the real private sector, would transform the zones into engines of growth.

One zone will be dedicated specifically to the digital economy, he said.

The event concluded with awards presented to top entrepreneurs, investors, and managers in the free zones.

In mid-July, Reza Masrour, secretary of the Free and Special Economic Zones High Council, said that Iran is set to implement a major restructuring of its free trade zones in a bid to revive their role in regional commerce and national economic development.

Masrour said that although the zones were designed to drive trade, investment, and transit, they have fallen short of expectations in recent years.

He announced the beginning of a reengineering process, backed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, to redefine the function and governance of these areas.

The transformation plan focuses on deep legal, institutional, and infrastructural reforms, alongside new policies to turn the zones into export-oriented hubs.

Each zone will align its activities with its own strengths, such as transit logistics, tourism, downstream industries, or advanced technologies, he added.

Authorities also aim to transition the zones into what officials describe as "seventh-generation" areas—drawing on modern international development models.

Three key documents are being drafted to guide this transition: a strategic roadmap for reform, a digital economy blueprint, and a national productivity program.

The strategic roadmap is designed to identify systemic challenges, reassess the direction of the zones, and develop macro and sector-specific policies.

The digital economy document links the potential of tech-driven innovation with the commercial ecosystems of the free zones. The productivity program is aimed at defining and applying performance benchmarks to improve efficiency across all regions.

Masrour said these plans are being developed in collaboration with Iran's top economic policy experts and research centers, using global models and tailored analyses of domestic and international conditions.

He added that the content reflects a broader strategy to redesign governance, strengthen the zones' missions based on competitive advantages, reform outdated laws and institutions, and harness Iran's geopolitical and geo-economic position—including international trade corridors, regional markets, energy routes,

and technology capabilities.

He expressed confidence that with support from the minister of economic affairs, the plans would mark the beginning of a more focused, dynamic, and effective era for Iran's free trade zones.

During a meeting with President Masoud Pezeshkian in last December, Masrour said that Iran's free trade zones collectively offer a bulk capacity of 61 million tons and 1.4 million TEUs, with the ability to handle 12 million passengers annually.

During the session, the official presented a review of the maritime economy and port capacities of key free zones, including Anzali, Kish, Qeshm, Chabahar, Arvand, Bushehr, and Mazandaran.

In that meeting, President Pezeshkian underscored the importance of fully utilizing the existing capacities of free trade zones. He called for the preparation of a strategic roadmap for these zones and emphasized the development of north-south and east-west transit corridors, with input from prominent consultants in the free trade sector.

Iran's free trade zones play a crucial role in facilitating trade, investment, and tourism by offering tax incentives, reduced tariffs, and streamlined regulations. The southern zones, such as Chabahar, Kish, and Qeshm, serve as key gateways for trade with the Indian Ocean, while northern zones like Anzali and Mazandaran provide critical access to the Caspian Sea region.

The Chabahar Free Zone, in particular, holds strategic significance as a transit hub connecting Iran to Central Asia, Afghanistan, and India via the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Meanwhile, Kish and Qeshm are pivotal for tourism and energy-related industries, with advanced port infrastructure to support containerized and bulk cargo handling.

The total capacity of 61 million tons of bulk cargo and 1.4 million containers highlights the zones' potential to strengthen Iran's position as a regional logistics hub. Additionally, the ability to accommodate 12 million passengers annually reflects the zones' growing role in boosting tourism and maritime transport.

Officials emphasized the need to address challenges, including infrastructure development and modernizing port facilities, to fully capitalize on the economic opportunities offered by the free zones.

The establishment of free trade zones (FTZs) in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989 - March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azarbaijan Province and Maku in West-Azarbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

The development of existing free trade zones and the establishment of new FTZs has become one of the major economic approaches of the Iranian government.



# Martyrdom anniversary of Nasrallah: Intersections of popular and political discourse

From page 1 ► The relationship that linked Sayyed Nasrallah to his people has not been weakened, rather strengthened and solidified; large crowds flocked to Haret Hreik to participate in the “Night of Ascension” event at the site of his assassination, a scene that carried profound emotional connotations.

The attendance was not merely formal; rather, it expressed the depth of the bond that many described as “exceptional,” as people saw Sayyed Nasrallah more than just a political leader. They saw him as a collective conscience representing them and expressing their aspirations.

In this context, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri issued a statement affirming the continuity of the resistance despite Sayyed Nasrallah’s martyrdom.

Berri’s choice of the phrase “There are no endings, you are only beginnings” reflects a political reading that Nasrallah’s martyrdom did not close a chapter, but rather opened a new horizon for the resistance in Lebanon and the region.

Indicating that protecting civil peace is “the best facet of the war against the absolute evil of Israel,” Berri linked the resistance option to protecting Lebanon’s cohesion, striking a balance between the national and regional dimensions.

For his part, Ali Larijani, Iran’s Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said what Nasrallah had warned against for decades had now become a tangible reality. This statement does not deviate from the context of acknowledging Nasrallah’s role as a man of foresight, who early on understood the nature of the Zionist project and its threat to the region.

He pointed to Israel’s recent attack on Doha as new evidence which shows the ulterior motive of the Zionist regime

Iran’s philosopher-turned-politician remarked, “Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah’s only sin was that he recognized Israel’s expansionist strategy earlier than others.”

He added, “Nasrallah under-



Initial estimates suggest that more than 100,000 took part in the first martyrdom anniversary of Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah and Sayyed Hashem Safieddine. The ceremony was held at the shrine of the Nation’s Supreme Martyr.

In an address, Hezbollah leader Sheikh Naim Qassem declared his movement will not disarm, saying removal of weapons would serve Israeli aims and provoke a “Karbala-like” confrontation. He honored the late Resistance leaders Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Sayyed Hashim Safi al-Din, citing million-strong funerals and southern advances as evidence that the resistance regained the initiative after recent hostilities.

Qassem urged the government to prioritize national sovereignty, reconstruction, and timely elections, defended support for the Lebanese army against external threats, and vowed to oppose any project seen as serving Israel.

stood the danger posed by Israel decades ago, prepared for it, and acted upon that understanding.”

Today, he said, although Lebanon is a small country, it stands as a powerful one in the face of Israel—and that strength comes from the “determination and willpower that Nasrallah instilled in the new generation.”

The language evoked on the occasion, both in political speeches and in the public consciousness. They reflected the continuing connection between the symbolism of Karbala and the concept of resistance.

