

Peace Plan or Disaster Plot

Inside Trump's 20-point proposal to end the Gaza war



Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu depart at the conclusion of a joint press conference in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington, DC, on September 29, 2025.

Sumud flotilla enters Gaza danger zone

The Global Sumud Flotilla entered what organizers called Gaza's "danger zone" on Tuesday, pressing east after repairs and carrying urgent medicine, food, and international volunteers in a bid to challenge Israel's naval blockade.

Organizers said Turkish drones circled overhead as the convoy resumed, after earlier drone strikes damaged several boats but caused no casualties.

Italy and Spain have dispatched naval vessels to monitor the area and stand ready to offer rescue support, a move that could help guard against potential Israeli interception.

On Tuesday, the yacht Johnny M suffered an engine leak, and its passengers were evacuated to safety; Turkish ships later delivered Red Crescent supplies, and the flotilla continued, organizers said. Supporters describe the flotilla as a peaceful act of Sumud — steadfast resistance to Gaza's 18-year blockade. They invoke the memory of the 2010 Mavi Marmara raid, when Israeli forces killed nine activists at sea, as a warning of the dangers of another violent interception.

At sea and in European ports, unions and activists are mobilizing to shield the convoy and denounce what they call disproportionate Israeli aggression.

Why does Lebanese Forces party continue to incite discord?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — The Lebanese Forces party is openly framing the upcoming elections as an existential battle, amplifying rhetoric that risks fuelling internal discord through media campaigns and theatrical displays in Parliament.

The latest chapter in this process emerged in the last legislative session, where representatives of the Lebanese Forces and the Phalange Party fought to add an amendment to the electoral law allowing expatriates to vote for all 128 members of parliament in their home districts, instead of limiting them to six seats, as stipulated in the 2017 Basic Law.

The proportional representation law passed in 2017 included an article allocating six seats to expatriates, distributed along sectarian and geographic lines (two seats for Christians, two seats for Muslims, one for Druze, and one for Armenians/minorities).

Over dozen IOF casualties in Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN — Fighters from the Palestinian resistance groups have carried out a series of operations against Israeli occupation forces (IOF) in Gaza City, in the northern Gaza Strip, and released details and video footage of the actions.

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad's armed wing, al-Quds Brigades, said they destroyed an occupation military vehicle with an MK84 warhead, a pre-rigged munition salvaged from the occupying regime's military remnants, in the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood, in the southern part of Gaza City.

According to the statement, the resistance fighters observed IOF helicopters landing to evacuate the dead and wounded from the scene of the operation.

They further announced that a special resistance unit engaged an IOF unit traveling in Humvees in Tel al-Hawa, highlighting that the fighters inflicted direct hits on the unit.

Iran pushes regional trade expansion in talks with EAEU officials

TEHRAN — Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Seyed Mohammad Atabak held intensive consultations with prime ministers and senior officials of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) during a visit to Belarus, with a focus on strengthening regional trade ties.

According to the ministry, Atabak, who chairs the Iran-Belarus Joint Economic Committee on behalf of Tehran, represented the First Vice President at the EAEU Council of Prime Ministers.

He also held separate discussions with Belarusian ministers and senior economic and industrial officials. ▶ Page 4

Europe voted against sanction relief following US 'order', says former IRGC chief

TEHRAN — Mohsen Rezaei, former chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), revealed that U.S. President Donald Trump personally called European leaders just 24 hours before a crucial United Nations Security Council vote, instructing them not to support a resolution that would have blocked the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran.

Rezaei made these remarks at a Tuesday ceremony honoring Iran's war martyr, condemning recent European actions as part of an illegitimate economic war against Iran, carried out without international legal justification. ▶ Page 3

16 Israeli pilots killed in Iran's missile strikes: Leader's military advisor

TEHRAN — A senior Iranian military commander says as many as 16 Israeli pilots were killed in Iran's missile attacks on Israel during the Tel Aviv regime's military aggression against Iran.

On June 13, Israel launched a blatant and unprovoked aggression against Iran, triggering a 12-day war that killed at least 1,064 people in the country, including military commanders, nuclear scientists, and ordinary people.

The United States also entered the war by bombing three Iranian nuclear sites in a grave violation of international law.

On June 24, Iran, through its successful retaliatory operations against both the Israeli regime and the U.S., managed to impose a halt on the terrorist aggression. ▶ Page 2

Europe's fatal mistake

By Mohammadjavad Akhavan

TEHRAN — In recent weeks, Europe's attempt to reinstate sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran has once again dominated international headlines. Yet, what lies behind this move goes far beyond a simple legal or diplomatic measure. It is, in fact, an effort by Europe to restore its long-diminished role in the global political order.

For years, Europe has aspired to become an independent political pole on the world stage. However, with the rise of American unilateralism—particularly during the Trump era—the European Union was effectively sidelined. Trump did not view Europe as a strategic partner but rather as a peripheral player. Even in crises directly tied to Europe's security—such as the conflict in Ukraine—he preferred to manage the situation without consulting or involving European states. This approach dealt a serious blow to Europe's political self-confidence. ▶ Page 3

Spain's arms embargo on Israel will influence EU states, says analyst



▶ Page 5

Snapback of UN sanctions 'an unprecedented blow to diplomacy', Araghchi tells Guterres

TEHRAN — Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has condemned efforts by the United States and three European nations to reactivate expired United Nations sanctions against Tehran, describing the move as "unjustified and illegal" and warning it delivers "an unprecedented blow to diplomacy."

Araghchi made the remarks on Monday during a meeting in New York with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, where he strongly criticized Washington and its European allies for invoking the snapback mechanism under the 2015 nuclear deal. The mechanism was designed to reimpose sanctions in cases of non-compliance but, according to Tehran, no longer holds validity after the US withdrew from the accord in 2018. ▶ Page 3



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

Europe will have no role in Iran's future calculations

In an interview with Etemad, Ahmad Shirzad, an expert on international affairs, says Europe will not have a role in Iran's nuclear issue in the future. Shirzad said: Today, the situation has changed. Despite all the distrust, hostile behavior, and unilateralism of the United States, it is at least clear that the main party in the nuclear case is Washington, and negotiations through the Europeans are basically useless. As Mr. Araghchi underscored, future decisions on this issue will effectively exclude Europe from playing any meaningful role. Therefore, dialogue and agreement with the main party, that is, America, will be much more fruitful than relying on European mediation. On the other hand, we should not forget that Europe's weight in this case is very low, and at some points, they have even played a destructive role. The role of the Europeans in recent years regarding the Iranian nuclear issue has not been positive or had a significant impact. Accordingly, Iran will likely have neither special interaction nor consultation with Europe in the future.

Hamshahri: Weakening sanctions pressure

Hamshahri wrote: With the activation of the snapback mechanism (by the European troika of Britain, France and Germany), the UN sanctions against Iran have been re-imposed. The main question now is whether these sanctions can stop Iran's nuclear program or will they simply increase diplomatic and economic pressure. It must be said that political consensus is the first condition for effectiveness. Whenever Russia or China opposes drastic measures or there is a possibility of vetoing resolutions, the effectiveness of the sanctions and the decisions of the Security Council will be weakened. The implementation of the sanctions requires monitoring capacities and technical-legal cooperation of third countries to prevent evasion of the sanctions. Countries that wish to avoid it can resort to alternative tools and paths. Ultimately, the reality is that Chapter 7 pressures and unilateral actions can bring the other side back to the negotiating table, but the sustainability of any agreement requires structural and political guarantees.

Kayhan: Israel concerned about rising Tehran-Beijing ties

In a note, Kayhan dealt with the intensification of concerns about the increase in relations between Iran and its allies following the return of sanctions. The paper

said: In recent years, China has become one of the most influential powers in the world and has expanded its influence in global economy, technology, and security. Now, Beijing's harsh tone and alignment with Iran are an issue that has increased the differences between Tel Aviv and Beijing. China's relations with Iran have become a major cause for concern for Israel because Beijing accounts for 91 percent of Iran's oil exports. This issue has also intensified the pessimism of the United States and Europe about the effectiveness of sanctions against Iran. The expansion of economic and military cooperation between China and Iran has become a matter of concern for Israel. China has close relations with Iran, and in recent years, it has deepened these relations by signing strategic and military agreements with Tehran. Joint naval drills between Iran, China and Russia are an example. Cooperation between Tehran and Beijing has changed the balance of power in the region to the detriment of the Tel Aviv regime.

Sobh-e-No: We must know the deceitful enemy well

Sobh-e-No wrote: Despite the agreement between Iran and the IAEA in Cairo that met the requests of the European side, the European trio of Britain, France and Germany activated the snapback mechanism. And now, with the return of sanctions, they are talking about diplomacy and say they are ready for dialogue with Iran. In such circumstances, negotiation and conversation lose their effectiveness, and the meaning of the Leader of the Revolution's remarks that "negotiation is a complete deadlock" becomes more evident. Now, instead of finding about the intention of the West, some political disputes have intensified at home. The lesson that can be learned from this agreement is to find about the "nature" of the enemy, which we must pay attention to in decision-making and policy-making, so that we do not fall prey to their trap again. Tehran's nuclear diplomacy has always been based on negotiation, interaction, and trust-building. From the intensive negotiations that produced the JCPOA to recent contacts with Europe, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and even with the United States, all indicate that Tehran has always sought a political solution. It is important to understand the "nature" of the other side so that we do not have a simplistic view of the other side, do not take anyone's signature as a guarantee, and do not be deceived by the other side's ploys through negotiations.

Snapback of UN sanctions 'an unprecedented blow to diplomacy', Araghchi tells Guterres

From page 1 ► Speaking to reporters in New York before his meeting with Guterres, Araghchi said he had held more than 31 bilateral meetings, during which agreements were reached on expanding economic cooperation. He described the Global Development Initiative summit, held at China's initiative, as "a very important conference," and also pointed to Iran's role in promoting the commemoration of the 1,500th anniversary of the Prophet's birth within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

He explained that his meeting with Guterres would focus on Iran's "final positions on the snapback issue," stressing that negotiations over the past week had been intense. "We were confronted with attempts to extract concessions from the Islamic Republic of Iran — demands that were completely unreasonable," he said. "In contrast, we offered our own proposals, which were entirely reasonable and even acknowledged as such by the Europeans."

