



Palestinian artists paint graffiti depicting the "Global Sumud Flotilla" on the wall of a building to support the flotilla, which set sail to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza, in Deir al-Balah, Gaza on October 3, 2025.

Sea of Resistance, Shores of Repression

Steadfast in defiance, activists detained after Israel intercepts Gaza flotilla

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – Israeli naval forces intercepted and boarded the Polish-flagged Marinette on Friday, the last vessel of the Global Sumud flotilla, taking control roughly 42.5 nautical miles off Gaza and towing the boat to Ashdod while detaining its six crew.

The seizure completed the dismantling of a 42-ship convoy after more than 450 activists had already been taken into custody during earlier boardings.

The convoy was not merely symbolic theater. Named "Sumud" meaning steadfastness, the mission combined shipments of food and medicine with a direct challenge to Israel's illegal naval blockade.

Calls for sanctions rise as Israel intercepts Gaza-bound flotilla

By Staff writer

TEHRAN – Worldwide protests have erupted following Israel's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla, a convoy carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza, with demonstrators demanding tough sanctions against the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Crowds gathered to protest the Israeli navy's blockade of more than 40 ships carrying roughly 500 people, including prominent figures such as climate activist Greta Thunberg and various politicians. The flotilla was attempting to reach Gaza, where the UN has reported famine conditions after two years of Israel's ongoing military operations described as genocidal.

Sumud flotilla speaks volumes beyond humanitarian aid to Gaza

By Bahram Moradi

TEHRAN – The Israeli military intercepted dozens of boats sailing as part of an aid flotilla towards Gaza, detaining hundreds of passengers.

The Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) was trying to break Israel's 18-year blockade of Gaza and get aid into the war-ravaged enclave using ships that set sail from ports across the Mediterranean, CNN reported.

The convoy set sail from Barcelona, Spain, on August 31 and was bolstered by other activist ships from various Mediterranean ports as it moved closer to Gaza.

Among the participants are lawmakers from Spain and Italy, as well as Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg.

Global anger at Gaza flotilla raid

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – International reaction is mounting after Israeli occupation forces stormed the Global Sumud Flotilla.

The attack has sparked widespread condemnation, diplomatic concern, and calls for accountability from governments and organizations around the world. Below are some of those reactions.

Flotilla organizers

The Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) confirmed that all 461 people onboard the flotilla have been "kidnapped" in international waters for defying the Israeli siege on Gaza.

Participants of GSF have been intercepted and kidnapped by Israeli forces for daring to sail against the illegal blockade of Gaza. They now face imprisonment – punished for their solidarity and courage."

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Landmark Iran-Russia partnership treaty officially takes effect

TEHRAN – The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, in a statement, announced that the Iranian-Russian Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership is legally binding as of October 2, 2025.

"The conclusion of the treaty mirrors the willpower of leaders of the two countries to further deepen and enhance relations in all areas of mutual interest based on mutual respect, good neighborliness and common interests of the two nations," read the statement.

"The Iranian-Russian Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership is a milestone in the history of relations between the two countries and envisions the upgrading of cordial ties between the two nations in various areas of mutual interest," the statement also read. ► Page 2

Israel's digital efforts to manufacture unrest in Iran and promote Pahlavi

TEHRAN – An article on Haaretz has reported a wide-ranging Israeli influence campaign targeting Iran, aiming to promote the return of the overthrown Pahlavi monarchy.

According to reports by Haaretz, TheMarker, and the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab, Israel has been running Persian-language online operations designed to amplify the image of Reza Pahlavi, the son of the deposed Shah, and to encourage anti-government sentiment inside Iran. ► Page 3

Pezeshkian visits Hormozgan to inaugurate projects, highlight economic potential

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian arrived in Hormozgan Province on Thursday for a one-day trip, marking the ninth provincial visit of his administration.

Pezeshkian, leading a high-ranking delegation, was welcomed at Bandar Abbas International Airport by local officials including Governor Mohammad Ashouri Taziani.

The trip focused on economic development, infrastructure and investment opportunities in the strategic southern province.

Project inaugurations and consultations

During the visit, Pezeshkian inaugurated two major projects: a power generation plant and a seawater desalination facility.

He also met separately with school construction donors, business and investment leaders, political and social figures, academics and local elites to hear their concerns on equitable development and social justice. ► Page 4

US pushing Lebanon into chaos under guise of financial and security support

By Sondoss AlAsaad

BEIRUT—Recent developments reveal that Lebanon is being forcibly pushed down a dangerous path, as the United States works to transform the Lebanese Army from a national institution into a tool within its regional program aimed at disarming Hezbollah.

Reuters quoted sources in Washington and Beirut as saying that the administration of President Donald Trump had agreed to provide \$230 million to the army and internal security forces.

This move, it said, aims to "support Lebanese sovereignty and implement Resolution 1701," but is essentially an attempt to pit the military against Hezbollah. ► Page 5



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Memorial held in Tehran to mark one-year anniversary of Hezbollah chiefs' assassinations

TEHRAN – A memorial service was held in the Iranian capital, Tehran, on October 2, 2025 to mark the first anniversary of the assassination of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Sayyed Hashem Safieddine, the former leaders of Lebanese Resistance movement Hezbollah.

People from all walks of life converged on Imam Hussein square in the heart of Tehran to pay tribute to the late secretaries-general of Hezbollah. ► Page 2



Exclusive Interview
Islamabad sees snapback sanctions as obstacle to dialogue, Pakistani scholar says

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TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Tehran must act in line with its national interests

In a note, Kayhan discussed the activation of the snapback mechanism by the European trio (Britain, France and Germany) and Iran's nuclear program, writing: Snapback does not limit Iran's nuclear program; rather, it accelerates the collapse of oversight. Snapback does not limit Iran's nuclear program; it accelerates the collapse of oversight. Rather than building on the recent Iran-IAEA framework that could restore some transparency, snapback undermines it. By closing the door to diplomacy, it also ensures that Iran's nuclear program will only become more secretive and more fragmented. Russia and China have rejected the move by the three European countries outright, saying that a party that violates a treaty cannot legally invoke its provisions. The two veto-wielding powers in the Security Council have announced that they will not implement snapback. This means that not only will they refuse to comply with sanctions, but even Security Council committees will likely be suspended. Perhaps most importantly, many Iranians are coming to a bitter conclusion: Whether Iran remains in the NPT or not, whether it cooperates with inspectors or not, the United States and Israel may strike again. The lesson for Iran is that international rules and institutions no longer matter, so Tehran must act according to its own national interests.

Iran: The way out of the crisis

In an interview with the Iran newspaper, Dr. Seyyed Jalal Dehghani Firouzabadi, a professor of international relations, discussed how to navigate the post-snapback crisis. He said: Ways out of the crisis require a multifaceted, cautious, and gradual strategy; radical, emotional solutions increase the risk of escalating the conflict. Therefore, the necessary steps include implementing "smart coercive diplomacy" and focusing on "preventing the escalation of the crisis" in the critical months ahead. At the same time, maximum exploitation of relations with Russia, China, and other non-Western partners to neutralize sanctions and alternative economic projects by strengthening economic diplomacy. Along with these, increasing domestic resilience and military deterrence, especially air defense, should be given priority to increase the cost of any military option against Iran. If these measures are implemented simultaneously and in a coordinated manner, the chances of overcoming the current crisis can be increased, and threats can be transformed into diplomatic and economic opportunities.

FM Araghchi marks 76th founding anniversary of PRC with congratulatory message

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has extended warm congratulations to the government and people of China on the 76th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic, praising Beijing's long-term development and reaffirming Tehran's commitment to deepening bilateral ties.

In a social media post published on Thursday, Araghchi said China's progress since 1949 shows how a nation committed to independence, self-reliance and self-strengthening can secure advances that attract global attention. "As Iran's comprehensive strategic partner, and regardless of any possible changes in the international environment, Iran will continue its cooperation with China," he added, expressing confidence that bilateral cooperation would yield "fruitful results."

Additionally, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian congratulated China on the 76th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, describing the Asian country as a key supporter of shared prosperity at the international level.

The Iranian president also highlighted that the complex and changing international and regional conditions make it increasingly essential to strengthen and expand bilateral relations.

Pezeshkian expressed optimism that mutual respect and common interests will further strengthen the ties between the two nations.