Berri also addressed Martyr Nasrallah, saying: “O martyred master, O comrade, O ever-present one. O Karbala’i who drew his full certainty from the blood of Imam Hussein and the patience of Lady Zainab (peace be upon them). On the day of your martyrdom, I recall your words echoing throughout the world, that standing up to falsehood, even if it leads to martyrdom, will expose all the masks, and it is also a Hussein victory and conquest.

This religious metaphor reflects a pattern deeply rooted in Hezbollah’s culture: transforming martyrdom into an open horizon for renaissance, and organically linking it to the Palestinian cause as a natural extension of the Hussein grievance.

The first anniversary of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah’s martyrdom was not merely a memorial service; rather, it seemed to be a unifying event that recreated his character as a continuing actor in the political and intellectual life of the resistance.

The popular and political messages emanating from Beirut were not limited to the Lebanese alone; they resonated in Tehran, Sana’a, al-Quds, and in the conscience of peoples who see resistance as an alternative to defeat in the face of Israeli hegemony.

The majestic popular scene marking the first anniversary of the martyrdom of Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah constituted a political and social event

par excellence. It transcended the confines of traditional commemorations to become a collective action countering all attempts to question the legitimacy of the resistance or to talk about its decline.

The crowds that filled the squares in Beirut, the South, and the Bekaa reflected a well-established truth: Sayyed Nasrallah has not departed from the people’s consciousness, but rather, through his martyrdom, he has become a symbol with a stronger presence and influence.

This popular interaction carries two fundamental implications: First, the relationship between the resistance and its constituency is not a traditional leadership relationship, but rather an organic integration that makes the leader’s absence an opportunity to reproduce his presence. Second, the discourse promoted after Sayyed Nasrallah’s martyrdom about the “fall of the resistance” practically collapsed in the face of the masses, whose presence embodied that the resistance is a societal project before it is a party project.

The anniversary showed that the true strength of the resistance lies not only in its military arsenal or political presence, but in its profound influence on people’s hearts and minds. For many, resistance is regarded as a cherished pillar of identity, dignity, and the right to live freely

Hence, the solemn popular commemoration served as a public referendum confirming that Sayyed Nasrallah’s martyrdom did not weaken the resistance, but rather recharged it with new symbolism, so that it would remain, in the eyes of its constituents, a firm choice that does not fall with the martyrdom of its leaders, but is renewed with their blood.

Thus, on his first anniversary, Nasrallah appeared present in politics as well as in the conscience, testifying that martyrdom is not the end, but rather the beginning of a long journey passed down through generations.

establishment infuriates her even more.

“South Africa has journalism schools, an editors’ forum, a press council — yet none of them spoke out when journalists were being massacred in Gaza,” she says. “That vacuum made me realize we needed an independent voice.”

Incidentally, the Sharpeville massacre was a key moment that led to the creation of the South African Press Council, highlighting its historical roots in struggles for accountability.

She also criticizes the Western-dominated global media landscape, which she describes as “middle-class, Eurocentric, and unwilling to confront its biases.”

In one recent controversy, South Africa’s public broadcaster suspended a freelance anchor who aggressively questioned an esteemed anti-apartheid figure for describing Israel’s actions as a holocaust. “It wasn’t journalism, it was harassment,” Subramany remarks. “But the fact that such incidents happen shows the pressure journalists face when speaking honestly about Palestine.”

The result, she argues, is a deliberate erasure of Palestinian voices. “Israel ensures foreign journalists can’t enter Gaza. It kills the local journalists who remain. And Western outlets, instead of protesting, censor themselves. That’s a global press freedom crisis.”

**Israel’s narrative of “terrorist journalists”**

One of the most disturbing tactics, according to Subramany, is Israel’s routine branding of Palestinian journalists as “terrorists.”

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

## Lebanon and the illusion of control: America’s strategic blindness in Middle East

By Batool Subeiti

LONDON - Most short- and medium-term strategies adopted by the West — through its various American administrations — are either partially realized or fail to materialize. That’s how the vision of a “new Middle East” has unfolded, nearly two years into the war on Gaza.

This also applies to how post9/11 strategies were seen in the American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. What is planned frequently does not happen, or cannot be achieved on the ground. Often unforeseen elements and consequences emerge that upset the original calculations.

The truth regarding Lebanon is that nothing controls the movement of events on the ground except the balance of forces. This leads one to ask: Are the prepared plans and

papers enough? Is talk and back-and-forth enough if it is not compatible with the real balance of forces on the ground? Or is it just talk for the sake of talk?

Here the bigger question arises: given the lack of precise knowledge about how the balance of forces on the ground evolved after the “Battle of the Mighty Ones”, the picture is no longer what it was before this battle and the Support Battle.

When we speak of the balance of forces between the Israeli occupation entity and the resistance, it certainly is no longer the same. Neither in terms of quantity, nor in terms of quality, nor in terms of methods and confrontation plans.

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

## Uruguayan Jews call on government to cut ties with Israel over Gaza ‘genocide’

A group of Jewish citizens in Uruguay has urged the government to immediately sever diplomatic, commercial, and military relations with Israel, accusing it of committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

As reported Wednesday by the Uruguayan outlet Debate, the petition — launched online and later delivered to the presidential offices in Montevideo — was spearheaded by activist Mónica Wodzislowski and has drawn more than 350 signatures from citizens identifying as Jewish Uruguayans.

“We distance ourselves from the criminal policy of Israel,” the letter declares, invoking the phrase “never again” to emphasize that mass violence must not be tolerated against any people.

The letter calls on Uruguay to “act in accordance with the rulings of the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice,” both of which are currently investigating Israel’s actions in Gaza. “Life and human values must be above the market,” it states, urging a halt to arms and trade deals

with Israel.

Its timing is significant. Earlier this month, a UN human rights commission concluded that Israel’s campaign in Gaza amounts to genocide, reinforcing international pressure after South Africa’s case at the ICJ and ongoing ICC investigations.

President Yamandú Orsi has criticized Israeli military actions at the UN but has not indicated any intention to cut relations. The government has so far remained silent on the petition.

What makes this appeal stand out is the identity of its authors: Jews in Uruguay explicitly rejecting Israeli policy in the name of Jewish values. They argue that supporting Palestinians’ right to life is consistent with remembering historic persecution.

Whether their demand translates into policy change remains uncertain, but the petition adds Uruguay’s Jewish dissenters to a growing international chorus calling for governments to hold Israel accountable.

## Gustavo Petro revives Colombia’s Bolivarian legacy

From page 1 ► The Colombian leader’s speech aligned closely with voices from across the Global South. Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto pledged 20,000 troops for any international force to defend Gaza, while Chilean President Gabriel Boric called for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to face trial for genocide. Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, visibly moved, kissed Petro on the head following his speech—an unmistakable sign of solidarity and shared conviction.