Araghchi noted that numerous meetings had been held with the three European powers, the UN Secretary General, and the Director General of the International

Atomic Energy Agency in an effort to reach compromise. However, he said these efforts failed because of "the excessive demands of the United States and the alignment of European states with Washington."

Later, during his meeting with Guterres, the Iranian foreign minister stressed that all restrictions imposed on Iran's peaceful nuclear activities under UN Security Council Resolution 2231 were scheduled to expire on October 18. He accused the European trio—Britain, France, and Germany—of aligning with Washington's "unlawful pressure campaign" instead of fulfilling their commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The dispute escalated on September 19 when the 15-member Security Council failed to adopt a resolution aimed at preventing the automatic reimposition of sanctions. The E3 had triggered the snapback mechanism, accusing Iran of failing to uphold JCPOA commitments. A follow-up resolution, which sought to extend both the JCPOA framework and Resolution 2231 by six months, also failed to gain approval on Friday.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

16 Israeli pilots killed in Iran's missile strikes: Leader's military advisor



From page 1 ► "More than 500 missiles were fired at the occupied territories during the war," said Major General Rahim Safavi, a senior advisor to Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. "The attacks inflicted huge damage to Israeli installations in Haifa and other areas," said the top general, adding, "Refineries,

powerplants and the regime's research centers were also targeted. At least 16 Israeli pilots were killed."

He said Tel Aviv has put a news blackout on the true extent of the losses it suffered during the conflict. "The occupying regime prevents the release of details of the damage and casualties

inflicted during the 12-day war," the top commander explained.

"Some of the missiles had such strong impacts that they acted like an earthquake and the destruction affected an area within a radius of 3 kilometers," said the top general.

"We were deceived and taken by surprise at the beginning of this conflict, which suggests weakness in the domain of strategic intelligence, and this area should be seriously improved," noted general Safavi.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the General Staff of the Iranian Armed forces highlighted the Iranian military is ready for any future conflict.

"We have extraordinary preparedness for any possible future confrontation," said Major General Aborrahim Mousavi after inspecting the Iranian naval forces in the south of the country.

He added the country's naval troops are ready to accomplish the missions assigned to them, adding, "They are, on a daily basis, rehearsing and updating all defensive and offensive plans to counter the enemy."

Iran FM: I came to NY with fair and constructive proposals, but West ignored them

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said that when he arrived in the United States earlier this month to accompany President Masoud Pezeshkian to his address at the UN General Assembly, he had also brought proposals aimed at securing a negotiated settlement of outstanding issues with the West over the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"We have always been ready for talks and a diplomatic solution," said the top Iranian diplomat in an interview with CNN. "Last week, I came to New York with fair, balanced and constructive proposals, so that we would be able to work out a diplomatic solution to this crisis, but the proposals were rejected by the U.S. and the three European countries and they opted for an immediate reinstatement of the sanctions (the so-called Snapback Mechanism), which further complicated the problems."

The JCPOA required Iran to scale back certain nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. However, the U.S. withdrew from the deal in 2018 and reinstated the sanctions it had previously lifted. After the U.S. exit, the European signatories failed to uphold their commitments and made little effort to preserve the agreement. In the latest blow to the deal, pre-JCPOA UN sanctions on Iran were reimposed last week after Europe triggered the process to restore them.

During his interview with CNN, Araghchi underlined Iran's full

abidance by the JCPOA, lambasting Washington for unilaterally pulling out of the deal. "We have never wanted to possess nuclear weapons and we proved this when we signed, in 2015, the JCPOA with members of the 5+1 Group, including the United States," he said.

"We implemented the deal in good faith and lived up to all of our commitments," said Araghchi, adding, "When the U.S. withdrew from the agreement, it had no justifiable reason to do so as numerous reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) stressed that Iran had fully complied with its obligations."

"We have had a bitter and unpleasant experience with the United States two times. Once we reached a deal but they pulled out of it, and once again we held talks this year but they attacked us," the Iranian foreign minister noted.

Araghchi also touched upon Washington's military strikes on Iranian nuclear sites that happened in June ahead of a scheduled sixth round of indirect negotiations. "The United States attacked our nuclear facilities and [uranium] enrichment centers and destroyed and heavily damaged them, but this military operation failed to resolve the issue because the technology is available and locally developed," he underscored.

"If there are any concerns about Iran's nuclear program, the solution should be a diplomatic one, and we have always been prepared for negotiations and a diplomatic solution," he said. Araghchi added



Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaks to CNN

military action did not help solve the problem.

"They tried the military option, but it failed to resolve the issue. Now, they are acting through the Snapback Mechanism, which will not solve the problem, either, and will only add to complexities and difficulties and make the diplomatic solution harder," said the Iranian foreign minister.

Araghchi also lashed out at the United Nations for targeting Iran with sanctions while turning a blind eye to the Israeli regime's genocide in Gaza.

"We are entitled to enrich uranium. We have never violated the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and have always acted in accordance with international regulations, and all we want is to enjoy our legal rights," he explained.

Years of ineffective diplomacy and the June war have pushed several political factions in Iran away

from negotiating with the West on the nuclear issue. In recent days, dozens of Iranian lawmakers have banded together to draft a bill that would require the government to withdraw from the NPT. Some have also called for a change in Iran's nuclear doctrine, but the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, has yet to alter a fatwa (religious decree) issued years earlier that bans Iran from developing weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

The Leader has, however, ruled out new talks with the U.S. as long as Washington seeks to predetermine the outcome of negotiations, puts forth unacceptable demands, and continues to threaten Iran. "Talks with the U.S. under the current circumstances are nothing but a deadlock," Ayatollah Khamenei said during a live televised address last week.

Iran to hold nationwide ceremonies for first anniversary of Nasrallah's martyrdom



TEHRAN – The first anniversary of the martyrdom of Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah will be commemorated across Iran and Lebanon, underscoring the enduring influence of the iconic resistance leader.

In Iran, the Council for the Islamic Development Organization announced that ceremonies will be held nationwide on Thursday, October 2. The main gathering in Tehran is scheduled for 4 p.m. at Imam Hussein Square.

In its statement, the council described Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah as "a historic and exceptional

leader of the resistance front" who, through more than three decades of strategic guidance and rare courage, "challenged the foundations of the domineering global order and ultimately achieved his long-cherished aspiration of martyrdom."

The council further emphasized that the Israeli regime, which believed it could crush the resistance by escalating violence and physically eliminating its leaders, "failed to weaken the movement that had reached unprecedented maturity under Nasrallah's three decades of leadership." Instead, it said, "his martyrdom opened a new phase



of vitality and strength for the resistance and became a spiritual asset ensuring the continuation of its path with even greater resolve."

On September 27, tens of thousands of Lebanese took to the streets in Beirut, the Bekaa Valley, and southern Lebanon to pay tribute and reflect on the legacy of Nasrallah and other resistance leaders and commanders. The rally was addressed by Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem, who stressed that the spirit and legacy of the slain leader remain alive and continue to guide the movement. Ali Larijani, Iran's

Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, also participated in the event.

Observers described the anniversary as a transnational event, combining deep popular sentiment with political and regional significance.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, widely regarded as one of the most influential Arab leaders in West Asia, was killed at the age of 64 in a series of Israeli airstrikes on southern Beirut on September 27, 2024, an assassination that marked a turning point in the region and galvanized the resistance movement.

Europe voted against sanction relief following US ‘order’, says former IRGC chief

From Page 1 ► The backdrop to this intervention centers on the so-called “snapback” mechanism triggered by the E3 countries — France, Germany, and the United Kingdom — last month. The snapback process allows for the automatic reinstatement of UN sanctions on Iran if Tehran is found non-compliant with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The E3 accused Tehran of violations, seeking to restore all UN sanctions suspended under Resolution 2231.

According to Rezaei, European powers initially signaled that they would reject a second resolution proposed to delay sanctions enforcement. Chinese and Russian diplomats indicated that the Europeans would not oppose this resolution at the UN Security Council. However, Trump’s direct call changed this course, leading to the failure of the resolution.

From Page 1 ► In response, European governments have recently sought to reassert themselves, attempting to project influence in shaping international arrangements. For instance, some European states—despite their longstanding ties with and support for the Israeli regime—have put forward initiatives such as recognizing Palestine. This shift is less about a genuine transformation in Europe’s worldview and more about remaining relevant as a visible power in global affairs.

Perhaps the most important arena in which Europe believed it still held a card was the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA). With Washington’s withdrawal from the agreement under Trump, the United States effectively lost the ability to activate the “snapback” mechanism. This gave Europe a unique opportunity to use the



Mohsen Rezaei, former chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), speaks during a ceremony honoring Iran’s war martyrs in Tehran on September 30, 2025.

Iran has vehemently rejected the snapback move as illegitimate, citing the U.S.’s unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018 and accusing the European trio of violating their JCPOA com-

mitments by aligning with unlawful sanctions instead of pursuing diplomatic engagement.

At the memorial ceremony held at the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare,

attended by families of martyrs, Rezaei commemorated the sacrifices of the defenders of the eight-year Iran-Iraq war.

Addressing decades-long economic pressures on Iran, Rezaei noted that foreign adversaries have imposed sanctions and hardships on the Iranian people, yet accuse Iran of causing economic suffering. He also denounced recent foreign demands that Iran restrict its missile capabilities to ranges below 400 kilometers, calling such limits unacceptable infringements on national defense.

He urged media outlets to avoid speculation about the timing of conventional war, emphasizing that “the war is already ongoing” in the forms of economic sanctions, propaganda, and media assaults.

Europe’s fatal mistake

mechanism as leverage to reassert its independence and credibility in global politics. Yet, Europe made a major miscalculation.

Rather than pursuing a fair and balanced deal, European governments advanced unrealistic and unreasonable demands on Iran. Ultimately, instead of capitalizing on their independent position, they fell back into following Washington’s lead. In doing so, they squandered what could have been a strategic opportunity to redefine Europe’s global role.

The outcome of this misstep is clear: Europe has lost one of its last historic chances to regain real political weight on the international stage. This strategic error will not enhance Europe’s standing; on the contrary, it will accelerate the decline of its political influence, partic-



French President Emmanuel Macron stands next to Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

ularly in comparison with the United States.

In the author’s view, the coming days and months will prove costly for Europe. The Union, which might have secured an independent role through prudent and bold decisions,

has instead chosen blind alignment with Washington. History may well record this period as a striking example of Europe’s inability to act independently in shaping global affairs.