Shargh: Impact of CFT on Iran's diplomatic strategy

In a commentary, Shargh discussed the consent of the members of the Expediency Council with Iran joining the CFT and wrote: Experts believe that implementing FATF standards can facilitate Iran's access to the global banking system and restore banking relations, an issue that is vital for oil and non-oil exports, attracting foreign investment, and even financing domestic projects. But the dimensions of this decision are not only economic. On the political level, agreeing to the CFT can be a positive signal to the international community, especially to European countries that invite Iran to adhere to global standards. In a situation where snapback sanctions against Iran have been activated and the atmosphere in foreign relations is tense, such a decision shows that Tehran is still ready to engage constructively with the international system in line with its interests. This message is especially important for countries that still have openings for economic interaction with Iran. The approval of the Expediency Council can pave the way for new talks and limited banking and financial agreements with some regional and European partners.

Donya-e-Eqtesad: Creating opportunities or killing opportunities?

The activation of the snapback mechanism and the return of secondary sanctions against Iran will quickly spread to the economy and the daily lives of Iranians. In this context, banks and financial institutions in various countries, from the Emirates and Oman to Turkey and Europe, have been required to examine the origin of Iranian assets and financial transactions more carefully. This situation creates a serious dilemma for many Iranian economic actors: accepting the risk of blocking resources and assets or transferring capital into the country. This trend could be the beginning of a new wave of reverse financial migration on a billion-dollar scale. The return of Iranian capital to the country is a reality that will happen sooner or later, and this trend is simultaneously the greatest opportunity and the most serious threat to the Iranian economy. If the economic governance system is not reformed, this wave could lead to unbridled inflation, favoritism, and a greater social divide. But if reforms are carried out, the return of capital will become a springboard for infrastructure development and bring Iran's economy closer to global standards. The country now faces a fateful choice: creating opportunities or burning opportunities?

The diplomatic messages follow a high-level Iranian visit to China led by President Masoud Pezeshkian. Pezeshkian headed a delegation to Beijing on August 31 to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and SCO Plus summits, which brought together leaders and senior officials from more than 30 countries.

Speaking on the sidelines of the SCO summit in Beijing on September 2, President Pezeshkian told Chinese counterparts that Iran is prepared to work with China "under any circumstances" to raise bilateral relations to their highest level. "We are ready for cooperation for the implementation of all provisions of the comprehensive 25-year agreement of the two countries," he said, describing Beijing as a "strong and determined friend and ally."

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei also praised China's long-term pursuit of development and self-reliance following Iranian President's visit. In his message on X, the Leader underscored the importance of deepening strategic cooperation with Beijing across political, economic and security fields and called on both countries to continue expanding ties that serve their mutual interests.

Iranian officials noted the recent exchanges as part of a longer strategic trajectory between Tehran and Beijing — one built on shared interests in economic cooperation, regional stability, and long-term strategic engagement.

Landmark Iran-Russia partnership treaty officially takes effect

From page 1 ► "By specifying areas and priorities of cooperation between the two countries, this significant document delineates a bright framework for the enhancement of relations in different diplomatic, economic, trade, scientific-technological, energy, investment, defense cultural and other areas and lays the groundwork for coordination and synergy to serve mutual interests and boost cooperation to safeguard international peace and security and face growing threats and challenges against the rule of law on the international stage as well as the principles and objectives of the UN Charter," said the statement.

"Being cognizant of the fundamental significance of safeguarding the principles and objectives of the UN Charter in order to protect international peace and security, Iran and Russia spare no effort to safeguard multilateralism and respect for international law, including through the enhancement of cooperation



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) shakes hands with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the 25th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Tianjin, China, on September 1, 2025.

within the framework of multilateral mechanisms and organizations such as the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," the statement added.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has also announced that the treaty has officially come into

effect, marking a landmark in bilateral relations.

The Iranian-Russian Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, signed on 17 January 2025, by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, is a treaty for the improvement of

ties between the two nations.

Under the deal, Iran and Russia aim to significantly enhance their collaboration across all sectors, including defense, energy, finance, transportation, industries, agriculture, culture, science, and technology. The treaty marks a turning point, opening a new chapter in reciprocal ties between the two sides.

"This treaty reflects a strategic choice at the highest level of political leadership in Russia and Iran, aimed at strengthening comprehensive friendly relations and good neighborliness," the Russian Foreign Ministry has noted.

Moscow has also emphasized that the development is a key watershed in the history of relations between the two countries, upgrading their partnership to a new level.

The treaty is seen as a reflection of the strategic alignment between Russia and Iran. It aims to boost cooperation on all fronts, including economic and military.

Iran condemns G7's support for reinstatement of anti-Iran sanctions



TEHRAN – Tehran has condemned as illegal and unjustifiable a statement released by the Group of Seven (G7) in support of the reinstatement of sanctions against Iran.

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said the G7's backing for the invocation of annulled UN Security Council sanctions against Iran amounts to the group's support for a move which is in violation of international law.

He said the Group of Seven has welcomed a move where the three European countries and the US brought back sanctions against Iran by abusing a mechanism originally formulated to settle differences over the

2015 Iran nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"The Group of Seven's stance will not be able to change the illegal and unjustifiable nature of the above-said move," the spokesperson noted.

The spokesperson recalled the Israeli regime's military aggression against Iran in the middle of diplomatic talks in coordination and collaboration with the US followed by Washington's direct attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, dismissing as "a sheer lie and distortion of reality" the Group of Seven's claim that "the three European countries and the US had, time and again and as a goodwill gesture, proposed diplomatic solutions to prevent a return to the past and achieve a comprehensive and lasting negotiated settlement."

"Due to its illegal and unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018 ensued by constant violations of international law with regards to Iran as well as obstructing the enforcement of the JCPOA, the United States is basically the root cause and main culprit behind the current situation," said Baqaei.

"Moreover, due to following the US and failure to fulfil their commitments and supporting the US and the Israeli regime in the

military aggression against Iran's peaceful nuclear installations, the three European countries not only failed to make good on a major part of their obligations under the JCPOA, but also, with blatant malice, turned a blind eye to all of Iran's initiatives and efforts for diplomacy," the spokesperson explained.

Baqaei further touched upon the Group of Seven's indifference toward the genocidal Israeli regime's nuclear arsenal, describing as hypocritical the group's approach vis-à-vis the non-proliferation issue.

"Because of their hypocritical and irresponsible performance with regards to the rule of law, peace and security, these seven countries are morally incompetent, whatsoever, to give advice to others," he said.

In a statement, the Group of Seven announced the group comprising Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain, the United States and EU foreign policy chief backed the activation of the so-called snapback mechanism by the European Troika to re-impose UN Security Council Sanctions as well as other restrictions against Iran.

The group claimed the move was the result of Iran's constant failure to live up to its commitments under the JCPOA.

Memorial held in Tehran to mark one-year anniversary of Hezbollah chiefs' assassinations



The first martyrdom anniversary of secretary general of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah and other Hezbollah leader was held at Imam Hossein (AS) Square of Tehran on October 2, 2025.

TEHRAN – A memorial service was held in the Iranian capital, Tehran, on October 2, 2025 to mark the first anniversary of the assassination of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Sayyed Hashem Safieddine, the former leaders of Lebanese Resistance movement Hezbollah.

People from all walks of life converged on Imam Hussein square in the heart of Tehran to pay tribute to the late secretaries-general of Hezbollah.

The ceremony reflected deep admiration for Nasrallah and Safieddine's unwavering dedication to the Resistance and highlighted their enduring legacy as two remarkable leaders in the region.

Safieddine was the cousin of and presumed successor to Hassan Nasrallah, who had been the leader of Hezbollah until he was assassinated in an Israeli airstrike on the Hezbollah headquarters on 27 September 2024.

On September 27, 2025, 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.

Hezbollah, Resistance Front will remain 'alive and active': Iran parliament speaker

Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said on Thursday that Hezbollah's strength stems both from the people's support and its presence on the battlefield, stressing that the Resistance Front remains "alive and active."

Qalibaf made the remarks at a ceremony in Qom's Imam Kazem Seminary marking the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hezbollah's secretaries. Reviewing the history of the Zionist regime, he recalled its formation in the aftermath of World War II, noting that the

United Nations Security Council, with the support of Britain and the United States, recognized the regime and solidified its existence.

"Over the past 77 years, the Zionist regime has produced nothing but a record of occupation, aggression, and violations of nations' rights," he said.

Qalibaf stressed that even in times when Israel has announced peace or ceasefires, it has continued to pursue wars of imposition and domination over regional states. "From Camp David and Oslo to other agreements, the regime's track record exposes its hostile and child-killing nature," he said.