On Friday, the U.S. State Department announced it would revoke Petro’s visa, accusing him of making “reckless and incendiary” remarks at a pro-Palestine rally outside UN headquarters in Manhattan. Far from backing down, Petro joined thousands of demonstrators and doubled down on his call for an “army for the salvation of the world,” urging it to be “larger than the U.S. military” and dedicated to enforcing international justice.

## Iraq dismisses Netanyahu’s threats

Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein has condemned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after he threatened to target what he called “militias” in Iraq.

Speaking at a press conference in New York, the top Iraqi diplomat described Netanyahu’s comments in his address to the 80th UN General Assembly as “unacceptable.” Hussein stressed that, “An attack on any Iraqi is an attack on Iraq.”

Earlier on Friday, Harakat al-Nujaba, an Iraqi resistance group, dismissed Netanyahu’s threats.

“Netanyahu’s speech was about what is to come, but it is an empty threat to the resistance,” al-Nujaba spokesman Hussein al-Moussawi said in a statement. “It is a clear confirmation of his intent to proceed with genocide in Gaza, a threat to global peace, and a blatant violation of international norms.”

Al-Moussawi added that the group gave no credence to Netanyahu’s remarks, which

he said reflected a “moral and humanitarian crisis” shared by Israel’s allies in the United States, some European countries, and Arab states that normalized relations with Israel. “Our options are open, and they have already experienced our might when our missiles and drones struck them in the most sensitive places,” he warned.

Harakat al-Nujaba is a coalition of four Iraq- and Syria-based resistance groups designated by the United States as terrorist organizations. Since the beginning of the Israeli regime’s war on Gaza, Iraqi resistance groups have carried out multiple retaliatory operations against various targets inside Israel.

In his speech to the General Assembly, Netanyahu claimed that Israel “deterred Iran’s Shiite militias in Iraq; they’re still deterred, and their leaders, if they attack Israel, will also be gone.” The Israeli prime minister spoke to a largely empty hall after many delegations walked out in protest of the regime’s crimes in Gaza.

## South African journalist: Israel’s war on media is a ‘deliberate massacre’

Deshnee Subramany tells Tehran Times about solidarity with Gaza journalists and the lessons from South Africa’s apartheid past

By Sahar Dadjoo  
Anger turns into action

TEHRAN- For South African journalist Deshnee Subramany, the struggle for Palestinian press freedom is deeply personal. Sitting at her desk earlier this year, she was overwhelmed by a steady stream of devastating news: journalist after journalist killed in Gaza.

“I was angry,” she recalls. “By January 2024, more than 170 journalists had been killed. Today the number is well over 270. That’s not just a tragedy, it’s a massacre. And what shocked me most was that no editorial body in South Africa was saying anything.”

That silence compelled her to act. At 10 p.m. one night, fueled by frustration, she drafted a statement condemning Israel’s attacks and calling for solidarity with Palestinian journalists. Soon after, she and her colleagues launched Journalists Against Apartheid (JAA), an initiative that has since organized national vigils in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and South Africa’s pre-eminent journalism school, Rhodes University.

“We wanted to be clear: South African journalists will not stay silent,” Subramany explains. “If our editorial institutions won’t act, we will.”

She adds: “I am wondering about this. The Press Council doesn’t issue statements, but it is meant to work with editorial bodies. You can see in its About page, right at the bottom, it talks about its interventions in big tech. But its vision is for journalism beyond South Africa too. I think it speaks to

how current institutions are not serving us anymore – like the UN’s processes.”

**Lessons from South Africa’s apartheid past**

Subramany’s activism is inseparable from her country’s history. Born in 1987, she grew up during the final years of apartheid and witnessed the fragile transition to democracy. That background, she says, shaped her sensitivity to injustice and censorship.

She recalls one story in particular: her reporting on Sharpeville, a township in Gauteng where police gunned down demonstrators during an anti-pass protest in the 1960s. Official records listed 69 victims, but survivors told her the real death toll was far higher.

“That experience taught me something crucial,” she reflects. “In situations of repression and genocide, we never truly know how many lives are lost. Records are manipulated, voices erased. The same is true today in Gaza. The world may never know the real number of journalists or civilians who have been killed.”

For Subramany, the parallels between apartheid South Africa and occupied Palestine are undeniable. Both, she argues, are systems of militarized control, racial segregation, and institutional silencing of dissent. “Even if Israel stopped bombing today, Palestinians would still face decades of rebuilding. Look at South Africa: thirty years after democracy, we are still recovering.”

=====Media silence and Western bias

If the brutality of Israeli airstrikes angers Subramany, the complacency of the media



## Message on World Tourism Day

From Page 1 ► Moving toward green tourism and harnessing innovation to reduce the environmental footprint of travel is no longer optional—it is a shared global necessity, and Iran is fully committed to this path.

With its unparalleled diversity of climates, rich cultural heritage, unique natural attractions, and a tradition of warm hospitality, Iran offers vast potential for tourism development. The cultural expressions of our diverse ethnic groups, ancient traditions, local and national festivals, and vibrant artistic events provide valuable opportunities to present the depth of Iranian identity while reinforcing social solidarity. Strengthening domestic tourism around these cultural resources not only stimulates economic growth but also nurtures social vitality, hope, and national cohesion.

In line with these principles, the Tourism Deputy Ministry is pursuing its programs this year through three key priorities:

Advancing Green and Sustainable Tourism – protecting natural resources and safeguarding our national heritage.

Expanding Smart Tourism – using new technologies to enhance travel experiences and improve efficiency.

Empowering Local Communities – leveraging festivals and cultural events to enable meaningful participation in both domestic and international tourism development.

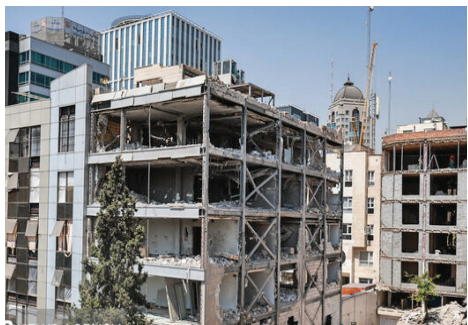
The realization of these goals calls for



synergy and cooperation among all actors—government bodies, the private sector, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and, above all, active citizen engagement. By joining hands, we can shape a bright future for tourism in Iran: a future in which this ancient land once again stands as an inspiring destination for the world, and as a symbol of peace, friendship, sustainability, and transformation.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day, I extend my sincere appreciation to all those working tirelessly in this field. I invite every stakeholder to contribute, with shared determination, to advancing “Tourism and Sustainable Transformation,” and to play their part in building a greener, more dynamic, and more hopeful tomorrow for our nation.