Masoud Pezeshkian’s strategic discourse on Fox News

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The interview granted by Masoud Pezeshkian, the Iranian president, to the U.S. network Fox News represents a singular episode in both media and diplomatic relations between Iran and the United States. Beyond the usual dialectical clash characteristic of Western media, this conversation opens a window to examine Iran’s political and strategic evolution at a moment when its limits and potential are being tested by external tensions and shifts.

On Fox News, Pezeshkian constructs a narrative that moves away from epic confrontation, offering a more complex portrait of Iranian reality. He acknowledges difficulties and mistakes but emphasizes that these are neither insurmountable nor definitive. The state is capable of learning, adapting, and advancing its projects despite economic sanctions, pressure campaigns, and regional tensions.

This measured recognition of vulnerabilities, combined with a determined commitment to perseverance, undermines narratives that reduce Iran to an inflexible or dogmatic actor. The discursive staging confirms that Iranian policy has been moving toward a rebalancing strategy grounded in the rationality of power and calculated diplomacy.

A key aspect of this narrative is the clarity with which it asserts that Iran’s political survival and regional influence rest on the ability to coherently manage internal dynamics while simultaneously building a strong, cohesive, and dialogue-ready external front. This interview, therefore, goes beyond the mere need to communicate; it becomes a strategic tool to align expectations and stabilize balances both with-

in and beyond its borders, projecting a message of confidence and persistence in its national and regional project.

The nuclear issue: Sovereignty and negotiation in a game of balances

As expected, the focal point of the interview is Iran’s nuclear program, which has been at the epicenter of disputes with the West for decades. Pezeshkian reaffirms the country’s right to civilian nuclear energy, citing international norms and preexisting multilateral agreements. At the same time, he distances himself from accusations of military intentions, labeling them unfounded and reiterating a commitment to a peaceful policy in this domain.

His discourse on negotiation follows a logic of mutual respect and reciprocity, emphasizing that any progress requires a genuine willingness by the parties to abandon unilateral measures and coercion, beginning with the suspension of oppressive sanctions.

This approach constitutes a political maneuver aimed at presenting Iran as willing to keep channels open while demanding conditions that cannot be compromised. This complexity is essential to understanding contemporary dynamics: the country advances toward sustained negotiations without yielding its core strategic prerogatives.

Furthermore, Pezeshkian emphasizes the international legitimacy of Iran’s civilian program in contrast to what he defines as “political attempts at demonization.” T

Here, the discourse reflects a strategic calculus balancing the need to preserve the integrity of the national project with the

urgency of accessing economic and political benefits through negotiation. The way Pezeshkian weaves these arguments reveals a sophisticated understanding of the international chessboard and the importance of managing both dimensions with care.

Regional reconfiguration: Beyond conflict rhetoric

Pezeshkian also shifts focus to the regional arena, noting that West Asia is currently in a conjuncture marked by multifaceted threats and the instrumentalization of conflicts to advance external agendas. Within this framework, he predicts that stability will only be possible through sovereign cooperation among regional nations.

This proposal emphasizes the need to rethink dynamics rooted in sectarian antagonisms and artificial divisions, transforming them into pragmatic mechanisms that prioritize political autonomy and collective security. Essentially, it outlines a model of flexible and sovereign alliances whose viability depends on the willingness to overcome historical differences and external rivalries.

It is noteworthy that Pezeshkian articulates this vision not only from the realist perspective of inter-state relations but also acknowledging the multiplicity of non-state actors and fragmented governments. He stresses that responses to threats cannot be reduced to destructive wars but require political coordination and pragmatic agreements.

This often-underestimated perspective in Western coverage accurately reflects Iran’s longstanding strategy of building networks of alliances capable of generating stability and deterrence in the face of Israeli pre-dominance and U.S. strategy in

the region.

On economic matters, Pezeshkian does not shy away from the reality of Western sanctions, which have undeniably impacted Iran. However, he uses a narrative that avoids victimhood, emphasizing adaptability, innovation, and deepening self-sufficiency within the framework of autonomous development.

This narrative portrays popular and state resilience, where overcoming economic adversity is linked to rejecting external dependency. In this view, the economy is not merely a technical matter but an essential vector of sovereign policy that legitimizes the national project and enhances regional influence.

Technological innovation, industrial development, and a gradual approach to emerging markets are presented as key pillars enabling Iran to navigate economic pressure while maintaining a growth profile that, although modest, is valued domestically and projects strategic continuity.

Governance and internal political cohesion

Regarding internal politics, Pezeshkian offers a conceptual vision of Iranian society as plural yet cohesive—a space where broad consensus around fundamental principles coexists with tacit acknowledgment of mechanisms designed to foster stability.

This account offers a richer, more dynamic understanding of the political system, moving beyond the simplification of a “static, monolithic regime.” The emphasis on governance and institutional innovation emerges as a key element for ensuring medium- and long-term stability.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

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SPORTS

Skocic expresses satisfaction with draw against Al Wahda

TEHRAN – Dragan Skocic expressed satisfaction with his teams’ overall performance after Tractor and Al Wahda FC shared a goal-less stalemate in the AFC Champions League Elite 2025/26 match on Monday.

Both had opportunities to seize the win but at the end, had to settle for a share of the points as they continued their unbeaten start to their respective campaigns.

Skocic saw a performance worthy of praise from his Tractor side but rued the missed chances, especially with Tomislav Strkalj’s late attempt which crashed against the crossbar.

“The result was not satisfying, but the players’ performance was excellent,” said Skocic. “They played exactly the way I wanted, both defensively and offensively.”

“We wasted many chances, but the team played well. Al Wahda’s squad is more expensive than ours, and of course we felt the absence of (Mahdi) Torabi and Domagoj (Drozdek),” the Croat added.

“We had analyzed all aspects of their game, including their long balls. Sometimes, we built up with three players at the back, and at times we changed our shape. Our performance was good, but we were also unlucky,” Skocic concluded.

Morais proud of Al Wahda to handle Yadegar-e Emam atmosphere

TEHRAN – Al Wahda coach Jose Morais felt his team competed well throughout the 90 minutes at the AFC Champions League Elite 2025/26 and the Portuguese was proud with how his side were able to handle the atmosphere at Yadegar-e-Imam Stadium.

The match ended in a goalless draw while two teams had created so many scoring chances.

“From the very first minute, there was a real fight between the two teams,” said Morais. “The pace of the game was very high, and the outcome was uncertain until the very last moment. In the end, I think justice was done, and the draw was fair.”

“Fortunately, our defense performed well for most of the match, and we managed to stop Tractor’s attacks. They are a strong team who transition quickly from defense to attack. I must congratulate my players because they played very well.”

After back-to-back draws, Tractor will aim for a win when they face UAE’s Sharjah FC on October 20 while Al Wahda host Al Duhail SC of Qatar on the same day.

Mohun Bagan pull out of Sepahan match: ACL Two

TEHRAN – Indian Super League champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) have pulled out of their AFC Champions League Two away match against Iran’s Sepahan.

The match was scheduled for Tuesday as the club’s six foreign players have declined to travel to that nation following “advisories from their respective countries.”

“In accordance with Article 5.2 of the AFC Champions League Two 2025/26 Competition Regulations (the ‘Competition Regulations’), the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) confirms that India’s Mohun Bagan Super Giant are considered to have withdrawn from the AFC Champions League Two 2025-26 competition after the club failed to report to Isfahan, Iran, for their Group C fixture against Sepahan on 30 September 2025,” the AFC said in a statement.

The matter will now be referred to the relevant AFC Committee for the appropriate

decision, the sport’s continental apex body added.

Similarly, when Mohun Bagan didn’t travel to Iran to face Tractor of Tabriz last year citing player security amid political tension in the West Asian region, the AFC deemed the ISL champions “withdrawn” from the continent’s second tier club competition.

“Consequently, the previous match played by Mohun Bagan Super Giant is cancelled and considered null and void in accordance with Article 5.6 of the Competition Regulations.

2025 World Para Athletics Championships: Salehi takes bronze

TEHRAN – Iranian woman shot putter Elham Salehi claimed a bronze medal at the New Delhi 2025 World Para Athletics Championships on Tuesday.

Salehi seized the bronze medal with a throw of 7.17 meters at the Shot Put F54 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, in New Delhi.

Mexican Gloria Zarca and Elizabeth Rodrigues Gomes of Brazil won gold and silver with 7.97 and 7.78 meters, respectively.

Iran’s Amanolah Papi had previously won a bronze medal at the Men’s Javelin Throw F57.

More than 2000 athletes from 104 countries compete in 186 medal events – 101 men’s, 84 women’s and one mixed.

American players pen deal with Esteghlal basketball team

TEHRAN – Cheah Rael-Whitsitt and Sabria Dean officially penned their deals with the Esteghlal women’s basketball team.

Power forward center Cheah Rael-Whitsitt has most recently played at KR Reykjavik in Icelandic Subway League. She has also played in Germany, Iceland, Puerto Rico, Ireland and Kosovo.

Sabria Dean, who has played in New Orleans, plays in guard position.

Esteghlal play in Iran Women’s Basketball (Premier) League, which is the highest level of national women’s basketball competition in Iran.

Branko Ivankovic rejects Persepolis’ speculations

TEHRAN – Branko Ivankovic has ruled out returning to Persepolis football club, despite multiple reports linking him to the job.

In an interview with Tasnim news agency, Ivankovic has rejected the speculations.

Ivankovic, who left the China national team after their failure to reach the 2026 World Cup, is reportedly linked with Uzbekistan Football Association. There are also rumors about a potential move to Persepolis.

Ivankovic said that he has not negotiated with Uzbekistan or with any club or federation.

The 71-year-old Croatian coach previously led Persepolis from 2015 to 2019, delivering three league titles, one Hazfi Cup, and three Super Cups, and taking the team to the 2018 AFC Champions League final.

Ivankovic also previously managed Iran’s national team from 2002 to 2006, leading Team Melli to the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

Branko Ivankovic is regarded as one of the most successful managers in the club’s history, and the team’s supporters have a great fondness for him. After Vahid Hashemian’s poor performance as head coach of Persepolis, the supporters have demanded the dismissal of the former Persepolis and national team striker from his position.

Iran reports \$54b in trade in first half of 2025

TEHRAN – Iran's foreign trade reached \$54.3 billion in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 21–September 22), according to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Faroud Asgari, deputy minister of economy and IRICA head, said non-oil exports amounted to \$25.9 billion during the period.