The Speaker emphasized that the Islamic Republic and the Iranian nation, through steadfastness, unity, and support for Hezbollah and the Resistance Front, have proven that they will never surrender to aggression. "With national solidarity and popular participation, Iran preserves and strengthens the power of resistance," Qalibaf said, adding that this strategy will pave the way for future achievements and repeated victories in the region.

Israel’s digital efforts to manufacture unrest in Iran and promote Pahlavi

From Page 1 ▶ The revelations shed light on the extensive use of artificial intelligence, fake social media accounts, and disinformation to destabilize the Islamic Republic at critical moments, including during Israel's recent military aggression against Iran.

Citizen Lab researchers found that, during the Israeli bombardment of Tehran's Evin Prison on June 23, a network of inauthentic accounts began circulating fabricated videos and false reports even before Iranian media had confirmed the attack. The material, some of it AI-generated, was designed to look like it came from ordinary Iranians near the scene. The campaign, dubbed “Prison Break”, aimed to provoke unrest by encouraging people to rush to the prison to “free family members.”

Researchers concluded that the speed and precision of the disinformation effort strongly suggest prior knowledge of the Israeli strike, making it highly unlikely that any independent third party could have carried out the operation.

The same investigations also exposed a separate Israeli-backed digital operation that promotes Reza Pahlavi as a political alternative to Iran's current leadership. The campaign has relied on “avatars”—fake online identities posing as Iranian citizens—to flood social media



platforms such as X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram with pro-Pahlavi content.

Sources familiar with the project confirmed that native Persian speakers were recruited to produce content and that artificial intelligence tools were employed to generate videos and narratives favorable to the former crown prince. In some cases, the network amplified posts from Pahlavi's Israeli ally, Innovation, Science and Technology Minister Gila Gamliel, who publicly hosted him during his first official visit to Israel in 2023.

An August 7 article by Haaretz also reported that less than a week after the war with Iran, Gila Gamliel posted an AI-gen-

erated video relating to Iran on X that quickly racked up more than 600,000 views. Researchers identified hundreds of suspicious X accounts that artificially boosted Gamliel's Iran-related content. Unlike her posts on domestic issues, which attracted only a few thousand views, her Pahlavi-themed posts consistently reached hundreds of thousands of users.

The investigations revealed that the pro-Pahlavi network was not operating in isolation. Citizen Lab documented another set of Israeli-linked accounts that spread AI-generated videos, fake BBC Persian reports, and deepfakes of Iranian figures.

Researchers discovered that

dozens of Telegram groups linked to the campaign were simultaneously encouraging protests in Iran while recycling inauthentic material. Some accounts even posed as Iranian women to lure real users into sharing their personal stories.

Experts note that the Israeli government has openly embraced Reza Pahlavi in hopes of legitimizing a campaign of regime change in Iran. Analysts warn, however, that Israel's overt support for the shah's son only strengthens the argument long made by Iranian officials—that hostile powers in Washington and Tel Aviv seek to restore a client monarchy in Tehran.

“Ultimately, Israel's sponsorship of Pahlavi is a propaganda tool,” one Israeli analyst admitted. “It serves more for public relations than any realistic political alternative.”

The revelations demonstrate that Israel is conducting not only military strikes against Iran but also parallel digital warfare designed to manipulate Iranian public opinion, spread chaos, and undermine the Islamic Republic's legitimacy.

The exposure of these operations underscores the extent to which Iran's enemies rely on fabricated narratives and online deception to advance their political and military objectives.

Tractor’s stalemates symbolize a deeper crisis in Iranian football

TEHRAN – After two rounds of the 2025/26 AFC Champions League Elite, Iran's lone representatives, Tractor, find themselves struggling in eighth place in the 12-team West Zone table, undefeated, yet unconvincing.

Their latest goalless draw against Al Wahda of the UAE marked the second consecutive match without a win, and the mood in Tabriz, much like the broader sentiment in Iranian football, is growing increasingly frustrated.

This is not just about Tractor. The draw at home, in a match they were widely expected to win, adds another chapter to Iran's disturbing record in Asian competition.

No Iranian club have won a match in the continent's top-tier competitions for 11 consecutive games, a streak that includes teams like Persepolis, Esteghlal, Sepahan, and now Tractor. Six draws, five defeats, no victories! The numbers are too clear to be defended with excuses.

Tractor's performance so far is particularly disappointing given their favorable draw. While Saudi clubs like Al Hilal and Al Ittihad are drawn in Group of Death, Tractor dodged the Saudi giants and found themselves in a group with comparatively beatable UAE and Qatari opponents. The expectation was clear: qualification should be the minimum. And yet, what we've seen is a team lacking urgency, ambition, and, quite critically, a Plan B.

The finger of blame must partially point to head coach Dragan Skocic. In their match against Al Wahda, despite an ineffective attack and mounting pressure, Skocic bafflingly refused to make a single substitution. Whether it's tactical rigidity or mistrust in his squad depth, the result is the same: a team unable to adapt mid-game, often flatlining when it matters most.

The lack of progress at the club level mirrors the trajectory of Iran's national team. With recent failures to beat teams like Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the sense is that Iranian football, once a continental powerhouse, is becoming increasingly irrelevant on the Asian stage.

The decline is undeniable. Just a few years ago, Iranian teams were serious contenders. Today, they're being outplayed not just by powerhouses like Al Hilal, but by mid-tier sides and, in some cases.

The AFC Champions League Elite was meant to showcase the best of the best. Tractor's presence should be a point of pride for Iranian football. Instead, it's a sobering reminder of just how far the standards have fallen.

Iran learn fate at AFC U23 Asian Cup 2026

TEHRAN – The teams aiming for glory at the AFC U23 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026 learnt their challengers following the Official Draw at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

The 16-strong cast were divided into four groups for the seventh edition of the tournament that will kick off on January 6, 2026.

Hosts and 2022 champions Saudi Arabia will have 2018 runners-up Vietnam, Jordan and debutants Kyrgyzstan for company in Group A.

Two-time and defending champions Japan will have to contend with 2024 hosts Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Syria in Group B.

Hoping to deny Uzbekistan – who lifted the trophy in 2018 – progress from Group C will be 2020 champions Korea Republic, Iran and Lebanon, who will be making their first appearance at the Finals.

Group D top seeds and 2013 champions Iraq will have to overcome the challenge of Australia, Thailand and China PR.

The top two finishers of each group will

progress to the Knockout Stage, with the Final showdown to be contested on January 24, 2026.

- Draw Result
- Group A:** Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan
- Group B:** Japan, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Syria
- Group C:** Uzbekistan, Korea Republic, Iran, Lebanon
- Group D:** Iraq, Australia, Thailand, China

Al Muharraq coach Manuel happy for win over Esteghlal

TEHRAN – Fernando Manuel declared that Al Muharraq SC showcased the quality of Bahraini football after his side defeated Iran's Esteghlal 1-0 on Wednesday in Group A of the AFC Champions League Two 2025-26 intact.

Juninho Piauiense's strike on the hour mark made the difference as Al Muharraq drew level on points with UAE's Al Wasl FC at the top of the standings.

“I'm happy that we were able to get the three points. I said before the game that the players' performance on the pitch is important. We deserved to win and we had good quality,” said Manuel.

The Bahraini side controlled much of the encounter but needed to defend in the closing stages as Esteghlal pushed for the equalizer.

“We controlled the game and deserved to get three points. Of course, Esteghlal had some chances towards the end of the game and we were lucky they did not score.

“We never came for a draw, and it was normal if we defended for some minutes because we were playing away. We had to play with strategy to get the three points, which we achieved.”

Iran’s Afrooz takes gold at 2025 New Delhi

TEHRAN – Saeid Afrooz of Iran claimed a gold medal at the New Delhi 2025 World Para Athletics Championships on Thursday.

He finished in first place at the Men's Javelin Throw F34 Final with 41.52 meters. He also improved on his own mark of 41.16 set in World Championships in Kobe, Japan.

Colombian throwers Diego Meneses Medina and Mauricio Valencia won silver and bronze medals with 39.19m and 37.94m, respectively.

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

Ricardo Sapinto: Result against Al Muharraq was not fair

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team head coach Ricardo Sapinto says that the loss against Al Muharraq in the AFC Champions League Two 2025-26 was not fair.

The Iranian team lost to Al Muharraq in Group A in Tehran's Shahr-e Qods Stadium.