## War tours aim to highlight Iranians’ resilience, Tehran official says



TEHRAN – Tours of sites in the Iranian capital damaged during the 12-day war imposed by Israel are intended to showcase the resilience of Iranians, Amir Qasemi, head of the Tehran Municipality’s tourism office, said.

He told Mehr news agency: “If we don’t explain, the bravery of the Iranian people during the 12 days of war will be forgotten.”

Qasemi explained: “This tour was an improvised idea that I first saw the feedback during the photographers’ tour. We organize this tour for the elite, including university professors. We take them to see the disasters. We take them to see the war disasters. By taking elites to these places, we ask them to pass this on from generation to generation and tell what our people went through.”

“Our people are passionate about their country. These things don’t happen that eas-

ily. With these events, like showing the disasters, many people who might not have been with us joined us. We organized a tour that a university professor was critical of, but when the tour took place, his opinion completely changed. This is the explanation that needs to be done.”

He said: “It is true that during the war many people traveled and Tehran became deserted, but the entire country was active. Tehran supported the eight-year 1980-88 war, but it was at the forefront of the war during the 12-day war. The reaction of the people at that time was unparalleled.”

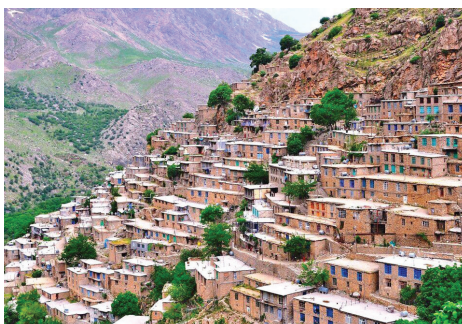
Qasemi pointed out: “I was at work for these 12 days. I saw things that I probably wouldn’t have seen if I had been born in another country. That’s why I tell my colleagues that we should try our best for these people. Whatever service we provide benefits them. Regarding making museums free, if a free tour is organized by the bus of Tehran Municipality’s tourism office, the municipal districts should not charge citizens but should attract participation so that the tour is free for the people. We have seen a good effect in this area. When we partner with the people, our work goes better. I hope that Tehran will one day become a tourist destination.”

## Photo exhibit on Uramanat tourist sites opens in Sanandaj

TEHRAN – A photo exhibition showcasing the natural and cultural attractions of Uramanat opened on Saturday in Sanandaj, the capital of Kordestan province.

The exhibition is aimed at promoting sustainable tourism, highlighting the province’s travel potential, and supporting local photographers, according to the department.

Uramanat, also known as Hawraman, is a remote, mountainous region in the Zagros range spanning Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces along Iran’s western border. Its cultural landscape, home to the Kurdish Hawrami people since around 3000 BC, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2021.



The organizers said visitors will be able to view photographs depicting the natural scenery and cultural heritage of Hawraman throughout the exhibition.

# Tourism minister invites Malaysian counterpart to visit Tehran

TEHRAN – Iran has extended an official invitation to Malaysia’s tourism minister, Tiong King Sing, to visit Tehran as part of efforts to strengthen tourism, cultural, and economic ties between the two nations.

The invitation was formally delivered by Rouzbeh Kardouni, adviser to Iran’s Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, during his visit to Malaysia, according to a statement from Iran’s Ministry of Cultural Heritage. Kardouni met with King Sing and presented the written invitation on behalf of Iran’s Minister, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri.

During the meeting, an Iranian delegation expressed Tehran’s readiness to participate actively



in the international tourism exhibition “Matta Fair,” scheduled for March 2026 in Malaysia. Salehi-Amiri also officially invited the Malaysian tourism sector to take part in Iran’s International Tour-

ism Exhibition, planned for February 2026 in Tehran.

In addition, Kardouni held talks with Chua Choon Hwa, the deputy tourism minister of Malaysia, in

Putrajaya, exchanging views on expanding cooperation through increased cultural exchanges, active participation in tourism fairs, and the establishment of direct flights between Tehran and Kuala Lumpur.

Kardouni said finalizing a memorandum of understanding on tourism cooperation could pave the way for enhanced bilateral relations in tourism and handicrafts.

According to the officials, visa validity for Iranian and Malaysian citizens was extended from 14 to 30 days from early summer 2025 to facilitate reciprocal travel.

The Iranian delegation also attended events for World Tourism Day 2025 and an international tourism conference in Malacca.

## Cultural heritage ministry plans to hold Mehregan Festival

TEHRAN--Mehregan Festival is the second largest celebration of ancient Iran after Nowruz, said Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage Ali Darabai, adding: “We are considering holding this world-recorded celebration on a public scale.”

Pointing to the arrival of the Iranian month of Mehr, he said that Mehregan Festival is a symbol of kindness, friendship, and gratitude, which is associated with the autumnal equinox and the harvest season.

This ritual was jointly inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List by Iran and Tajikistan in 2024, he mentioned.

The global registration of the Mehregan Festival, in addition to emphasizing cultural values, has highlighted the need for its popular revival, and planning must be made for its preservation and promotion, he said.

According to Darabi, the Cultural Heritage Department intends to organize this year’s Mehregan Festival in cooperation with other agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Revival of Iran’s national and traditional rituals and introduction to the younger generation, creation of a happy and vibrant social atmosphere for families and youth, strengthening the national and religious solidarity, preservation of intangible heritage and its connection with today’s life, and development of cultural tourism are among the goals that Darabi listed for holding this event.

He noted: “Strengthening cultural diplomacy and international cooperation with Tajikistan is another of our approaches to honoring Mehregan.”

Mehregan is an ancient annual festival that

marks the autumn equinox and expresses the communities’ gratitude for an abundant harvest. It is celebrated by many Iranians and by the people of Tajikistan.

The ceremony of Mehregan is named after Mehr, the Zoroastrian god of friendship, peace, and solidarity. The Zoroastrian faith reaches back to antiquity and the festival is a major part of the group’s identity.

Participants perform local wrestling, and rope walking, and distribute food and drinks. In Tajikistan, the element is celebrated during or after the harvest and includes many of these same customs.

Moreover, the ceremony functions to integrate people socially. People of all ages, genders, and backgrounds come together. The ceremony promotes mutual respect among communities and peaceful relationships.

## Experts discuss Shirazi urban heritage in Eastern Africa

TEHRAN— A scientific gathering of ‘Shirazi city-states in East Africa’ was held by the Cultural Heritage Ministry’s Research Institute with the participation of the head of the institute, Mohammad-Ebrahim Zarei.