Export volumes totaled 74.9 million tons, while imports reached 18.8 million tons, the official added.

Comparing the figures with the same period a year earlier, Asgari said non-oil exports rose six percent in volume, though their value remained largely unchanged.

Imports increased two percent by weight but fell 15 percent in value.

He added that Iran conducted trade with more than 100 countries during the first half of the year.

As previously announced by the official, Iran exported non-oil goods worth \$20.92 billion in the first five months of the current Iranian year (March 21–August 22), accounting for more than 61 million tons of shipments.

Asgari said exports slipped six percent in value year-on-year, though volumes were nearly unchanged, edging up 0.07 percent.

By comparison, imports reached \$23.02 billion for 15.21 million tons of goods, down 16.3 percent in value and 5.4 percent in weight.

Asgari noted that petrochemical products remained the backbone of outbound trade.

Iran shipped 21.88 million tons of such products worth \$8.64 billion, marking a 12 percent drop in volume and 13 percent fall in value.



Natural gas, liquefied propane, bitumen, liquefied butane and methanol ranked among the top exported items.

On the import side, raw gold, corn feed, sunflower seed oil, rice and soybeans were the most significant commodities.

He added that while imports contracted sharply, the trend reflects a shift toward curbing non-essential purchases in favor of essential goods and raw materials.

China, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates led the list of buyers of Iranian goods, joined by Turkey, Afghanistan, Oman and Pakistan.

The UAE, China and Turkey also stood out among the main suppliers to Iran, along with India, Germany, Russia and the Netherlands.

Altogether, Iran's non-oil trade totaled \$43.94 billion between March and August, covering 76.54 million tons of goods.

Officials have highlighted the figures as an indication of resilience in trade flows despite global price fluctuations in petrochemicals and tighter import policies.

in Hangzhou, China, on September 26, 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 "crossroads 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.

new projects, and examining development strategies.

Organizers said the event offers opportunities to attract investment, showcase technological achievements, and boost economic resilience in the mining sector.

During the exhibition, specialized meetings and workshops will address key issues in the industry. Among them is a session titled "Resilience, investment and technology development in the circular economy of mines and metal industries," scheduled for October 2.

Iran pushes regional trade expansion in talks with EAEU officials

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Seyed Mohammad Atabak held intensive consultations with prime ministers and senior officials of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) during a visit to Belarus, with a focus on strengthening regional trade ties.

According to the ministry, Atabak, who chairs the Iran-Belarus Joint Economic Committee on behalf of Tehran, represented the First Vice President at the EAEU Council of Prime Ministers.

He also held separate discussions with Belarusian ministers and senior economic and industrial officials.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Minsk International Innovations in Industry Exhibition, Atabak told the assembled EAEU prime ministers, ministers, and officials that the region's future depends on the determination of its leaders and decisions made in the interest of their people.

He stressed the need to harness new technologies and to foster greater convergence among regional states through scientific capacity.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, relying on its scientific and technological strengths and with a forward-looking approach, is determined to open a new path for fair, sustainable, and peaceful development alongside its neighbors and partners," he said.

Atabak added that the pursuit of this path would lead to a future where science, industry, and technology serve the welfare of nations and promote peaceful coexistence.

The minister underlined that new technologies and industrial prospects would shape sustainable development, secure the future of nations, and determine the region's standing in the world.

Iran's annual export to Russia anticipated to hits \$1.4b by next March

TEHRAN– Given the current trend and trade plans, Iran's exports to Russia are expected to reach about \$1.4 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (march 20, 2026), compared to about \$1.1 billion at the end of the previous year, an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said.

Akbar Godari, the head of TPO's Central Asia, Caucasus, and Russia Office, said that the share of industrial goods in Iran's exports to Russia has increased significantly over the past three years, and our country's exports to this destination have almost doubled.

On September 18, Iran's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad met Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilov and Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller in Tehran to review economic cooperation and preparations for the next meeting of the Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee, the Oil Ministry's news agency Shana reported.

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

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

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

On September 23, Iran's Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Seyed Mohammad Atabak met Russian Economic Development Minister Maxim Reshetnikov in Moscow during the first joint committee session on implementing the Iran–Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) free trade agreement.

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

He noted that trade between Iran and Rus-



He highlighted artificial intelligence as a key area for joint investment, knowledge-sharing, and supply-chain integration, adding that cooperation in common standards, workforce training, and digital infrastructure would accelerate the shift toward the fourth industrial revolution.

By pooling scientific and industrial capabilities, Atabak said, countries could build industries that are not only sustainable and smart but also competitive and innovative on the global stage.

Belarusian Industry Ministry places great importance on the development of mutually beneficial cooperation between Belarus and Iran, Belarusian Industry Minister and Co-chair of the Belarusian–Iranian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation Andrei Kuznetsov told BelTA on the sidelines of the high-level talks between Belarus and Iran at the Palace of Independence in Minsk on August 20.

"We highly value the achieved level of interaction and see significant potential for further expansion of bilateral ties. The Industry Ministry is ready to offer Iranian partners a wide spectrum of opportunities for deepening our industrial partnership," Andrei Kuznetsov said.

sia grew by 35 percent in May and June 2025 compared with the same period a year earlier, attributing the rise to the free trade agreement and the determination of both countries to expand commercial ties.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Iranian officials have said that steel and

retariat was aimed at boosting joint projects.

She stressed Belarus's interest in building partnerships with Iran's free zones, saying the two countries could meet many of each other's needs through investment and re-exporting goods. "We are committed to implementing the framework of this agreement and creating more opportunities for cooperation," she said.

Perminova noted that Belarus's free trade zones were established to stimulate provincial development and commercial dynamism, and added that Minsk was ready to pursue serious joint projects with Tehran.

Masrour said Belarus could use Iran's ports to bypass its landlocked geography and sanctions-related restrictions.

He cited the Caspian route from Makhachkala in Russia to Iran's Caspian Port as a corridor that could provide Belarus with maritime access. In return, he said Belarus could enhance Iran's entry into the Eurasian Economic Union's 180-million-strong market.

"Both Iran and Belarus face unjust economic sanctions," Masrour said, adding that the measures had restricted Belarus's traditional access to Baltic ports in Lithuania and Latvia. "Iranian ports can serve as an alternative."

The official also pointed to Iran's role in the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), saying Belarus could secure vital export routes for its potash fertilizers, agricultural products and other goods to Arab countries, Africa and beyond via Iranian free zones.

The talks also covered cooperation in tourism, high-tech industries, the digital economy, logistics, and organizing joint investment exhibitions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Peace plan or disaster plot

Inside Trump's 20-point proposal to end the Gaza war

By staff writer

TEHRAN – Nearly two years into its genocidal war on Gaza, Israel backed by the United States finds itself at a stalemate. Despite relentless military campaigns, Gaza's resistance groups remain active, their networks weakened but far from defeated. The battlefield has failed to deliver the decisive victory Israel had hoped for, and a new strategy is now emerging.

U.S. President Donald Trump, eager to reassert himself as a global power broker, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, struggling to maintain his fragile coalition at home, have unveiled a ceasefire proposal for Gaza. Marketed as a humanitarian breakthrough, the plan's real aim is not reconciliation but the disarmament of Palestinian resistance groups. It is a ceasefire designed not to resolve the conflict but to reshape it in Israel's favor, institutionalizing control while stripping Palestinians of their only means of leverage.

The White House issued the text of its 20-point proposal on Monday as Trump and Netanyahu met in Washington. The proposal outlined the framework for remaining captives, reconstruction, governance, and disarmament. Yet, despite its presentation as a peace initiative, the plan is overwhelmingly one-sided in Israel's favor. Key Israeli strategic objectives, including retention of the Philadelphia corridor, are left intact, ensuring Israel maintains permanent control over crucial access points in Gaza.

Israel's political dilemma

Israel entered the war with the stated goal of eliminating Hamas after the resistance movement carried out a surprise military attack in southern Israel on October 7, 2023. Yet, despite deploying its full military arsenal, Israel has not been able to achieve this objective. Hamas and allied groups continue to demonstrate resilience, using asymmetric tactics that blunt Israel's conventional superiority.

At home, Netanyahu faces



mounting political pressure: his fragile coalition is split, war fatigue is spreading across Israeli society, and international criticism of the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza has intensified. The war that was supposed to secure Israel's dominance has instead exposed its vulnerabilities.

In this context, the ceasefire plan emerges not as an act of goodwill but as a political lifeline. For Israel, it offers a way to recast failure as compromise. For Trump, it is a chance to return to the Middle East stage as a peacemaker, even if peace is the last thing this plan guarantees.

Diplomacy as a weapon

The proposal's central logic is clear: exchange guns for promises. Its key provisions include:

Immediate Ceasefire: Hamas would release captives within 72 hours in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.

Disarmament: Resistance groups must dismantle tunnels, surrender weapons, and end all military activity.

International oversight: Foreign forces would replace Israeli troops, tasked with enforcing disarmament.

Security buffer zone: Israel would retain a permanent presence inside Gaza under the vague term security perimeter and maintain control of the Philadelphia corridor, ensuring continued access and influence.

Governance: A transitional authority, overseen by a "Board of Peace," would manage Gaza, with figures such as Tony Blair controversially floated as potential leaders.

While framed as a roadmap to stability, the plan's substance is heavily tilted toward Israeli interests. It secures Israel's military and territorial objectives through diplomacy while offering Palestinians little beyond aid and reconstruction.

From skepticism to outrage

Although the proposal has received support from several countries, it has also drawn sharp criticism.

Hamas and others have already rejected the disarmament clause outright, insisting that armed struggle remains a right until the occupation ends. They fear Israel could resume war at will once captives are released and leverage is lost.

Former UK Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn has criticized Blair's involvement, saying the former British prime minister's "catastrophic decision to invade Iraq cost thousands upon thousands of lives."

Australian Senator David Shoebridge also stated: "Tony Blair's only role in the Middle East should be as a defendant, on trial for commencing the illegal and disastrous Iraq war that destroyed millions of lives."

Additionally, Balakrishnan Rajagopal, the UN's special rapporteur on housing warned that buffer zones and foreign transitional authority amounted to land grabs disguised as peace.

The illusion of peace

The Trump-Netanyahu ceasefire proposal is not a pathway to peace but a strategic maneuver to neutralize Palestinian resistance through non-military means. It represents a shift from bombs to boardrooms, but the underlying goal remains the same: to deny Palestinians sovereignty while consolidating Israeli control.