“This result is not normal or fair. We had 70 percent of possession. We created many chances. Maybe they weren't great chances but at least we shouldn't lose the game. It was a good game and we deserved more than this,” said Sapinto.

“We had worked on the defensive weaknesses during the week but we conceded again. Small mistakes punish a team. The players played well and the least we should have done was not lose,” the Portuguese added.

Esteghlal next faces Jordanian side Al Wehdat, who is also searching for the first win, while Al Muharraq hosts Al Wasl.

Islamabad sees snapback sanctions as obstacle to dialogue, Pakistani scholar says

Dr. Qaiser Ahmed outlines Pakistan’s balancing act between East and West while preserving cooperation with Iran

By Sahar Dadajoo

TEHRAN – The reactivation of the snapback mechanism at the United Nations Security Council has once again placed Iran's nuclear program at the center of global diplomatic tensions. Following the European trio's move to reinstate sanctions, Tehran has sharply criticized the decision, while countries across the region are weighing the implications for stability, trade, and security.

Pakistan, situated at the crossroads of South and Central Asia and sharing a long border with Iran, faces unique challenges and opportunities in navigating this evolving landscape.

To better understand Islamabad's perspective, the Tehran Times conducted an exclusive interview with Dr. Raja Qaiser Ahmed, Associate Professor of International Relations at Quaid-i-Azam University.

With extensive expertise in South Asian geopolitics, international law, and foreign policy, Dr. Ahmed provides an in-depth analysis of Pakistan's stance on the snapback sanctions, the role of its strategic partners, and the broader regional and global con-

sequences of the UNSC decision.

Below is the full text of the interview:

Given Pakistan’s emphasis on diplomacy over coercion in addressing the Iranian nuclear issue, how does Islamabad perceive the re-imposition of snapback sanctions under UNSC Resolution 2231?

Pakistan has consistently emphasized diplomacy, dialogue, and regional stability over coercion. In this context, the re-imposition of snapback sanctions is perceived as a development that could complicate ongoing diplomatic efforts to maintain the Iran nuclear deal framework. Islamabad advocates for measured engagement and urges all parties to prioritize constructive dialogue to prevent escalation and preserve regional peace.

How do Pakistan’s strategic partnerships with China and Russia influence its position on the snapback mechanism, especially in contrast to its relations with Western powers?

Pakistan's close strategic partnerships with China and Russia provide it with a perspective that prioritizes multilateralism and

balanced regional engagement. While maintaining cooperative relations with Western powers, Pakistan's approach is informed by the emphasis on sovereignty, non-interference, and negotiation-led solutions, reflecting the diplomatic philosophies shared with its Eastern partners.

What are the potential implications of the snapback sanctions on Pakistan-Iran relations, particularly concerning trade, border security, and regional cooperation?

Snapback sanctions could have tangible effects on Pakistan-Iran ties, particularly in trade, border management, and broader regional cooperation. Pakistan seeks to ensure that sanctions do not disrupt legitimate cross-border trade, energy projects, or collaborative efforts on security and counter-terrorism. Maintaining stable and mutually beneficial bilateral relations remains a core priority for Islamabad.

From a legal standpoint, how does Pakistan interpret the provisions of UNSC Resolution 2231, and what role does international law play in its diplomatic approach to the snapback

The E3 even insisted that Grossi submit his comprehensive report as soon as possible, prior to the deadline set by the resolution they themselves had proposed to the Board of Governors.

Eventually, the Director-General's report was published in early June, and despite Grossi's unconstructive approach in preparing the report — including going beyond his mandate as outlined in the resolution, reopening closed nuclear files, and reviving outdated accusations — it contained two main and fundamental messages: first, that Iran has no nuclear weapons program; and second, that all nuclear materials and activities in Iran are under the IAEA supervision and safeguards.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

An exhausted legitimacy: Why the E3 has no credibility and standing on Iran’s nuclear issue

By Mohammad Hassaninejad

TEHRAN – At least in the past year, the three European countries, known as the E3, have not only failed to take constructive steps toward finding a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear issue, but have continuously worked to sabotage any prospect in that direction.

This behavior partly reflects the chronic inability of the E3 to help resolve global issues but can also be interpreted as a sinister move to pave the way for what happened on September 26 in New York — triggering the so-called “snapback” mechanism and completing the cycle of undermining diplomacy and multilateralism.

Recalling the course of recent events helps in better understanding such assessment.

In November 2024, before the IAEA Board of Governors meeting, its Director-General, Grossi visited Tehran and reached an agreement with Iran's Atomic Energy Organization on how to deal with the 60% enriched uranium. Pleased with this achievement, he left Tehran. However, in Vienna, instead of welcoming this constructive agreement, the E3 countries imposed a resolution on the Board of Governors, demanding the Director-General to provide a comprehensive report on Iran's nuclear activities. Knowing that the composition of the Board favored them, the Europeans' sole concern was to pressure Iran and prepare the ground for the snapback mechanism. Therefore, they chose to disregard Grossi's agreement with Tehran and pursue their own agenda.

Iranian ambassador says \$30b trade target with Iraq is achievable

TEHRAN – Iran's ambassador to Baghdad said on Thursday that the two countries are determined to deepen economic and commercial ties, adding that a bilateral trade target of \$30 billion is within reach.

Speaking at a joint meeting between the governors of Ilam in western Iran and Iraq's Maysan Province on the reopening of the Chilat border crossing, Mohammad Kazem Al-e-Sadegh announced that preliminary approval had been given to build the crossing.

He said the project fits into both governments' broader strategy to expand regional trade and economic cooperation.

Al-e-Sadegh said the new crossing could turn Ilam Province into a hub for economic exchanges. "If managed properly, this project will not only boost local economic activity and create jobs, but also directly improve the quality of life for border communities through infrastructure development," he said.

Highlighting the economic potential on both sides, the envoy described the Chilat corridor as a key facilitator for achieving the trade volume target.

"This border crossing can become a successful model for joint cooperation between Iran and Iraq," he said, adding that the move would increase the region's share of international trade and meet the needs of local border populations.

The opening of the Chilat crossing in Dehloran County, adjacent to the town of Ali Gharbi in Iraq's Maysan Province, is part of Tehran and Baghdad's agreements to strengthen cross-border economic cooperation, particularly in frontier provinces.

On Thursday, Iranian and Iraqi officials, including the governors of Ilam and Maysan, parliamentary representatives and Al-e-Sadegh, inspected the border area to review final steps before reopening.

With its proximity to Maysan's capital Amarah, Chilat is seen as a strategic economic gateway that could become a key channel for Iranian exports to Iraq and the wider region.

Dehloran, rich in oil and gas reserves and home to 123,000 hectares of fertile farmland, is a major agricultural and energy center in Ilam Province. The opening of the border market is expected to boost exports and foreign exchange earnings. The area ranks second nationally in the production of rapeseed, a strategic oilseed crop.

The reopening is also expected to ease heavy traffic during the annual Arbäeen pilgrimage. Currently, most pilgrims cross through the congested Mehran terminal. Authorities say diverting part of the flow to Chilat, especially during peak periods, will help balance traffic and improve service quality at both crossings.

Ilam Province has the longest shared border with Iraq at 430 kilometers, 220 of which run through Dehloran County.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$3 billion to Iraq during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22).

CBI governor says solar projects to receive immediate financing

TEHRAN – The governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) said solar energy projects will receive immediate financing, underlining the sector's priority for the government.

Mohammadreza Farzin told a gathering of business leaders and traders at the Isfahan Chamber of Commerce that the banking system has been instructed to swiftly fund both small- and large-scale solar initiatives.

Farzin, who traveled to the province to meet private-sector representatives, said solar energy is among President Masoud Pezeshkian's top priorities, and the banking network is fully backing these plans.

He directed that all small-scale solar projects in Isfahan be finalized and financed through the provincial Bank Coordination Council.

He added that larger-scale projects will be funded through the Central Bank's monetary policy department by issuing special financial certificates.

As stated by the vice president, the government is rapidly pursuing the installation of solar panels



Forud Asgari said that Iraq was Iran's second top non-oil export destination in the mentioned period.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$11.9 billion to Iraq in the past Iranian calendar year 1403, which ended on March 20.

Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, said that Iraq was Iran's second top non-oil export destination in the previous year.

Considering Iran's vast export capacity and Iraq's large market for Iranian goods, both sides want to expand the volume of bilateral economic exchanges.