According to Miras-e Arya (CHTN), Morteza Rezvannar, a faculty member of the institute, introduced a number of the heritages left behind by these city-states based on field surveys in Tanzania and Kenya.

He said that many studies and books have been compiled by British, German, Portuguese, African, Arabian and Iranian researchers regarding the civilization of Shirazi people in East of Africa.

Pointing to the history and role of Shirazi people in forming the city-states of East of Africa, he said: “a large Shiraz tribe led by Ali ibn Hassan Shirazi migrated from the Persian Gulf to East Africa in seven ships in 957 CE and established the city-states in several locations. They ruled these regions for 500

years and founded a new race called the Afro-Shirazi, who inherited a new style in architecture, language, religion, and rituals.”

He added that based on the field and historical documents, many persons and groups in East of Africa including Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, and Sumali call themselves Shirazi and are very competitive and committed to preserving the Shirazi race, citing the extensive and fundamental services of their Shirazi ancestors in the spread of civilization, urbanization, shipping, and global trade in Africa.

Pointing to some of Shirazi city-states in East of Africa such as Kilwa Kisiwani, Kaole, Zanzibar, Mombasa, and Lamu, he said: “Unfortunately, the aforementioned monuments are at risk of severe destruction due to the lack of attention, and steps should be taken to restore and protect these world monuments by guiding the tourist tours, encouraging the administrators of the southern provinces to

communicate with these countries, and also by corresponding with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant agencies.”

Zarei reminded that following the pursuit made by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Islamic Culture and Communication Organization, the issue of cooperation with the governments of Tanzania and Kenya to protect the common heritage of Iran and the aforementioned countries will be examined.

In this regard, a meeting will be held with researchers and relevant agencies to explain the relevant dimensions and areas and determine the roadmap, he added.

The relations between Iran and East Africa are captured well by depicting the impact of the Shirazi (Persian) civilization on the East African coast. But some influential scholars claim that historians tend to dismiss or trivialize the role played by the Shirazis in East Africa.

## Intl. scholars urge action as Gaza, West Bank archaeological collections face unprecedented loss

TEHRAN – A group of prominent Israeli and international archaeologists, researchers, and museum curators has issued a stark open letter condemning the widespread destruction of cultural heritage in Gaza and the West Bank, accusing the Israeli government and military of violating international law and engaging in a policy of “annihilation.”

The letter, signed by scholars including Tel Aviv University’s Prof. Rafi Greenberg and others, cites the recent total destruction of a building housing the archaeological storerooms of the prestigious École Biblique in Gaza as a triggering event. The incident necessitated the urgent, partial relocation of tens of thousands of archaeological items, with the full extent of the damage still unknown.

“This is a continuation of the policy of destruction and annihilation in the Gaza Strip that has also targeted heritage sites,” the letter states. It references reports indicating that approximately 110 historical buildings, archaeological sites, and other cultural properties have been severely damaged or completely

destroyed in Gaza, “mostly with no known connection to military needs.”

The scholars assert that such actions contravene the rules of warfare as set forth in international conventions, including the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which Israel has ratified.

The letter broadens its criticism beyond the current conflict in Gaza to address the long-standing situation in the West Bank. It describes “ongoing Israeli violation of international law in the occupied territories” and constraints on Palestinian archaeological authorities, which have led to the “neglect of many cultural properties, their appropriation by nationalist elements, and their partial or complete destruction.”

In view of what they call the “imminent

planned destruction of Gaza city,” the signatories issue a three-point call to action to the Israeli government and military:

Immediately stop the demo-

lition of the Gaza Strip, the destruction of its cultural treasures, and the attempt to cleanse it of any presence other than Jewish.

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



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Candidaturas y CV deberán ser dirigidos al mail: [uruiran@mrree.gub.uy](mailto:uruiran@mrree.gub.uy)

Fecha límite: 15 de octubre 2025

### Correction

In an interview published in our Saturday issue, the headline was wrongly typed “Malaysia” instead of “Indonesia”. The mistake is regretted.



By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN – With the vast participation of domestic and international pharmaceutical companies and manufacturers in the 10th IranPharma Exhibition, the first international event in the health sector after the 12-day war in June, the expo has turned out to be a magnificent symbol of health diplomacy and international communication of the country.

Known as the largest specialized pharmaceutical event in Iran, the event kicked off on September 24 and came to an end on September 26.

Pharmaceutical companies from Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, England, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, the United States, Italy, Japan, Peru, Spain, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, South Korea, Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates were among the participants in the three-day exhibition, IRNA reported.

Compared to earlier years, the number of visitors to the 10th exhibition increased by 30 percent.

Currently, over 140 thousand individuals are operating in the pharmaceutical industry of the country. In the Iranian year 1403 (March 2024-March 2025), the amount of



medical exports rose by 16 percent in comparison to a year earlier, and in the first five months of the current Iranian year (started on March 21), the figure has increased by 11 percent compared to the same period last year.

Hosted by the Iranian Syndicate of Pharmaceutical Industries at the Grand Musalla in Tehran, the event attracted 373 domestic and 370 international companies, associations, and related organizations.

This year's edition was held with the theme "Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation." It served as a great platform for domestic companies to examine challenges, make an effort to address problems in pharma manufacturing, showcase export capabilities, attract investment in innovative areas, and foster

ties through holding joint meetings and signing agreements with foreign companies, such as Indian and Chinese delegations and manufacturers.

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

According to Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafargandi, the issue of medicine and medical equipment production and self-sufficiency in these areas is one of the government's priorities.

Medicine and medical equipment are two important areas related to people's health, he said, adding: "We are trying to reach self-sufficiency for the supply of medicine and medical equipment," IRNA reported.

On January 13, the head of Iran's

Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters said that medical equipment worth around \$20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually.

More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made, IRNA quoted Abdolreza Yaqoubzadeh as saying.

Also, over 95 percent of specific ICU and CCU beds and more than 85 percent of operating room medical equipment, such as anesthesia machines and other equipment, are manufactured with cutting-edge technology in the country, he added.

Yaqoubzadeh went on to say that the country's need for medical equipment production is three to four billion dollars per year, some one billion dollars of which is imported.

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

Medical equipment manufacturers in the country produce and supply over 10,000 types of medical equipment to domestic and foreign markets. Now, various pieces of laboratory equipment are manufactured at prices much lower than the same foreign products.

## IRCS, ICRC discuss ways to boost co-op

TEHRAN – Razieh Alishvandi, the director of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) for international affairs, and Vincent Cassard, the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Iran, have explored the potential to enhance joint efforts between the two societies.