For Palestinians, disarmament without independence is not peace but capitulation. For the international community, the plan is a reminder that true stability in the region cannot be engineered through coercion or external control. Real peace will come only when Palestinian rights, freedom, and justice are recognized—not when resistance is stripped away under the false promise of reconstruction.

Any ceasefire or reconstruction plan must give Palestinians real control over Gaza, including its borders and governance. Palestinians should be allowed to defend themselves, and disarmament should be voluntary, tied to fair political agreements.

Israel should not maintain buffer zones, the Philadelphia corridor, or the ability to restart military operations. International authorities should support, not replace, Palestinian governance, and their actions should be transparent and accountable.

Mediators must be neutral and credible, avoiding figures with controversial histories of Middle Eastern interventions in positions of operational power over Gaza. Aid and reconstruction efforts should focus on rebuilding hospitals, schools, and infrastructure while strengthening Palestinian independence, rather than using aid as a tool of political control.

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Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

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Spain's arms embargo on Israel will influence EU states, says analyst

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN- Spain's recent arms embargo on Israel and restrictions on military fuel shipments through the country's ports and airspace marks a shift in most European countries' policy toward Israel. This move reflects growing tensions within the EU and challenges NATO and U.S. positions on Middle Eastern developments.

To better understand these developments, Tehran Times interviewed Firas Alcharani, a physician and international affairs analyst living in Spain.

Dr. Alcharani, a native of Syria, offers insights into Spain's actions, their influence on the EU and U.S. relations, and the broader implications on Palestinian rights and regional diplomacy.

Below is the text of the interview:

1. Spain recently imposed an arms embargo on Israel and banned shipment of fuel to Israeli military forces by using the country's ports or airspace. How do you interpret these moves in terms of Spain's foreign policy priorities and its position within the European Union?

Spain's plan is very important in stopping shipments of weapons and the contracts signed for that purpose. An additional important step has been taken to prevent the use of airports for any aircraft carrying weapons to the usurping entity, and ports for ships. In my opinion, the next plan regarding not using American bases for aircraft carrying weapons, especially using American bases in Spain, will certainly strengthen this position. Other countries like Ireland, Slovenia, and others in the European Union will likely take similar decisions.

2. Considering the broader geopolitical context, how do Spain's recent actions impact its relations with both Israel and Middle Eastern countries, including Iran and Palestine?

Regarding the relationship between Spain and Middle Eastern countries like Iran, I hope it im-

proves. But we must not forget NATO's position, led by the United States, in making decisions about the Iranian nuclear issue, Iran's weapons, and missile capabilities. They consider it a threat to the existence of the usurping Zionist entity. This will not change because they always use the pretext of the two-state solution, which is nonsense and hypocrisy. They know that the entity intended to take entire historic Palestine and establish, if possible, a "Greater Israel". Regarding Palestine, what matters is the return of the Zionist prisoners and the end of the war without solutions that benefit the Palestinians and their right to their usurped land.

3. Spain has been vocal about supporting Palestinian statehood and the two-state solution. How do you assess Spain's diplomatic move in international forums regarding the bleeding Palestine wound?

That Spain is joining legal procedures is very important; and in one way or another, it will influence EU countries. Being the second country after Ireland and the first major EU country to take such a decision to punish war criminals and those responsible for the genocide (in Gaza is very important).

4. From your perspective, what are the possible implications of Spain's actions on U.S.-Spain and U.S.-EU relations, considering Washington's strong support for Israel?

Spain will certainly face internal and external pressure because of its stance. The Spanish Zionist lobby is strong and supports right-wing parties like the People's Party in Spain, the separatist right-wing party in Catalonia (the largest party in the Catalanian parliament), and the far-right party Vox. They will revive previous issues, investigations, and corruption charges related to the Spanish, British, and American intelligence services to use them against the ruling party, especially Pedro Sánchez, to sway Spanish public opinion and call for early elections. America will also apply pressure through measures like customs tariffs and others.

Israel's edits shaped Trump's Gaza plan, limiting Palestinian sovereignty: report

Israel helped shape the Trump plan, according to The Wall Street Journal's report on Tuesday, and pushed for several amendments that appeared in the final draft presented to Arab mediators.

On Monday, the White House unveiled Mr. Trump's 20-point Gaza plan, which was passed to Hamas via Egypt and Qatar; Hamas said it would review the proposal before responding.

The document demands an immediate ceasefire and the return of all captives within 72 hours of acceptance, in exchange for Israel freeing 250 Palestinians serving life sentences and about 1,700 others detained since October 7, 2023.

It also calls for a suspension of aerial and ar-

tillery operations while swaps proceed and ties any Israeli withdrawal to Gaza's "demilitarization" — language critics say prioritizes Israeli security over Palestinian rights.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the plan as potentially "historic," even as Palestinian leaders and rights groups warned the vague nods to self-determination fall short of statehood and risk legitimizing further occupation.

Many Palestinians see promises of a "deradicalized, economic" Gaza — the plan's touted "Riviera of the Middle East" — as a façade for reconstruction that will be conditional, securitized, and beholden to external control.

Israel re-arrests dozens of Palestinians freed under Gaza truce deal: monitor

The Palestinian Prisoners' Society (PPS) says Israel is escalating its targeting of Palestinians released earlier this year under previous Gaza ceasefire agreements, carrying out new arrests and interrogations.

The group said the latest case was Hanan Barghouti, who was detained on Tuesday from her home in the village of Kobar near Ramallah city in the occupied West Bank, Al Jazeera reported. At least 40 people freed in January and February have since been re-arrested, with 16 still in custody, most under administrative detention — meaning they are being held without charge or trial.

ing they are being held without charge or trial.

The group called the campaign a deliberate policy aimed at keeping released prisoners under constant threat, noting that some have been detained and interrogated multiple times.

Israel has "institutionalized" these measures through military orders and legislation, the group said, while recent releases under previous truce deals with Hamas were marked by "organized terror", including severe beatings before release and threats against families that continue to this day.

Venezuela weighs emergency decree as Maduro warns of US aggression

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro said he is prepared to declare a state of emergency in response to what he called U.S. "aggression," after deadly American strikes on small boats in international waters off Venezuela's coast.

According to Al Jazeera, he announced a consultation process and signed a decree granting himself special defense and security powers for 90 days, renewable once, enabling nationwide troop mobilization and temporary military authority over public services and the oil industry. Vice President Delcy Rodríguez briefed foreign diplomats on the measures.

The moves follow a major U.S. deployment in the Caribbean—eight warships, a nuclear-powered submarine, and F-35 fighters near Venezuela and in Puerto Rico—under the banner of anti-drug operations.

U.S. forces have bombed at least three vessels, killing 17 people, while UN experts and international scholars have criticized the actions as extrajudicial killings of individuals not indicted in court. Caracas accuses Washington of waging an "undeclared war," noting UN and U.S. data indicate Venezuela is not a significant source of cocaine to the United States.

Over a dozen IOF casualties in Gaza

From page 1 ► Al-Quds Brigades also announced that it sniped an IOF soldier positioned on the roof of a house near al-Shati (Beach) Camp, hitting him directly.

Also, Hamas's armed wing, Al-Qassam Brigades said it struck an IOF command-and-control site east of the al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City with several mortar shells.

In central Gaza, al-Quds Brigades reported seizing an IOF quadcopter drone while it was conducting intelligence tasks.

Despite the Israeli genocidal assault and blockade, Palestinian resistance forces continue to carry out operations and set ambushes against the IOF across the Strip, especially in Gaza City, which is facing an intense campaign to displace its residents and occupy their land.

Under the "permission to publish" clause, Israeli media reported that at least two IOF soldiers have been killed and several others injured, some critically, when an IOF tank was struck by an anti-tank missile.

In a separate incident, Hebrew media stated

that around a dozen IOF soldiers have sustained injuries. At least five of them are in serious condition following fierce clashes between the Israeli infantry and Palestinian resistance fighters in central Gaza City, with heavy gunfire heard in the area.

IOF helicopters were reportedly firing on positions near the ongoing clashes and later seen evacuating the injured to hospitals.

Amid talk in Washington over a plan to end the Gaza genocide, there has been no sign the occupation regime's savage assault on the Gaza Strip has eased.

The IOF has intensified operations against the Palestinian population killing scores of civilians, most of them women and children.

Heavy IOF airstrikes, especially in Gaza City left dozens of civilian casualties on Tuesday.

Other parts of the enclave have not been spared from the regime's onslaught. A mother and her six children were killed when their home was struck near Deir al-Balah in the central part of the Strip.

and ignite the street against it.

On the other hand, a significant overlap emerged between President Michel Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, with both sides agreeing on the need to keep the army out of political disputes and preserve internal stability. This sent a message domestically and internationally.

This harmony was seen as an attempt to curb Prime Minister Nawaf Salam's impulse to comply with Western pressure regarding amending the electoral law to serve the interests of the opposition.

Some viewed the awarding of an honorary medal to Army Commander General Joseph Aoun as a consolidation of the military's image as a guarantor of stability, particularly after the army's calm

Why does Lebanese Forces party continue to incite discord?

From page 1 ► This article was to be implemented in the 2022 elections. However, the political circumstances at the time led to an exceptional suspension of its implementation, and those abroad were granted the right to vote directly for representatives in their home districts in Lebanon.

This allowed for broader participation and made a difference in some results.

Today, while the six-seat provision is supposed to be implemented in the 2026 elections, the Lebanese Forces, along with opposition forces, are pushing to repeat the 2022 experience, namely, keeping expatriates as voters in their internal constituencies, arguing that restricting them to six seats is unjust and undermines their political representation.

But behind these arguments lurk subtle political calculations: the majority of expatriates are concentrated in Europe, America, and Africa, meaning that including them in the election of all parliament members would strengthen the hand of the resistance's opponents, where Hezbollah is classified as "terrorist."

This parliamentary pressure was accompanied by organized media campaigns. The newspaper Nidaa al-Watan, affiliated with Lebanese Forces, published two articles with confrontational headlines: "The Clash Is Coming and Is Inevitable," and "Joseph Aoun: Leave."

Both articles were clearly inflammatory, targeting President Michel Aoun and the presidency, in an effort to weaken the political cover of the military establishment

Iran to mark first anniversary of UNESCO listing of Mehregan festival with symposium

TEHRAN – The Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Tehran is set to host a gathering to mark the first anniversary of the inscription of the Celebration of Mehregan, an ancient autumn festival, on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Maryam Dara, a faculty member of the institute, along with Tara Pourvala and Babak Salamati, are scheduled to speak at the event, the institute said on Monday.