Iran and Iraq have set a target of \$20 billion in annual trade, and businessmen and authorities of both countries are determined to meet that target.

In late May 2024, the head of the Department of Spatial Planning and Regional Planning of the Iranian Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said that Iran exports some 2,200 products, valued at \$12 billion, to neighboring Iraq annually.

Speaking in a meeting entitled "Reviewing opportunities and challenges of attracting Iraqi investors and strengthening trade relations between the two countries in line with demarcating Iran in the regional value chain", Jafar Hosseini said that Iraq, benefiting from \$85 billion foreign currency reserves, 130 tons of gold reserves, and 147 billion barrels of proven reserves of crude oil, is among the richest countries in West Asia.

Currently, Iran exports over 2,200 various types of goods and products to Iraq, he said, adding that more than half of the active Iranian traders are present in the Iraqi market.

Developing the trade infrastructures to facilitate trade between the two countries, encouraging traders to invest in Iraq, promoting trade through dispatching and admitting trade delegations and participating in exhibitions of the two countries, etc. are suggested to strengthen the trade and economic relations between Iran and Iraq, he underlined.

In an interview in mid-December last year, the ambassador of Iran in Iraq praised the economic relations between the two sides and expressed hope that these relations will be more and better.

Mohammad Kazem Ale-Sadeq announced the value of commercial exchanges between the two countries, and stated that economic relations between Iran and Iraq are very good, and expressed hope that these relations will improve.

in the organizations and executive agencies, especially in Tehran.

Allaedin Rafizadeh said that all government agencies in Tehran will be equipped with solar power plants.

The government has parallel plans to optimize energy consumption, including the installation of solar power plants in executive agencies, the official emphasized.

Iran installed approximately 600 megawatts (MW) of solar power capacity in the past Iranian year (ending March 2025), marking a fourfold increase over the previous annual average of 150 MW, according to Alireza Parandeh Motlaq, deputy head of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA).

In an appearance on the state TV, Parandeh Motlaq said the Energy Ministry has undertaken the development of several government-led solar power plants to help meet growing electricity demand from households and industry. Although initially state-funded, these plants are ultimately intended for transfer to the private sector.

Pezeshkian visits Hormozgan to inaugurate projects, highlight economic potential

The president attended the provincial planning council and held meetings with governors and directors general to follow up on decisions and accelerate the implementation of priority projects.

Before departing for Tehran in the evening, Pezeshkian stressed Hormozgan's extensive economic, maritime and tourism potential, calling for balanced development and the resolution of infrastructure bottlenecks.

Strategic economic hub on Iran's southern coast

Hormozgan, with more than 900 kilometers of coastline stretching from Sistan-Baluchestan Province on the Sea of Oman to Bushehr on the Persian Gulf, has the country's longest shoreline along the Persian Gulf



and Makran coasts.

It is home to Iran's most strategic islands with vast oil and gas reserves.

Covering over 71,000 square kilometers, it is the eighth-larg-

est province by land area.

The province has long held a central role in Iran's trade and development plans due to its proximity to key waterways.

Historically known as part of

the "Persian Sea," the region offers exceptional advantages for maritime commerce and logistics.

Hormozgan is also known for its cultural and social cohesion, with longstanding ties between its Shiite and Sunni populations and communities from across Iran.

Bandar Abbas, the provincial capital, is often described as "a small Iran" for its diverse demographic makeup and vibrant economic activity.

Officials said the president's trip is expected to boost investment, improve infrastructure and address transportation issues related to the use of free zone vehicle plates, further solidifying Hormozgan's role as a strategic economic hub.

Doha ready to expand trade, customs ties with Iran: envoy

TEHRAN – Qatar is ready to develop and facilitate trade and customs exchanges with Iran, the Qatari ambassador to Tehran stated.

Saad Abdullah Saad Al Mahmoud Al Sharif made the remarks during a meeting with Iran's deputy economy minister and head of the Customs Administration, according to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance.

He said a joint technical committee will soon be formed to follow up on the electronic exchange of customs data between the two countries.

The envoy welcomed plans for joint training programs and reciprocal visits to customs facilities, and praised cooperation on transit issues.

He added that both sides are working toward signing an electronic data exchange agreement in the near future.

Al Sharif also expressed appreciation for Iran's solidarity with Qatar following a recent terrorist attack by Israel, noting that Iran provided critical customs facilities to Doha during the blockade years.

The head of Iran's Customs Administration condemned the attack on Qatar and highlighted the "very friendly and close" bilateral ties.

He said Iran is pursuing customs cooperation with Qatar along three main axes: electronic data exchange, facilitating and accelerating the entry of Iranian goods into Qatari ports, and holding joint training courses and visits to customs posts.

He added that exchanging data before cargo arrives will speed up clearance procedures and remove the need for repetitive inspections in both countries.

Iran's deputy economy minister also called for joint training programs and technical visits, particularly to Bushehr customs, to further streamline services between the two sides. He additionally urged the removal of restrictions on the entry of Iranian wooden dhows to Qatari ports.

On May 12, Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi met with Qatar's Customs Authority Chief Ahmed Al-Jamal, on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2025, stressing the need to enhance commercial ties and develop trade infrastructure to increase bilateral trade volume.

According to the TPO's public relations office, Dehnavi described Iran-Qatar economic and trade relations as growing and highlighted the potential for customs cooperation to accelerate trade.

He said the TPO stands ready to coordinate with other Iranian agencies to follow up on key issues and push them toward implementation.

Pointing to the geographical proximity between the two countries, Dehnavi said Iran and Qatar possess complementary trade capacities and noted that customs agencies would serve as the gateway to deeper commercial cooperation.

For his part, Al-Jamal voiced Qatar's strong interest in expanding trade with Iran. He said the upward trajectory in commercial exchanges could also foster stronger political relations, pointing out that Iranian products have long held a special place in the Qatari market.

Al-Jamal emphasized that Qatar has already implemented measures to facilitate the entry of Iranian goods and believes the current trade volume falls short of its potential, given the strong demand among Qatari traders for Iranian products.

Also, Qatar's Customs Authority chief met with the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) and other senior Iranian customs officials, in Tehran on May 11, to discuss ways to expand bilateral cooperation and share experiences aimed at facilitating and developing trade.

According to the IRICA, the two sides explored strategies to enhance customs cooperation between the neighboring countries.

Forud Asgari, Iran's deputy economy minister and head of the Customs Administration, described the visit of Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Jamal and his accompanying delegation as highly significant, citing the friendly ties between Iran and Qatar.

During the meeting, Asgari briefed the Qatari delegation on Iran's customs operations, emphasizing that all procedural formalities in the country are now handled through electronic systems.

Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Jamal praised Iran's digital customs processes and expressed Qatar's interest in expanding cooperation with Iran. He noted that the broader political and diplomatic alignment between the two nations offers a valuable opportunity to deepen customs collaboration.

Al-Jamal also took particular interest in Iran's risk management system, which Asgari further elaborated on during the talks.

Asgari called on the Qatari side to expedite the clearance of Iranian shipments—especially perishable goods—at Al-Ruwais Port, and voiced Iran's readiness to help resolve any related challenges.

The meeting aimed to promote mutual cooperation in areas such as trade facilitation, combating smuggling and customs violations, the secure exchange of electronic customs data, and the organization of joint training programs.

The two sides also agreed to conduct regular joint inspections of ports and customs facilities and to hold periodic meetings between their customs officials to ensure close coordination.

The 10th Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Committee meeting concluded on December 12, 2024, in Doha, with officials from both nations pledging to enhance bilateral economic ties and increase trade to \$1.0 billion annually.

The meeting, co-chaired by Iran's Minister of Energy Abbas Ali-Abadi and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani, focused on expanding cooperation across multiple sectors, including energy, infrastructure, and trade.

The event featured four specialized committees: Trade (covering commerce, banking, and insurance), Infrastructure (transport, agriculture, and ICT), Social and Cultural (tourism, health, and research), and Energy (water, electricity, oil, and gas). Over 60 representatives from public and private sectors of both countries participated in the discussions.

Ali-Abadi emphasized the strategic importance of the partnership, saying, "Today's



economic relations between Iran and Qatar require a strategic outlook." He noted that current trade between the two countries stands at approximately \$200 million annually, with plans to increase it fivefold to \$1 billion in the near future.

The official further highlighted a significant energy project involving a 200-kilometer undersea power line to connect Iran and Qatar's electricity networks. Initiated in March 2023, the feasibility study is in its final stages, with implementation set to follow approval.