"Today, more than ever, we need to strengthen emergency preparedness and coordination for future humanitarian responses. Through joint planning, the International Committee of the Red Cross can play an important role in supporting the Iranian Red Crescent Society's innovative approaches, mainly in community preparedness and resilience sectors," IRNA quoted Alishvandi as saying on Tuesday.

Referring to the supportive measures in Khorasan Razavi, South Khorasan, Sistan-Baluchestan, and Tehran provinces, Alishvandi noted that the continuity of rehabilitation and primary health services to vulnerable families, particularly the host community and nationals' families with disabled people, will only be possible with ongoing support and funding.

The official went on to highlight the significance of maintaining and conducting joint projects, including mine awareness projects in border areas, equipping rehabilitation centers, and providing primary health services.

Conducting training workshops on emergency risk management, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for aid workers and staff, as well as teaching humanitarian principles and values to journalists, can improve the quality of relief and media activities, Alishvandi further noted.

Referring to the future of the two societies' cooperation, she said holding annual meetings to review achievements and explore new solutions should be included on the agenda as an integral part of the collaborations, Alishvandi said.

The official expressed hope that the implementation of the anticipated programs in the coming years would not only improve the quality of the IRCS's services at the national level but also provide a successful model of humanitarian cooperation between a national society and the ICRC.

### Joint efforts

On September 8, the IRCS, in cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the ICRC, held a workshop on the vital importance of rehabilitation.

"Rehabilitation is not just about providing medical services. It restores lives," the head of the IFRC delegation in Iran, Faisal Mahboob, said.

"We are here since we have a shared mission that is helping people to regain dignity, independence, and hope through health and rehabilitation," the IRCS website quoted Mahboob as saying.

The official made the remarks online while addressing a workshop on becoming familiar with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement services in the treatment and rehabilitation sectors.

The official went on to say that "Strategy 2030 reminds us of three key priorities: strengthening local measures so that societies can rely on their strengths and capabilities, investing in the future so that young people and volunteers get ready for leadership, and promoting collaborative efforts since no one society can face a crisis alone."

Attending the workshop, Cassard said, "This initiative highlights our joint commitment and mutual understanding within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; it underscores the critical role we play in delivering humanitarian action."

In March, the IRCS and the ICRC discussed ways for expanding collaborations to promote support-

ive and medical services, particularly rehabilitation services, in different provinces of the country.

During a meeting held on March 13, Cassard stressed the need to prevent disabilities and develop psychosocial support services in less privileged areas. These valuable actions can pave the way for further cooperation.

For her part, the director of the IRCS for international affairs, Razieh Alishvandi, highlighted the successful partnership between the two organizations. Lauding the ICRC's endeavours in the country, the official stressed the importance of holding training courses on international humanitarian law (IHL) and the need to get acquainted with the Red Cross movement.

The IRCS has taken various measures to serve the people utilizing the capacity of 270,000 personnel, relief workers, and volunteers, she noted.

Cassard commended the IRCS for taking measures during the Nowruz holidays and announced the ICRC's readiness to support the IRCS in organizing the World Red Crescent Day and expanding medical, rehabilitation, and humanitarian services in underprivileged areas

In February, the IRCS and the ICRC agreed on setting up a joint secretariat on rehabilitation services in Tehran.

During a meeting in Tehran to prepare for the first international conference on physical disability and rehabilitation, Kolivand said rehabilitation is an essential part of universal health coverage.

"Due to war and other accidents, rehabilitation services are greatly needed in the country. That's why the Society started providing rehabilitation services and manufacturing prostheses and orthotics. Currently, 200 rehabilitation centers are operating in Iran, and the conference will focus on the activities of these centers," he added.

## Pasteur Institute of Iran to mark World Rabies Day

TEHRAN – Observed annually on September 28, World Rabies Day aims to raise public awareness about rabies prevention and what to do in the event of a bite. In this line, the Pasteur Institute of Iran plans to hold special programs both in person and online.

The main objective is to educate people about rabies, and its potential risks, the ways to prevent it, as well as enhance collaborations between governmental and nongovernmental organizations, the health ministry's website quoted Qobad Moradi, an official with the health ministry, as saying.

Rabies is a fatal but preventable viral disease affecting the central nervous system. In up to 99 percent of human rabies cases, dogs are responsible for virus transmission. Children between the ages of 5 and 14 years are frequent victims. Rabies infects mammals, including dogs, cats, livestock, and wildlife.

It spreads to people and animals via saliva, usually through bites, scratches, or direct contact with mucosa (for example, eyes, mouth, or open wounds). Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100 percent fatal.

This year's World Rabies Day theme is 'Act now: You, Me, Community'. The theme highlights the importance of promoting cross-sectoral involvement and collaboration in preventing the disease, he noted.

The event serves as a great opportunity to showcase achievements, measures, and challenges in managing the disease, Moradi added.

For the first time in its 19-year history, WRD's theme does not include the word 'rabies', showing how well-established this movement has become. It is calling on everyone to take responsibility, work together, and drive real change. Whether you are an individual, part of an organization, or a decision-maker, the time to act is today.

You – Take action in your personal life: vaccinate your dog, educate yourself about how to prevent rabies and Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, or advocate for better policies.

Me – Lead by example: inspire others, train professionals, or support rabies elimination efforts in your community.



Community – Work together: organize vaccination campaigns, educate learners and their families, and push for stronger rabies elimination programs.

The call to Act Now is the difference between life and death. As a Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD), rabies disproportionately affects underserved communities, mainly in Africa and Asia. Every nine minutes, rabies claims another victim, but death is 100 percent preventable. When we work together, eliminating this disease for good relies on all of us acting now! Rabies need not be fatal if all the post-exposure steps are taken.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a series of education films to support community understanding. The films are aimed at different audiences. For children, the focus is on how to behave responsibly around dogs and the importance of telling an adult if they are bitten or scratched by an animal.

For parents, teachers, and the community, a second film focuses on the critical importance of immediate wound washing in the event of a bite. For community health workers, the third film highlights the important steps to be taken prior to seeking further clinical advice.

WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) aim to achieve the goal of zero human deaths from rabies by 2030.

## Access to environmental info in digital age promotes accountability

TEHRAN – Observed on September 28 every year, the International Day for Universal Access to Information 2025 highlights Access to Environmental Information in the Digital Age, as universal access to information is foundational for transparent, participatory, and accountable governance.