Mehregan, also known as the Festival of Mehr, is one of Iran's traditional celebrations linked to the autumn equinox. The festival, regarded as the second most significant after Nowruz, is associated with thanksgiving for harvests and the equal length of day and night at the start of autumn.

The celebration, which usually extends over several days, has roots in the Zoroastrian tradition. It is named after Mehr, the deity representing friendship, peace and solidarity.

In 2024, the festival was inscribed jointly by Iran and Tajikistan on UNESCO's heritage list during the 19th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, held in Paraguay.

In Iran, Mehrgan is celebrated primarily within Zoroastrian communities, as well as in rural Muslim ceremonies. The festival involves diverse rituals, including the recitation of Zoroastrian sacred texts, the setting of a traditional tablecloth adorned with seasonal foods, and the preparation of special dishes. Music, local wrestling, and com-



munal feasts are integral parts of the celebrations. In urban centers, the festival is less common but remains significant in specific regions such as northern Iran and among Zoroastrian communities in provinces like Yazd, Fars, and Tehran.

In Tajikistan, Mehrgan is celebrated as a post-harvest Thanksgiving festival, emphasizing shared customs such as feasting, music, and community gatherings. Farmers and gardeners are key participants, reflecting the festival's agrarian roots. The event is also an important occasion for social cohesion, bringing together people of all ages, genders, and backgrounds to foster mutual respect and solidarity.

Mehran plain is home to key prehistoric sites, archaeologist says



TEHRAN – The Mehran plain, situated west of the Zagros Mountains, is home to important archaeological hubs with evidence of human settlement dating back to prehistoric times, an archaeologist said on Monday.

Habibollah Mahmoudian, a specialist in prehistoric archaeology, told ISNA that it is a place where Elamite and Uruk pottery reveal cultural links with eastern Mesopotamia.

Mahmoudian said that Mehran County is located in a lowland area on the edge of the Iranian Plateau and is connected to the relatively flat lands of eastern Mesopotamia.

He added that in terms of historical and archaeological developments, this region is dependent and intertwined with the cultures of eastern Mesopotamia.

The archaeologist noted that the Mehran plains and their satellite hill areas are located in the rugged western foothills of the Zagros, including the Kabirkuh Mountains and its parallel heights.

He explained that with the settlement of humans on the slopes and the beginning of plain settlement, the formation of early villages should be sought in the marginal plains connected to the mountains, such as the Hijdahaneh and Golan regions.

Pointing to the effective factors in human settlement in this region, he said the proximity to the mountain as a source of food, water resources, proximity to villages and summer cottages, forest wood, natural shelters, the presence of stone for building settlements, and a suitable climate were among the vital factors for settlement in this region.

He added that the archaeological findings and evidence in sites such as Chogha Golan and Seyyed Hassan confirm the human settlement in this county in prehistoric times.

Mahmoudian explained that initial studies in-

dicating that it is possible to observe the continuity and sequence of settlements of the Shushan and Musian plains in the city of Badra, Iraq, the Seyyed Hassan A and B mounds in Mehran plain, and the Golan mound on the banks of the Konjan Cham River.

He added that the Uruk and Susa pottery samples (Elamite period) in Mehran indicate the cultural connection between southwestern Iran and eastern Mesopotamia.

The investigations were continued by Director of National Museum of Iran Director Jebrael Nokandeh and led to the identification of 62 ancient sites spanning the time period from the Upper Paleolithic to the Late Islamic period, he said. As a result of these investigations, the important site of Chogha Golan entered Iranian archaeological literature and was later designated as a protected area by Nokandeh, he added.

Mahmoudian said that the results of the archaeological studies of Mehran attracted the attention of researchers such as Abbas Alizadeh, and Alizadeh submitted a research plan to the Cultural Heritage Organization of the time and requested archaeological studies of Mehran Plain.

He continued that Mohsen Zaidi surveyed the eastern and buffer zone between the Mehran and Dehloran plains in 2003 and identified sites from the early writing period to the historical period. In 2010, Zaidi began excavations and excavations at Golan Hill with the aim of stratigraphy, which continued for two seasons.

The archaeologist said that the dating of carbon-14 samples from this site indicates a long habitation from about the middle of the 10th millennium to the end of the 8th millennium BC.

Mahmoudian said that new archaeological excavations have been carried out in this city, especially in the village of Golan, and the results have not yet been published.

West Azarbaijan has high potential to be tourism hub, minister says

TEHRAN – Iran's cultural heritage minister said on Tuesday that West Azarbaijan province could develop into a major tourism and cultural hub, citing historic sites and its role as home to the tomb of Shams-i Tabrizi in the town of Khoy.

Reza Salehi-Amiri, minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, told reporters during a visit to Shams's mausoleum in Khoy that investment in the city's cultural and tourism infrastructure would benefit the wider province.

"West Azarbaijan can become a symbol of unity and a destination for both domestic and foreign visitors," Salehi-Amiri said.

He underlined that Khoy was one of Iran's historically important cities and needed national-level investment to strengthen its position as a cultural and tourism center.

The minister noted that West Azarbaijan has three UNESCO-registered places and many other significant monuments, as well as a diverse religious



and cultural heritage. "When we talk about this province, we are talking about a land of varied religions and cultures," he said.

Salehi-Amiri added that expanding tourism in the region could boost the economy and local infrastructure. He said the ministry, in coordination with provincial officials, would seek to accelerate cultural projects.

The minister traveled to Khoy

to attend the 11th International Conference on Rumi and Shams-i Tabrizi. Scholars from several countries gathered at the two-day event to mark Rumi Day on the Iranian calendar and to discuss the legacy of the mystics.

Conference topics included the views of Shams and Rumi on peace, coexistence and dialogue, as well as the role of their philosophy in Eastern religions. Partic-

ipants also examined historical accounts of Rumi's first meeting with Shams.

Shams Tabrizi (1185–1248), whose teachings profoundly influenced Rumi, remains a central figure in Persian mystical literature. He is the namesake of Rumi's Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi and is traditionally believed to have spent 40 days in secluded spiritual discourse with Rumi in Khonja before departing for Damascus.

According to sources, Rumi undertook one or two journeys to Syria, during one of which he met the dervish Shams. However, he was deeply influenced by Shams during their second visit to Khonja on November 30, 1244. For months, the two men constantly interacted, and as a result, Rumi neglected his disciples and family, who could not tolerate the close relationship. One night in 1247, Shams disappeared forever. This experience turned Rumi into a poet. The Divan of Shams (The collected Poetry of Shams) is a true translation of his experiences into poetry.

Minister calls for state-private sector cooperation to develop tourism, handicrafts

TEHRAN – Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri has called for greater cooperation between the government and the private sector to strengthen tourism and handicrafts.

Speaking at a meeting with members of the tourism commission of the Iran Chamber of Commerce on Monday, Saleh-Amiri said joint efforts could help expand the tourism industry, attract foreign investment and develop medical tourism.

He called the tourism industry as one of the major drivers of the national economy, ILNA reported.

Also, Mostafa Mousavi, head of tourism commission of Iran Chamber of Commerce, said that the Chamber of Commerce, along with the Cultural Heritage Ministry, can play an important role in drawing domestic and

foreign investments.

With joint planning, the path to tourism and handicraft development can be paved and the desired regional and global position can be achieved, he added.

He also said that over seven million tourists visited Iran during the last Iranian year, the majority of whom are from neighboring countries.

The commission's seven-year plan focuses on expanding sustainable interactions with neighboring countries and strengthening the position of free zones, he pointed out.

Another speaker at the event, the Deputy Minister of Handicrafts Maryam Jalali-Dehkordi said that countries like China have been able to establish their handicrafts in global markets by creating national brands. Iran, too, with its cultural and artistic richness, can

achieve a worthy position in this field with a comprehensive program, she added.

Also, Mohammad Jahangiri, head of the health committee of the tourism commission of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, referred to the capacities of medical tourism and said: "This sector was able to fulfill a special mission during the Corona era and today it can also be one of the strategic axes of development. Our suggestion is for border provinces to become more active and cooperate with countries like Oman in the field of remote medical and health services."

This meeting ended with an emphasis on strengthening cooperation between the private and public sectors, attracting new investments, developing the health tourism, and branding Iranian handicrafts as four key axes for developing the country's tourism industry.

Can Tehran become a smart tourism destination?

TEHRAN-- In a study conducted by the Tehran Urban Research and Planning Center (TURPC) to examine the economic potential of smart tourism (using new technologies to enhance travel experiences and improve efficiency), in Tehran, it highlighted the economic benefits of smart tourism and provided evidence and documentation that clarified the grounds for implementing smart tourism projects in the metropolitan area of Tehran.

According to ISNA, the tourism industry has become one of the most important sectors of the world economy today, and smart tourism is one of the emerging forms of tourism that has emerged in the wake of information technology and has attracted the attention of global tourism stakeholders.

Smart tourism tools refer to a combination of mobile hardware, software, and networks to enable interaction between tourists, stakeholders, and physical objects. The communication must be able to provide personalized services and real-time information for making smart decisions. Three specific smart tourism tools are mobile applications, augmented reality, and near-field communications.

Currently, due to the benefits of this type of tourism, countries such as Spain, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia are working on projects to realize smart destinations.

A study conducted by TURPC to examine the economic capacities of the smart tourism in Tehran,

showed that the creation and income generation from digital assets, attracting investment, increasing fees and taxes, advertising, holding events, direct sales of tourism services and products, attracting experts, selling data and information, profitability of the public transportation system, operational savings, and smart car parking spaces are among the most important capacities that Tehran Municipality can benefit from by developing the smart tourism.

Subsequently, the costs and revenues generated as a result of these capacities were matched with the expenditures and resources included in the latest municipal budget plan, and it was determined that by allocating part of the available credits in the relevant rows, the realization of the smart tourism destination in Tehran can be facilitated and its economic benefits can be enjoyed in the municipality's resources and revenues.


The results of the research indicate

that the municipality should play its role in this field and facilitate the process of realizing smart tourism in a way that, while ensuring sustainability, tourists

and citizens, stakeholders and managers can benefit from its benefits in various dimensions, including the economic dimension.