"This project will revolutionize power transfer between the two nations during peak demand periods and enable electricity transit to third countries," Ali-Abadi stated.

He also expressed Iran's readiness to welcome Qatari investors, envisioning mutual investments of at least \$1 billion annually. Key focus areas include energy, transport, free trade zones, tourism, healthcare, and agriculture.

The Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Committee, established in 1995, has facilitated significant achievements, particularly in water and electricity sectors. The 10th session underlined both nations' commitment to translating agreements into tangible outcomes and fostering regional cooperation.

At the end of the meeting, the two sides signed a comprehensive cooperation document to determine the framework of cooperation in the coming year.

Speaking in an online meeting with Saleh Alkhulaifi, the deputy Industry and Commerce minister of Qatar, in late November 2024, Mohammad-Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), said that Iran seeks to reach one billion dollars in annual trade with Qatar.

Referring to the extensive political and cultural relations between the two countries, Dehghan Dehnavi said: "Despite the efforts of both sides, economic relations between Tehran and Doha have not reached the desired level."

"Fruits and food products are Iran's top exported items to Qatar, and it cannot be expected that the trade between the two countries will exceed one billion dollars with the export of such products, the official said.

According to the TPO head, the challenges in developing trade with Qatar are clear, and Iran is trying to increase the volume of trade with Qatar by developing a well-considered and coherent work plan.

Alkhulaifi for his part stated that the strict customs regulations in Qatar affect all countries, saying: "We will work to expedite the clearance of Iranian goods from Qatari ports and issue visas to Iranian businessmen, and we hope that the prospect of a billion-dollar trade between the two countries will be realized in the near future."

Steadfast in defiance, activists detained after Israel intercepts Gaza flotilla

From page 1 ► For Gaza's starving families—where famine has been officially confirmed and hundreds have died from hunger—such an effort carried both symbolic and practical weight.

Organizers described the voyage as an attempt to establish a “people's humanitarian corridor,” bypassing Israeli-controlled channels that have consistently restricted or delayed aid.

The hundreds detained included veteran campaigners as well as high-profile figures such as Greta Thunberg and European officials such as France's Rima Hassan. Many were taken to processing centers, with some reportedly transferred to the Ktzi'ot high-security facility in the Negev desert as deportation proceedings began.

According to the International Committee to Break the Siege of Gaza, several detainees announced an open-ended hunger strike within hours of capture, refusing food “from the moment of detention” to protest abduction and the denial of relief to a besieged civilian population.

Israel's extremist National Security Minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, exploited the detainees as props in a political spectacle. He was filmed at the detention site mocking the activists as “terrorists.”

Later in the day, he urged that they be imprisoned “so they can smell the scent of the terrorists’



wing,” and denounced Prime Minister Netanyahu's plan to deport them as a “fundamental mistake.” Critics described his conduct as intimidation and a violation of the activists' basic rights.

The legal objections to Israel's conduct are substantial. Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), vessels in international waters enjoy freedom of navigation; boarding and seizing a civilian ship there is unlawful unless justified by piracy or self-defense, neither applicable to humanitarian missions.

UN experts have also urged safe passage and stressed that Israel must not interfere with freedom of navigation.

Once activists were detained, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) required that they be informed of the rea-

sons for arrest, given legal counsel, and brought before a judge.

The Fourth Geneva Convention bars occupying powers from obstructing relief consignments, and preventing or attacking humanitarian relief violates these obligations; critics say the flotilla's interception and the vilification of detainees breached these standards.

Rights groups, including Adalah and Amnesty International, have reported further violations: deportation hearings initiated without notifying detainees' lawyers, restricted access to legal counsel, and expedited removals. A few activists have already been deported, while others face indefinite detention.

For Gaza, the siege is absolute. With border crossings sealed and maritime relief blocked, over two

million people remain trapped under bombardment, facing famine, disease, and displacement.

The flotilla had been more than a symbolic gesture — it was a small but tangible effort to pierce a blockade widely condemned as collective punishment.

Its capture underscores how few avenues remain to deliver aid or to assert even the most basic rights under international law, especially as Western governments withheld support for Sumud and allowed it to be suppressed by Israel.

The seizure crystallizes a larger choice: whether international norms will protect civilian navigation and humanitarian relief, or whether political spectacle will continue to shield violations of law.

For those aboard the Sumud flotilla, the voyage embodied steadfast resistance. For Gaza's families, its loss is another measure of how international law is failing those most in need — even as Washington and Tel Aviv claim to promote a new “peace plan” that demands Hamas's surrender, and many governments rally to pressure the resistance while ignoring the civilians trapped under siege.

The fate of the Sumud shows that while diplomatic energy is consumed by political bargaining, the urgent needs of Gaza's people — food, medicine, and survival — remain abandoned at sea.

Sumud flotilla speaks volumes beyond humanitarian aid to Gaza There is no limit to Israel's disinformation campaign and lies

From page 1 ► **Butcher calls aid flotilla “terror flotilla”**

To justify its interception of boats, Israel said they were approaching “active combat zone.” War minister Israel Katz congratulated the Israel Occupation Forces (IOF), saying they stopped and neutralized “the terror flotilla.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also said the military “repelled a campaign of delegitimization against Israel.”

Drawing on the words of Katz, even lawmakers from Spain and Italy, French MEP Rima Hassanas, former Barcelona mayor Ada Colau, as well as climate activist Thunberg and other European dignitaries are “terrorists,” but those who have destroyed about 90 percent of buildings in Gaza, imposed famine on 2.3 million population and have been committing war crimes against them for two years are just defending themselves against terrorism.

The words by Netanyahu are also an open acknowledgement that his regime is acting illegally, unlawfully and illegitimately in Palestine as a whole and Gaza in particular.

It is not the first time that Israel raids aid convoys bound to Gaza. In June it intercepted the Freedom Flotilla Coalition carrying Thunberg and other prominent activists. In May, activists on board an FCC ship said they were targeted by an Israeli drone in international waters off Malta.

In 2010, 13 years before the start of the current Gaza war, Israeli forces attacked an aid flotilla in international waters, killing nine Turkish nationals.

GSF highlights indescribable sufferings of Gazans

The GSF comprises more than 500 partic-

ipants - mainly from European countries - intended to deliver food, water and medicine to civilians in Gaza. But this is not the whole story.

They are primarily highlighting Israel's barbarity which has been butchering and starving civilians in Gaza.

They are sending this message to the world that Israel is a pariah state and that the world is angry of Israel's atrocious acts in Gaza. Indirectly, they are also showing that remaining silent in the face of these horrible acts against the Gazans cannot be condoned and that enabling Israel's acts in the enclave is a complicity in the war crimes.

James Smith, a British doctor who has previously been on the flotilla, said he joined to protest “Israel's illegal siege and blockade of Gaza.”

“It is a form of direct action, it's a form of anti-colonial resistance,” said Smith, who also worked at al-Aqsa hospital in Gaza for 2.5 months.

“The flotilla is carrying humanitarian aid, but it's not simply humanitarian,” Smith told CNN.

Comically, Israel's foreign ministry has said that it has found documents in Gaza that “prove Hamas's direct involvement” in the funding and execution of the flotilla.

Sarcastically speaking, Israel usually has paperwork ready to legitimize its unfounded claims. For example, there is no starvation in Gaza, or Hamas operated a command center beneath Gaza's largest hospital, or sexual assault on October 7 by Hamas militants, etc.

U.S. repeats Israel's narrative

In a post on X, Israel's foreign ministry claimed said activists' “sole purpose” was “provocation.”

Like always, the U.S. rushed to back Israel in unlawfully intercepting the convoy. Its State Department parroted Israel's narrative that the aid convoy was “a deliberate and unnecessary provocation.”

Some European countries that have been backing Israel's war machine in the Gaza Strip and has not still repented their actions should now feel shameful. They have stood on the wrong side of history. The leaders of these countries should notice that people took to the streets in cities in Italy, Turkey, Greece, Tunisia, Germany, the Netherlands, Brazil, Australia, the U.S., Malaysia, Caracas, Argentina, and some other cities to condemn the Israeli interception of the vessels.

These demonstrations show that the public are losing their patience with Israel's unending atrocious acts.

In Italy, which has not yet joined or showed no inclination to join some other important European countries that recently recognized the State of Palestinian, protesters took to the streets in cities including Rome, Pisa, Florence and Turin on Wednesday evening in protest to the interception of the vessels, and a major Italian labor union called for a national general strike on Friday, across public and private sectors, in solidarity with the flotilla and the people of Gaza.