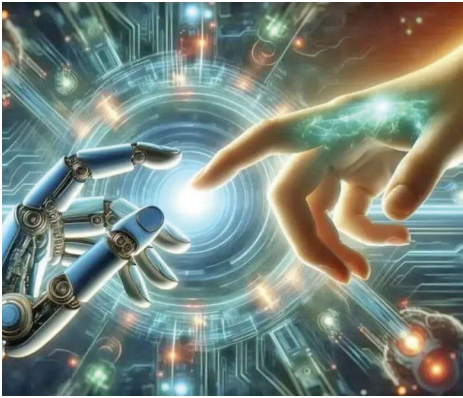
Universal access to information means that everyone has the right to seek, receive, and impart information. This right is an integral part of the right to freedom of expression. The media plays a crucial role in informing the public about issues of interest, but it relies on the ability to seek and receive information, too. Hence, the right to universal access to information is also bound up with the right to freedom of the press.

Digital technologies can enhance public access, foster transparency, and empower citizens and stakeholders to participate meaningfully in environmental governance and sustainable development.

The theme focuses on the vital importance of timely, comprehensive, and cross-border access to environmental information in an increasingly digital world.

Environmental data, encompassing climate change, pollution, biodiversity, and disaster risks, transcends national borders, necessitating collaborative, transparent, and innovative global sharing of information.

Access to information is particularly important for populations at risk of environmental disaster due to climate change.



Universal access to information is crucial. Access to environmental information is crucial. It is deeply linked to international environmental governance frameworks such as the Paris Agreement (2015) and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992). These international instruments provide a legal and normative foundation supporting citizens' rights to know and enabling governments to uphold accountability in environmental policies.

Therefore, universal access to information is a cornerstone of healthy and inclusive knowledge societies.

In November 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared September 28 as International Day for Universal Access to Information. The UN General Assembly also adopted the same day in 2019 as the International Day for Universal Access to Information.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Bikes to hold 3.5% share in Tehran transportation

Bikes will carry out 3.5 percent of the capital's total transportation, as the national document on bike transport development has proposed, deputy mayor for traffic and transport affairs at Tehran Municipality has stated.

A five-year plan to develop biking in the capital has been proposed aiming to promote biking, develop bike lanes and curb air pollution.

Currently, the document is under review by the traffic council to be approved, ISNA quoted Mohsen Pourseyeedi Aqaei as saying on Saturday.

As per the document, some 120 kilometers of the roads will be accessible for the bicycle riders each year, he added.

The reason behind the failure of bicycle schemes in past recent years was that the technology was overlooked in the schemes, he explained.

## انجام ۳.۵ درصد از سفرهای تهران با دوچرخه

معاون حمل و نقل ترافیک شهرداری تهران از تدوین سند دوچرخه پایتخت خبر داد، براساس این سند، می بایست ۳.۵ درصد از سفرهای تهران با دوچرخه انجام شود.

محسن پورسیدآقایی در گفت و گو با ایسنا، با بیان اینکه سند توسعه دوچرخه در دستور کار قرار دارد گفت: در حال حاضر این سند سند ۵ساله در شورای ترافیک پایتخت در حال بررسی است که در صورت تصویب دوچرخه سواری ترویج و توسعه می یابد.

وی با بیان اینکه سالانه ۱۲۰کیلومتر به مسیر دوچرخه اضافه می شود، در پاسخ به سوالی در مورد سرنوشت دوچرخه های قبلی شهرداری گفت:دلیل شکست طرح های دوچرخه در گذشته این بود که به تکنولوژی های روز دنیا توجه نشده بود.





SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Wealth converts a strange land into homeland and poverty turns a native place into a strange land.*  
**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon:11:55 Evening: 18:10 Dawn: 4:34 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:58 (tomorrow)

## American actress Jennifer Lawrence calls out genocide in Gaza

Jennifer Lawrence has opened up about the death of children in Gaza during an appearance at the San Sebastian Film Festival (SSIFF) on Friday.

"I'm terrified and it's mortifying. What's happening is no less than a genocide, and it's unacceptable. I'm terrified for my children, for all of our children," the Oscar winner told a press conference in answer to a question from the assembled media while in Spain to tout her latest film, "Die, My Love".

According to The Hollywood Reporter, Lawrence also took aim at divisions among Americans over politics that risked alienation among young people. "On top of everything else, what makes me so sad is that this disrespect and the discourse in American politics right now is going to be normal to them. I mean, the kids who are voting right now at 18, it's going to be totally normal to them that politics has no integrity. Politicians lie; there is no empathy," she argued.

Lawrence added overlooking war and strife in a far-off land risked the same happening at home. "Everybody needs to remember that when you ignore what's happening on one side of the world, it won't be long until it's on your side as well," Lawrence added from the film festival podium.

She further noted, "Our Freedom of Speech and expression is under attack and I think the world of cinema and using your voice in artistic ways, having festivals like this where we can learn from each other and realize we are all connected and matter and deserve empathy and freedom is important."

Lawrence's comments come after the SSIFF itself demanded a cease-fire and the release of all hostages in an open letter to

Hamas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ahead of the festival.

"We believe it is necessary to publicly state our rejection of the genocide, of the unimaginable massacres to which the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu is subjecting the Palestinian people since Hamas perpetrated the terrorist attack of October 7, 2023 which, we of course, also condemn," SSIFF organizers wrote.

"They are killing the Palestinian civilian population. They are killing boys and girls. They are killing journalists and humanitarian workers. They are using starvation as a weapon. They are preventing and hindering access to humanitarian aid. They are forcing the mass displacement of the Palestinian population. They are razing buildings to the ground. They are bombing hospitals too," they continued. "They humiliate, conquer, squash. They are destroying Gaza. They scorn international legality. So much atrocity, so much terror is unbearable. We are beside ourselves with anger and pain at such injustice."

At least 65,550 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip since October 2023 and the number of injuries has surpassed 167,500 in the Israeli onslaught, the Health Ministry said on Friday.

"Many victims are still trapped under the rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them," it added.

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

## Tehran unveils mural honoring martyr Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah on first anniversary

TEHRAN-The newest mural at Valiasr Square in central Tehran was unveiled on Friday, commemorating the first anniversary of the martyrdom of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the Commander of Resistance.

The mural, an artistic collaboration by the Owj Arts and Media Organization, was unveiled as a tribute to Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, who was martyred on September 27, 2024, during an Israeli airstrike targeting the southern Beirut district of Dahieh. The artwork also features a narrative from children around the world, emphasizing unity and resilience.