First Announcement

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1



National Iranian Oil Company

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0340019

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir. Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity
1	TUBING 3-1/2 IN., 9.2 PPF, API GRADE L-80, SEAMLESS VAM FLUSH JOINT THREAD, RANGE 2	3,000LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 33,756/04 EURO or 27,394,851,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

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PAYMENT TERM IS C.A.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex,
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 4644 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

PUBLIC RELATIONS

www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://i/ets.mporg.ir> www.setadiran.ir

Iran commemorating National Elderly Week

TEHRAN – The National Elderly Week is being observed from September 30 to October 6 in the country, focusing on improving mental and physical health, social participation, and life quality in older adults.

Simultaneous with the International Day of Older Persons, observed on October 1, this year's theme is 'Preserving the dignity, improving the health and quality of life of the elderly using neighborhood-oriented approaches', IRNA reported.

Due to the rapid growth in the number of older adults in the country, Iran is expected to enter a phase of population aging between 2041 and 2046, with nearly a third of the population being aged 60 and older by 2050.

A recent report has shown that the number of Iranians aged 65 and older is currently at 7.5 million, accounting for less than 10 percent of the country's total population.

The number of aged citizens in the country is growing by 3.62 percent, five times faster than the total population growth rate, which is 1.24 percent. For the time being, elderly women account for 52.3 percent of the total population, outnumbering men (47.7 percent).

This year, in line with the theme of the week, this year's programs are centered around three key areas: training and raising awareness, fostering respect and social participation, and promoting the physical, mental, and social well-being of the elderly.

Accordingly, each day of the week is assigned a specific theme.

Tuesday, September 30, 'the elderly and social status'

Wednesday, October 1, 'the elderly and physical health'

Thursday, October 2, 'the elderly and mental health'

Friday, October 3, 'the elderly and family'



Saturday, October 4, 'the elderly and social participation'

Sunday, October 5, 'the elderly and social support'

Monday, October 6, 'the elderly, spirituality, and life expectancy'

holding webinars, educational workshops, developing posters, educational media, media campaigns, organizing cultural and social festivals, 7th national conference on forests slated for November

TEHRAN – The 7th national conference on the country's forests is scheduled to be held from November 5-6.

Titled 'Maintaining sole ownership and integrated management of natural resources with an emphasis on social forestry in Zagros', the event will be held in the southwestern Lorestan province, IRIB reported.

The Iranian Forestry Association, in cooperation with the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, has organized the event.

The conference is centered around forestry and forest ecology, law and politics; forestry and forest management, technical and engineering subjects; forest

genetics and breeding, economic and social issues of forests; climate change in forests, and the application of new technologies in forest management.

Zagros forests, mostly located in Lorestan, are among the most important natural resources of Iran, as they constitute 40 percent of the country's forests, and play an important role in the production of a large part of the country's freshwater.

Iran seeks global co-op

The forest area in Iran amounts to approximately 14 million hectares, which constitutes 7.5 percent of the country's total land area. The forests are scattered in different regions across the country. The current per capita forest area is around 1700 square meters, while the country's per capita forest area in the world is 5600 square meters.

Addressing the international conference on the sustainable management of Zagros forests in January, the head of the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, Ali Teymouri, said, "Iran has called on international institutions and other countries to help preserve

Zagros forests through a comprehensive cooperation program."

Iran is famous for having one of the oldest forests in the world. 300,000 hectares of the forests in the country are inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list, IRNA quoted Teymouri as saying.

"Due to their geographical location, these forests have a high diversity of flora and fauna. Zagros forests are home to more than 2,500 plant and animal species that are not found in other parts of the country or even the world, which indicates their rich biological diversity.

These forests play vital economic and social functions, and contribute to local communities' livelihood. However, they are threatened by different factors such as climate change, frequent wildfires, and illegal exploitation," he added.

To address environmental challenges and improve sustainability indicators, Iran needs to develop international collaborations that focus on providing technical support, exchanging experience, financing, as well as regional and scientific cooperation, Teymouri said.

The official went on to say that Iran is willing to benefit from other countries' expertise in designing and implementing sustainable management projects for the forests. As environmental challenges are universal, the country seeks to utilize global environmental structures and facilities to restore the forests.

The sustainable management of the Zagros forests through participatory management or social forestry, incorporating economic, social, and environmental sustainability indicators, and involving local communities, government bodies, and private sectors, is on the agenda of the Natural Resources Organization of the country, the official further noted.

ments, it is also recommended to consume an iron-rich diet, such as meat and legumes.

The coverage of the iron supplementation program has risen from 57 percent in the Iranian year 1400 (March 2021– 2022) to 91 percent in 1402 (March 2023 – 2024), Ahmad Esmailzadeh, an official with the health ministry, said in May.

The vitamin D supplementation program started in the country in 2014. "Over the past three years, the coverage of the program has surged from 51 percent to 80 percent, indicating effective cooperation among the health ministry, the ministry of education, and parents," Esmailzadeh noted.

Knowledge-based companies to attend CIIE in China, CPHI in India

TEHRAN – Delegations of Iranian knowledge-based firms, operating in health sector, will participate in the China International Import Expo (CIIE) 2025 which is scheduled to take place in Shanghai from November 5 to 10, as well as the Convention on Pharmaceutical Ingredients (CPHI) and Pharmaceutical Machinery and Equipment Convention (PMEC), which will be held in India from November 25 to 27.

Supported by the Innovation and Prosperity Fund, knowledge-based companies will set up their pavilions in China.

Hosted in Shanghai since 2018, the expo is held annually to open the Chinese market to foreign goods and services. The CIIE remains a key destination for global companies seeking both visibility and tangible opportunities in China.

The expo typically features seven main exhibition areas: Food and Agricultural Products, Automobile and Smart Mobility, Intelligent Industry and Information Technology, Consumer Goods, Medical Equipment and Healthcare Products, Trade in Services, and Innovation Incubation Special Section.

The Medical Equipment and Healthcare Products Exhibition Area includes medical devices, medicines, pharmaceuticals, rehabilitation and elderly care products, supplements, and nutrients.

Knowledge-based companies will also have the opportunity to showcase their latest achievements and capabilities in CPHI & PMEC India with the support of the Vice-Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-based Economy.

It is one of the largest and most comprehensive events and trade fairs for the pharmaceutical industry in South Asia.

Pharmaceutical raw materials, Final formulations, Natural extractive pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals, Clean room technology, Machinery & equipment are among the items to be exhibited.

It aims to foster a synergistic blend of business, leadership, innovation, knowledge exchange, recognition, and networking.

Tehran to boost health ties with Beijing, New Delhi

Iran and China will implement joint programs in the pharmaceutical and medical fields under the 25-year agreement signed by the two countries, Hamid Inanlou, an official with the Food

and Drug Administration (FDA), said in September.

"The joint programs aim to boost commercial, scientific, and industrial capacities of the two nations, enhance domestic production, and facilitate access to regional markets," IRNA quoted Inanlou as saying.

A part of the 25-year strategic partnership focuses on expanding collaborations in the health sector, including sharing expertise, technology, conducting medical research, training, and exchanging specialized human resources, as well as developing new medicines, he added.

Manufacturing medical and laboratory equipment such as syringes, diagnostic kits, health products, joint investment, and the establishment of joint companies, Inanlou further noted.

In April, Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafargandi and his Indian counterpart explored the potential for the expansion of health cooperation.

The officials met on the sidelines of the eighth meeting of health ministries of member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Xi'an, China, the health ministry website reported.

During the meeting with Punya Salila Srivastava, the Indian Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the two sides highlighted the enhancement of joint efforts in the health sector, particularly in manufacturing medicines, developing vaccines, traditional medicine, and medical training.

Lauding India's achievements in the health sector, Zafargandi announced the country's readiness to foster collaboration with India in the mentioned fields, particularly supplying pharmaceutical raw materials.

Highlighting the two countries' capacities in traditional medicine thanks to their indigenous teachings, the official said, "Iran is willing to exchange knowledge and experiences with India, as well as conduct joint research in traditional medicine."

The health minister proposed promoting cooperation on primary health care, as well.

The Indian official, for her part, referred to the formerly signed agreement between the two countries, saying that India is willing to expand collaboration with Iran in different fields of the health sector.

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ENGLISH IN USE

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‘Climate change impact on Iran doubles world average’

The effects of climate change on Iran has more than doubled on average compared to other parts of the world, while southern provinces of the country are more likely to bear the consequences, secretary of environmental policy at the center for strategic studies affiliated to the presidential office has said.

"The Hoomand-Absard station in Damavand county in northeast of Tehran experienced a temperature increase of 2.7 °C over the past 50 years, while over the past 100 years, the temperature rise was about 0.76 °C," ISNA quoted Mohammad Darvish as saying on Tuesday.

Climate change impact is increasing in southern part of the country, among which Yazd province's condition has raised concern, he said, adding, the industries operating in the province must reduce their dependency on water, otherwise water scarcity might worsen in the region.

تغییرات اقلیمی در ایران دو تا سه برابر جهان

محمد درویش، دبیر سیاست محیط‌زیست مرکز بررسی‌های استراتژیک نهاد ریاست جمهوری گفته، ایران با تأثیرات تغییر اقلیمی دو تا سه برابر بیشتر از تأثیرات ایجاد شده در کره زمین روبرو شده است.

محمد درویش، در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایسنا با اشاره به گزارش‌های منتشر شده توسط سازمان هواشناسی، وزارت نیرو و سازمان آب، اظهار کرد: ایستگاه هومند آبسرد در دامنه‌های کوه دماوند طی نیم قرن اخیر افزایش دمایی حدود ۲.۷ درجه سلیوس را نشان می‌دهد و این مسئله در حالی رخ داده است که در ۱۰۰ سال گذشته، حدود ۰.۷۶ درجه سلسیوس افزایش دما داشته‌ایم.

وی اضافه کرد: هر چقدر به شهرهای جنوبی‌تر کشورمان نزدیک می‌شویم، تغییرات اقلیمی هم بیشتر می‌شود به طوری که از این میان یزد وضعیت نگران‌کننده‌ای دارد. باید میزان وابستگی صنایع در یزد نسبت به آب کاهش پیدا کند چرا که در غیر این صورت می‌تواند شتاب خشک‌سالی‌ها را افزایش دهد.