If the siege on the enclave continues and if dreadful acts continue against the Palestinian in Gaza, GSF will not be the last aid convoy to defy Israel and navigate toward Gaza and put the pariah and occupation regime of Israel in a more complicated quandary.

in the region.

Malaysia

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said, “By blocking a humanitarian mission, Israel has shown utter contempt not only for the rights of the Palestinian people but also for the conscience of the world. The flotilla embodies solidarity, compassion, and the hope of relief for those under blockade.”

Turkey

The Turkish foreign ministry said, “The attack carried out by Israeli forces in international waters against the Global Sumud Flotilla, which set sail to deliver humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza, constitutes an act of terrorism that gravely violates international law and endangers the lives of innocent civilians.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Calls for sanctions rise as Israel intercepts Gaza-bound flotilla



Demonstrators rally in the Italian capital [Alessandra Tarantino/AP]

From page 1 ► By Friday morning, Israeli forces had completely dismantled the flotilla, storming and seizing the Marinette, a Polish-flagged vessel with a crew of six, which was the last ship still at sea. Livestream footage showed soldiers boarding the vessel and detaining those on board. In total, hundreds of activists from dozens of boats have been arrested.

In Italy, people took to the streets on Friday as part of a day-long general strike called by unions in support of the aid flotilla. The CGIL trade union organized demonstrations in more than 100 cities. In Rome, crowds marched from the central Piazza Vittorio toward the main train station, waving union and Palestinian flags and holding banners. Some reports suggest that more than one million people attended the rallies.

In Barcelona on Thursday, demonstrators marched, chanting slogans such as “Gaza, you are not alone,” “Boycott Israel,” and “Freedom for Palestine.” Spanish television showed riot police forcibly repelling protesters who attempted to breach barriers. Former Barcelona mayor Ada

Colau is among the activists intercepted at sea.

In Dublin, several hundred protesters gathered outside Ireland's parliament, where Palestinian solidarity is often connected to the country's historical struggle against British colonialism. Miriam McNally, whose daughter joined the flotilla, told AFP: “I am worried sick for my daughter, but I am so proud of her and of what she's doing. She is standing up for humanity in the face of grave danger.”

In France, protesters rallied at Place de la République in Paris, while in Marseille demonstrators were arrested after attempting to block access to Eurolinks, a weapons manufacturer accused of selling military components to Israel.

In London, hundreds of demonstrators rallied in central areas on Thursday to support Global Sumud Flotilla activists. The crowd carried Palestinian flags and chanted slogans such as, “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” expressing solidarity with those detained and criticizing the British government for being “complicit in Israel's actions in Gaza.”

French opposition leader urges Macron to expel Israeli envoy

Mathilde Panot, deputy leader of the France Unbowed party, has urged the French president to expel Israel's ambassador to Paris, Joshua Zarka, following Israel's seizure of the Global Sumud Flotilla. Al Jazeera reported.

Panot, speaking on French RTL Radio, said: “This morning, I officially request the president [Emmanuel Macron] to expel Israel's ambassador to France.

“It is unacceptable that a representative of a state that has illegally hijacked a legitimate mission to break the blockade three times is allowed to remain in our territory any longer.”

Diplomatic relations with Israel should be severed, Panot said, expressing her satisfaction with Colombian President Gustavo Petro's decision to expel Israel's diplomats from his country.

US pushing Lebanon into chaos under guise of financial and security support

From page 1 ► The funding, which arrived quickly before the end of the US fiscal year, was allocated mostly to the army (\$190 million), with the remainder to internal security.

This will enable these forces to assume internal security duties and open the door to involving the army in sensitive matters related to the Resistance's weapons.

U.S. envoy Thomas Barrack publicly stated that Israel “does not recognize red lines” and will intervene whenever it feels threatened.

He emphasized that Washington will not deploy its forces to protect Lebanon, but will leave it to the Lebanese Army to confront Hezbollah!

Barrack's statement was not merely a description, but rather the announcement of a clear plan to place the army at the heart of the conflict. It is the only body capable of disarming the Resistance, according to the American vision, despite everyone's awareness that this course of action opens the door to civil war.

At the same time, the U. S. State Department increased pressure through the “Rewards for Justice” program, announcing a \$10 million reward for any information on Hezbollah's funding networks.

This campaign is paralleled by political and media incitement claiming that the Resistance receives approximately \$60 million per month to rebuild its forces.

This campaign is not separate from the prelude to a broad Israeli intervention. It represents the financial and legal face of a comprehensive war that seeks to stifle the Resistance before any direct military confrontation.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

From page 1 ► **Palestine**

The Palestinian Authority's Foreign Ministry said it “condemns Israel's attack and aggression against the Global Sumud Flotilla.”

In a post on social media, the ministry added that the “flotilla has the right of free passage in international waters, and Israel must not interfere with its freedom of navigation, long recognised under international law,” it added.

Hamas

The Hamas resistance movement said the incident was an “act of terrorism” and part of a “blatant Zionist attempt to deter international supporters from carrying out their humanitarian mission of delivering aid to the Palestinian people besieged in the Gaza Strip, who are being subjected to systematic campaigns of extermination and starvation.”

United Nations

The UN special rapporteur on Palestine, said the Israeli intervention against the flotilla highlighted the West's inaction towards Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

“As I watch Israel's illegal abduction of the only humans who have risked their lives to break Israel's unlawful blockade, my thoughts are with the people of Gaza, trapped in Israel's killing fields,” Albanese said.

“Shame on Western governments first and foremost, and their complicit inaction.”

Pakistan

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the “dastardly attack” by Israeli occupation forces.

“This barbarity must end. Peace must be given a chance and humanitarian aid must reach those in need.”

Colombia

President Gustavo Petro of Colombia announced that his government was expelling Israeli diplomats and cancelling Colombia's free trade agreement in light of the Israeli occupation regime's actions.

He said Colombia “must pursue all the appropriate demands, including through Israeli courts” to ensure the return of its citizens.

South Africa

President Cyril Ramaphosa underlined the “interception in international waters off the coast of Gaza reinforces Israel's continued violation of international law and infliction of suffering, including starvation, on the Palestinian people.” “(It is) another grave offense by Israel of global solidarity and sentiment that is aimed at relieving suffering in Gaza and advancing peace

Vice president urges tourism sector to raise service standards



TEHRAN – Iran's Vice President for Executive Affairs Mohammad Jafar Ghaempanah on Thursday called on tourism operators to improve service standards and develop innovative products, saying the government would work to remove barriers to growth.

Ghaempanah made the remarks at a ceremony honoring veteran tourism workers and industry activists held at the Kooshk-e Bagh-e Honar complex in Tehran's Abbasabad cultural zone during Tourism Week, which was commenced on September 27, concurrent with the World Tourism Day.

"We must make the tourist's path from decision to experience short, transparent and predictable," Ghaempanah said. He added that domestic banks should be used to support rural tourism and that investment regulations should be streamlined and digitized to encourage private participation.

He added that data on tourist arrivals and departures was essential for planning infrastructure and that attention should be given to capital markets, health tourism, and regional travel packages. "If local communities benefit from tourism, they will advance," he said.

"I commit myself to work on removing barriers to tourism development, but you should strive for standardization of services and the creation of innovative products," Ghaempanah told participants.

Also, Mohammad Hossein Hejazi, head of the Abbasabad cultural and tourism district, said the industry must pursue a sustainable development path despite current challenges.

Gilan tourism activists honored

TEHRAN--A ceremony to honor the activists, servants, and members of the travel services staff of Gilan province was held in the central hall of Rasht, the capital city of the province on Thursday.

The ceremony was attended by Javad Vahedi, the deputy for parliamentary, legal, and provincial affairs of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and , advisor to the minister and the governor of Rasht, members of Rasht Islamic City Council, members of the Parliament, a group of provincial officials, and interested people, ISNA reported.

Emphasizing that Gilan province has a special place in the field of tourism, he stated:

"The pristine and diverse nature of this province is only one of its advantages, but what distinguishes Gilan is its historical and religious background, especially in the field of Shi'ism. This province was the origin of one of the first Shia governments in Iran, and the people of this land, especially from the Deylaman region, were the founders and spreaders of this religious thought in the Fourth Century AH."