Entitled "Sayyed Hassan in My Heart," the mural is described as more than just a painting; it is a pledge—an oath of love, peace, resistance, and steadfastness. As explained by the creators, it "connects the hearts of the world." The piece boldly proclaims: "I love you, O Sayyed," and "Sayyed Hassan is in my heart," with a childlike voice shouting for justice and solidarity.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, a formidable Arab leader in West Asia, has made an indelible impact on contemporary Lebanon, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the



broader region. He was tragically killed at the age of 64 during a series of intense Israeli airstrikes in southern Beirut on September 27.

The attack that claimed Nasrallah's life was carried out by Israeli fighter jets targeting Hezbollah's main headquarters, resulting in the martyrdom of several senior Hezbollah commanders and prominent Iranian Revolutionary Guards Lieutenant General Abbas Nilforoushan, who

was present at the scene.

Under Nasrallah's leadership, whose name means "victory through God," Hezbollah evolved from a grassroots armed movement into the largest political party in Lebanon's recent history. Renowned for his captivating speeches, Nasrallah garnered attention throughout the West Asia and beyond, establishing himself as a significant figure within the Axis of Resistance, which includes Hezbollah, the

Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the Houthi movement in Yemen, and various Iraqi paramilitary factions.

The Valiasr Square mural regularly reflects national and religious events, promoting themes such as Iranian-Islamic lifestyle and anti-hegemonic resistance through artistic media, fostering a sense of unity and resilience across the nation.

## Iranian director Hemen Khaledi wins at BIFF with debut feature documentary "Singing Wings"



TEHRAN – The documentary "Singing Wings" by Iranian director Hemen Khaledi won an award at the 30th Busan International Film Festival (BIFF), held from September 17 to 26 in South Korea.

A joint production of Iran, Georgia, and Belgium, the movie grabbed BIFF Mecenat Award, which is given to exceptional Korean and Asian documentaries in Wide Angle Competition.

Each winner is awarded KRW 10,000,000 (\$7,100) as funding for their next production, ISNA reported.

Produced in 2025, the 73-minute documentary is about Khadijeh, a 78-year-old Kurdish woman from Iran, who has two pressing tasks – one, to care for a stork whose wings were injured by high-voltage wires and left behind; and two, to dissuade her daughter from emigrating to the

UK.

In her mind, there is no contradiction between helping the wounded bird migrate and preventing her own daughter from migrating. It's just that they cannot be achieved by willpower alone. And of the two, changing her daughter's mind is far more difficult.

"Singing Wings" follows Khadijeh's busy life, set against the picturesque Kurdistan, a stork habitat. The elderly woman's innate sense of humor and cheerful optimism that will draw smiles from audiences are the driving force and heart of this film.

Khaledi, a native of this region, chooses not to dwell on the Kurdish people's hardships, but instead to bring their pure spirit and simple way of life to the screen in the best possible light. It is a fable that unfolds in a world of fairytales.

The director has chosen a slow-paced narrative to reflect the unhurried rhythm of village

life as he knows it. The project description contrasts the picturesque beauty of the Iranian Kurdistan villages and its serene natural surroundings with the challenges faced by the characters.

Hemen Khaledi is a Kurdish filmmaker from Shno, Kurdistan Province. "Singing Wings" is his first feature documentary as a director. During its production, the project received the "Cat & Docs Award" at the FIPADOC's pitching program.

Dedicated to discovering and showcasing exceptional Korean and Asian films, Busan International Film Festival brings exceptional films to global audiences while solidifying Busan's identity as a mecca for film and visual culture in Asia.

Widely regarded as Asia's acclaimed film festival, the BIFF plays a pivotal role in shaping the region's cinematic landscape and has risen to stand proudly alongside renowned film festivals worldwide.

## Cartoon of Day

### BIBI'S SPEECH IN UN



Bibi's Speech in UN  
Cartoonist: Morad Kotkot from Palestine

## Tehran cultural center to screen Oliver Stone's "Born on the Fourth of July"

TEHRAN- American filmmaker Oliver Stone's 1989 movie "Born on the Fourth of July" will go on screen at the Arasbaran Cultural Center in Tehran on Sunday evening.

Film critic Kurosh Jahed is set to attend a screening of the film followed by a review session.

"Born on the Fourth of July" is a biographical anti-war film, based on Ron Kovic's 1976 autobiography. The movie chronicles Kovic's

life over two decades—from his childhood in Massapequa, New York, to his Vietnam War service, subsequent paralysis, and his evolution into an anti-war activist. Starring Tom Cruise in his first Oscar-nominated role, the film also features Kyra Sedgwick, Raymond J. Barry, Jerry Levine, Frank Whaley, and Willem Dafoe. It is the second film in Stone's Vietnam War trilogy, following "Platoon" and preceding "Heaven & Earth."

Critics lauded the film for its compelling

storytelling, Cruise's intense performance, and Stone's powerful direction. It achieved box office success, grossing over \$162 million worldwide, making it the tenth highest-grossing film of 1989. At the 62nd Academy Awards, it received eight nominations, including Best Picture and Best Actor, with wins for Best Director, Best Film Editing, and Best Supporting Actor. The film also garnered four Golden Globe Awards, including Best Motion Picture – Drama and Best Actor.

## "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo" to be performed at Iranshahr Theater

TEHRAN – Iranshahr Theater Complex in Tehran will host the play "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo" by Rajiv Joseph from September 29.

Nader Fallah has directed and produced the 80-minute play and the cast includes Ramin Sayardashti, Alireza Akhavan, Hamed Faal, Saeid Yaghoubi, and Mostafa Kheirollahi, among others, IRNA reported.

This work was inspired by a real-life incident at the Baghdad Zoo in 2003 when a drunk Amer-

ican soldier shot dead a tiger.

Set amid the chaos of the 2003 American occupation of Iraq, Rajiv Joseph's groundbreaking play exposes both the power and peril of human nature.

In the play, the lives of two American Marines and an Iraqi translator are forever changed by an encounter with a quick-witted tiger who haunts the streets of war-torn Baghdad attempting to find meaning, forgiveness, and redemption amidst the city's ruins. As he witnesses the puzzling

absurdities of war, the tiger encounters Americans and Iraqis who are searching for friendship, redemption, and a toilet seat made of gold.

In borrowing this absurd situation, the play profoundly portrays the madness, hatred, and passions engendered by the Iraq war. In making the leap from reality to the world of fiction, it shines a light on reality, and the breadth that it displays in so doing makes for part of its fascination.

Rajiv Joseph, 51, is an American playwright. He was named a finalist for the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his play "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo," and he won an Obie Award for Best New American Play for his play "Describe the Night".

The play will remain on stage until October 31 at Iranshahr Theater, located at the Artists Park, North Mousavi Street, Taleqani Street.