TEHRAN TIMES



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Failures are often the results of timidity and fears;
disappointments are the results of bashfulness; hours of
leisure pass away like summer-clouds, therefore, do not
waste opportunity of doing good.*

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:54 Evening: 18:06 Dawn: 4:37 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:00 (tomorrow)

“The Odd Couple” on stage in Tehran

TEHRAN- An adaptation of American playwright and screenwriter Neil Simon’s play “The Odd Couple” is on stage at Hamoon Theater in Tehran.

Hossein Kashfi Asl is the director of the play, which has been translated by Shahram Zargar.

“The Odd Couple” is a classic play that premiered on Broadway in 1965. Its success on stage led to numerous adaptations over the years, including a highly popular 1968 film, several television series, and various spin-offs and derivative works.

The story centers around two mismatched roommates, whose contrasting personalities create comedic tension and highlight themes of friendship, acceptance, and the quirks of human nature.

The original plot features Felix Ungar, a neurotic and obsessively neat news writer (or photographer in the television adaptation), who finds himself thrown out by his wife. With nowhere else to go, Felix moves in with his best friend, Oscar Madison, a laid-back, slovenly sportswriter. Despite Oscar’s carefree attitude—characterized by careless spending, gambling, and a messy apartment—he enjoys his relaxed lifestyle.

Felix, on the other hand, is perpetually uptight, obsessively tidy, and finds little joy in life, often pointing out the flaws and mistakes of others, including himself. His attempts at gentle correction often backfire, annoying his friends and even causing the collapse of their weekly poker game. Though Oscar initially feels compelled to ask Felix to leave after a brief cohabitation, he soon realizes that Felix’s presence has a positive influence on him, and their friendship endures despite their differences.

Neil Simon sold the film and television rights to Paramount Pictures in 1967. The 1968 film adaptation starred Jack Lemmon as Felix and Walter Matthau as Oscar, with Matthau reprising his stage role. The film was a major success, expanding the setting beyond just Oscar’s apartment to include various locations around New York City. Simon himself wrote the screenplay, earning an Academy Award nomination for his work, and director Gene Saks brought the story vividly to life.

The story’s popularity spurred a 1970–1975 television sitcom on ABC. Although Simon initially disapproved of the TV adaptation, he later changed his opinion, even making a cameo appearance in the final season.

More recently, from 2015 to 2017, CBS produced “The Odd Couple” sitcom starring Matthew Perry as Oscar and Thomas Lennon as Felix.

“The Odd Couple” has remained a significant part of American comedy history, adapting to changing times while preserving its core themes of friendship, eccentricity, and the humorous clash of personalities. Its various incarnations continue to entertain audiences, demonstrating the timeless appeal of Neil Simon’s witty and insightful storytelling.

Neil Simon (1927–2018) was an American playwright and screenwriter. He wrote more than 30 plays and received more combined Oscar and Tony nominations than any other writer.

He was one of the most reliable hitmakers in Broadway history, as well as one of the most performed playwrights in the world. Though primarily a comic writer, some of his plays, particularly the “Eugene Trilogy” and “The Sunshine Boys,” reflect on the twentieth century Jewish-American experience.

Isfahan children’s film festival to be held in multiple provinces across country

TEHRAN- The 37th edition of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth is set to be inaugurated on Saturday in the 19 provinces across Iran, with Isfahan taking on the role of the primary host city.

The festival’s organizers have prepared cinemas in East Azarbaijan, Bushehr, Tehran, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Zanjan, Semnan, Khorasan Razavi, South Khorasan, Qom, Kermanshah, Kerman, Golestan, Gilan, Mazandaran, Markazi, Hamedan, Hormozgan, and Yazd, each equipped to showcase the selected works and provide a platform for cultural exchange and entertainment.

This return to provincial venues follows a six-year pause, during which the festival was primarily confined to its traditional host city of Isfahan, with only limited virtual screenings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event will run until October 8, under the direction of Hamed Jafari, and will feature three main sections: a national competition including feature films, shorts, and animation; an international competition showcasing films produced after 2024 from around the world; and a special section dedicated to themes such as children affected by war, specifically focusing on Israel’s attack on Iranian soil as well as Gaza and other regions, and the Asian Films Award.

The national section sees entries vying for the prestigious

Golden Plaque, with films competing on artistic merit, innovation, and storytelling. Meanwhile, the international section aims to promote cross-cultural dialogue and showcase the diversity of global children’s cinema.

The special section highlights themes related to children experiencing conflict and hardship, emphasizing the festival’s commitment to addressing social issues through film. Over the previous editions, the festival also introduced new competitive categories, including awards for the most innovative and creative films, those with significant economic potential in related industries, and works capable of expanding into other sectors such as digital media and virtual platforms.

The festival’s history, span-

ning over 36 editions since its inception in 1982, demonstrates its importance as a cultural institution. With 21 editions held in Isfahan, six in Tehran, five in Hamedan, and one in Kerman, it has served as a platform for showcasing Iranian and international children’s cinema. The 33rd and 34th editions were held simultaneously in Tehran and Isfahan and were conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also led to adjustments in screening formats, with only feature films shown in dedicated venues while observing health protocols. Over the years, the festival has mostly been held in October, with occasional editions in other months.

Given the new generation of children and adolescents who have grown up immersed in dig-

ital technology from birth, the festival has undertaken significant policy reforms since its 32nd edition to better serve and engage this audience. These reforms include the addition of four new competitive sections, which have introduced awards recognizing innovation, economic potential, cultural impact, and digital content such as web series. These developments aim to elevate the role of filmmaking as a tool not only for artistic expression but also for economic development and cultural diplomacy, emphasizing the importance of creating wealth within the film industry and fostering a new generation of filmmakers.

In this context, the festival has also launched initiatives to support young filmmakers through the Olympiad of Youth Filmmakers, held in collaboration with the Farabi Cinema Foundation and the Iranian Young Cinema Society.

Another significant development is the establishment of a video library designed to increase Iran’s share in the global market for children’s and youth cinema.

International collaboration remains a core focus of the festival’s strategic vision. Over the past year, Iran has signed numerous memoranda of understanding and cooperation agreements with countries such as India, Serbia, Armenia, and Pakistan, aiming to strengthen co-productions and promote cultural exchange.

Strengthening cultural and tourism diplomacy: Indonesia and Iran move closer

By Sedigheh Hosseini

TEHRAN- An Iranian media delegation, including journalists, influencers, and media professionals, recently traveled to Indonesia to gain a deeper understanding of the country’s tourism and cultural opportunities. A reporter from Tehran Times accompanied the delegation to cover the visit and provide an in-depth report on Indonesia’s real landscape and the potential for cultural cooperation between the two nations.

During an exclusive interview with Tehran Times, Adfikri Kevin Marvel, Cultural Attaché and diplomat of the Indonesian Embassy in Tehran, emphasized the importance of direct people-to-people interactions and highlighted the role of the visit in strengthening bilateral relations and promoting cultural and tourism diplomacy.

Discovering the real Indonesia

Marvel stated that such programs help Iranians gain an authentic perspective of Indonesia—from the stunning natural landscapes and beautiful beaches of Bali to the lifestyle and cultural differences between various re-

gions, such as Bali and Jakarta. He described the experience as a valuable opportunity to understand Indonesia’s culture and way of life.

People-to-people diplomacy: the key to effective engagement

The Indonesian Cultural Attaché stressed that continuing cultural exchange programs and fostering familiarity between the peoples of both countries normalizes direct interactions and builds a solid foundation for long-term cooperation.

Raising awareness at multiple levels

Marvel also noted that awareness initiatives should be carried out at different levels—from grassroots communities to government institutions, as well as the media and journalists. He emphasized that this multi-level approach can deepen mutual understanding and make bilateral relations more sustainable.

Continuing the programs: a strategic necessity

In conclusion, the Indonesian Cultural At-

taché stated that sustaining these programs is essential for advancing cultural, tourism, and public diplomacy relations between Iran and Indonesia. He underscored that consistency and focus are required to maximize their impact.

Cartoon of Day

Trump’s Plan
Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

“Hegel and the Foundations of Literary Theory” published in Persian

TEHRAN – The Persian translation of the book “Hegel and the Foundations of Literary Theory” written by M. R. Habib has been released in the bookstores across the country.

Edris Ranji has translated the book and Qoqnoos Publishing House has brought it out in 520 pages, IRNA reported.

Do the various forms of literary theory – deconstruction, Marxism, new historicism, feminism, post-colonialism, and cultural/digital studies – have anything in common? If so, what are the fundamental principles of theory? What is its ideological orientation? Can it still be of use to us in understanding basic intellectual and ethical dilemmas of our time? These questions continue to perplex both students and teachers of literary theory.

Habib finds the answers in theory’s largely unacknowledged roots in the thought of German

philosopher Hegel, whose insights continue to frame the very terms of theory to this day. Habib explains Hegel’s complex ideas and how they have percolated through the intellectual history of the last century.

Originally published in 2019, this book will interest teachers and students of literature, literary theory and the history of ideas, illuminating how our modern world came into being, and how we can better understand the salient issues of our own time.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) was a German philosopher and a major figure in the tradition of German idealism. His influence on Western philosophy extends across a wide range of topics—from metaphysical issues in epistemology and ontology, to political philosophy, to the philosophy of art.

Hegel was born in Stuttgart.

His life spanned the transitional period between the Enlightenment and the Romantic movement. His thought was shaped by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, events which he interpreted from a philosophical perspective. His academic career culminated in his appointment to the chair of philosophy at the University of Berlin, where he remained a prominent intellectual figure until his death.

Throughout his work, Hegel strove to correct what he argued were untenable dualisms common in modern philosophy. His principal achievement was the development of a comprehensive philosophical system, often termed absolute idealism, to account for reality as a unified whole.

Hegel’s characteristic procedure, often termed dialectical or speculative, assesses concepts and forms of consciousness according to their own internal

criteria, revealing their contradictions and one-sidedness. This leads to their resolution in a higher, more comprehensive unity which both cancels and preserves the initial stage. His major works, including the “Phenomenology of Spirit” (1807) and the “Science of Logic” (1812–1816), detail this systematic vision. In his political philosophy, he famously asserted that “world history is progress in the consciousness of freedom.”

Hegel’s influence has been profound and divisive. After his death, his followers split into rival “Right” and “Left” Hegelian camps. The Left, including Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx, adapted his dialectical method for their materialist critiques of society. In the twentieth century, his thought was further developed in traditions such as French Hegelianism and critical theory, and became a major point of reference for existentialism.