He added: "One of the important honors of the people of Gilan is their participation in the formation of the first Shia government by three brothers, Ahmad, Hassan, and Ali, who were able to lay the foundations of the Alawi government. Despite this valuable background, comprehensive and sufficient studies have not been conducted in this field so far, and it is necessary for researchers in the field of history and cultural heritage to focus

es. He added that Abbasabad has been promoted as an urban eco-park and model for cultural innovation.

During the event, officials also unveiled the poster for a new book titled I Am from Tehran, produced by a team led by tourism researcher Arash Nooraghayee, with the participation of the head of Tehran's cultural heritage department.

Earlier in September, Salehi-Amiri said that Iran seeks to increase its foreign arrivals to protect 1.6 million jobs in the sector and sustain 22,000 accommodation centers, 6,000 travel agencies, 15,000 tour guides, and 3,000 eco-lodges. The minister identified Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Persian Gulf neighbors, particularly Iraq, as priority markets for tourism. He added that other Islamic countries, such as Egypt and Indonesia, are also important targets.

According to official figures, 6.2 million foreign tourists visited Iran in 1402 (Mar. 2023-Mar.2024) and 7.39 million in 1403. The minister said the government had aimed for 25% growth in arrivals this year, but numbers dropped in June and July due to a 12-day conflict [the Israeli-imposed war on Iran, which was launched on June 13, 2025].

Under Iran's Seventh National Development Plan, the country seeks to raise foreign tourist arrivals to 15 million [in a year]. Salehi-Amiri added that this requires an annual growth of 19.5%. He also asked the parliamentary research center to provide proposals to help revive the industry following the recent conflict.

on this issue and deepen national understanding of this important part of Iranian history." Vahedi said that Gilan province has an unparalleled capacity for developing religious tourism; a capacity that must be properly recognized and introduced and transferred to future generations with appropriate planning.

Also, Yousef Salmankhah, caretaker of Gilan Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, said: "September 27 has been designated as World Tourism Day.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

First Announcement



Brief Notice of International Two-Stage Tender No. 834058-2

It is hereby announced that Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) intends to procure the single-line roller bearing 2P19022C4, in accordance with the required conditions and technical specifications, through a two-stage international tender. Accordingly, all the prospective bidders are kindly requested to visit ESCO's website www.esfahansteel.ir so as to obtain the tender document no later than 06.10.2025 and upload their techno-commercial offer to ESCO's website (through Sourcing Field) max. up to 06.10.2025 at 18:00 p.m.

It is evident that this letter is only for notification purpose.

Yours Respectfully,

S.Khalili,

Equipment and Goods Procurement Management

Esfahan Steel Company

Historic core of Dehdasht to be restored for tourism, minister says



TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri said on Thursday that the historic texture of Dehdasht in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province will be fully restored for tourism.

Visiting the lesser-known province, Salehi-Amiri said the restoration would help promote tourism and strengthen Iran's cultural image internationally.

"The revival of this historic zone cannot rely solely on government spending," Salehi-Amiri said. "The participation of investors can turn Dehdasht into a hub for domestic and foreign tourists."

The minister said his office is in talks with investors and related associations and has delegated decision-making authority to provincial governors to accelerate development. He added that priority measures include approving infrastructure permits and raising the ceiling for investment licenses from 800 billion rials (\$800,000) to 10 trillion rials (\$10 million).

"This delegation of authority allows provincial managers to make strategic decisions locally, without requiring investors to travel to Tehran," he said.

Salehi-Amiri described the government's evaluation of the provincial administration as positive and said sustainable development could help close long-standing economic gaps in the region.

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Governor Yadollah Rahmani said 42 tourism projects are underway in the province and will be funded by the end of the [current Iranian calendar] year. He noted that 780 sites in Dehdasht are registered as national heritage and one has been inscribed internationally.

Rahmani said the restoration of Dehdasht's historic fabric, which includes a caravanserai, mosque, marketplace, bathhouse and citadel, would provide significant opportunities for investment.

Iran 6,000 years ago, ahead of Mesopotamia in innovation, culture

TEHRAN-- New excavations at the ancient site of Chega Sofla in southeast of Khuzestan province have provided a new picture of the history of early Near East civilizations.

Findings show that the Copper Age societies in the 'Dasht-e Zohreh' around 6,000 years ago were not only on par with, but also more advanced than Mesopotamia in some innovations, including brickmaking, weight standards, and silver and gold jewelry, redefining Iran's place in the history of prehistoric civilization in the region, IRIB wrote.

In an article titled 'Ahead of Time', published by Eric Powell, deputy editor of the journal Archaeology, it is stated that excavations at the Chega Sofla site, located in southwestern Iran, indicate a high level of development of the Copper Age societies of the region.

Dating from the Copper/Chalcolithic period and the transition from Neolithic villages to the early Mesopotamian cities (3500 BC), the site was previously considered to be on the fringes of the Elamite and Mesopotamian

civilizations.

However, recent findings show the opposite of this idea and indicate the development of technology and advanced culture of its inhabitants.

Excavations at the Chega Sofla cemetery have revealed the remains of 102 individuals buried in a variety of burial practices, including reburial, bone mixing, skull burial, and a pair of skulls known as 'lovers'. The most notable burial is that of a 25-year-old woman named 'Khatun', who was discovered with a ceremonial copper sword, silver and gold jewelry, and a stone weight. About 70 percent of the burials were female, and some women had modified skulls, a symbol of social status.

The other important achievements of the excavations are the discovery of architectural innovations and advanced technology. The use of baked bricks in the construction of tombs and temples, a standard weighing system with marked weights, and valuable objects such as marble bowls and intricate

the Sassanid Empire extended from Sogdiana and Iberia (present-day Georgia) in the north to the Mazun region of Arabia in the south, reaching the Indus River in the east and the upper Tigris and Euphrates valleys in the west.

The Sassanid period marked a revival in Persian art and architecture, characterized by monumental palaces such as those at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan. Crafts including metalwork and gem engraving became increasingly refined, while the translation of works from East and West into Pahlavi, the Sassanid language, advanced scholarship.

Rock-carved sculptures and bas-reliefs on limestone cliffs are among the most recognizable features of Sassanid art, with notable examples at Bishapur, Naqsh-e Rostam, and Naqsh-e Rostam in southern Iran. In 2018, UNESCO inscribed the "Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region" on its World Heritage list.

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province is also known for its nomadic culture. Visitors can stay with nomadic or rural families, participate in agricultural and daily routines, and experience traditional arts and customs.

ceramics, confirm the high level of technical and cultural progress of these societies.

The first temple of the Copper Age of Iran was also discovered at Chega Sofla, which was built of baked bricks, had an H-shaped structure, burial of sacrificial animals (male goats and cows), and a small marble bowl with numerical signs (17, 19, 21 lines), which probably represents a counting system or religious ritual.

These findings reflect the advancement of the societies of Dasht-e Zohreh in the fields of metallurgy, pottery, and architecture, and show that this region was even ahead of the ancient city of Susa in some areas.

The cemetery and temple of Chega Sofla offer clear symbols of social organization, commercial activities, religious rituals, and the prominent role of women, opening a new horizon in the study of the prehistory of Iran and the Near East.

Second Announcement



E.S.2025/001 Tender SSICO.

Shadegan Steel Industry Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 25,000 MT DIRECT REDUCTED IRON (DRI), under FCA(free carrier) delivery terms at the Shadegan Steel Industry Company warehouse.

Interested applicants are requested to visit the company's official website at (www.ssico.ir) to download the TENDER documents.

- All documentation will be provided electronically.
- All bids on conformity to TENDER instruction should be submitted no later for **14th Oct, 2025**
- Esteemed TENDER Participant, you are hereby requested to submit your financial proposal to Shadgan Steel Industry Company after conducting a visit to the designated depot as indicated in the tender documents. Please note that failure to visit or to collect samples from the depot prior to submitting your proposal shall nullify any subsequent claims regarding the non-inspection of the stated items.

Email: commission@ssico.ir

For further inquiries, please contact us at:

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Tehran hosts BRICS meeting on geopolitical technologies

TEHRAN – Iran has played host to the fourth meeting of the BRICS working group on geospatial technologies and their applications.

The meeting was held online from September 30 to October 1, bringing together BRICS member states, including Brazil, China, Russia, India, Indonesia, Ethiopia, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates, Mehr news agency reported.

The two-day event was organized in cooperation with scientific institutions, including Mapping Organization, Metrological Organization, Space Organization, Space Research Institute, the Geology and Mineral Exploration Organization, the University of Tehran, and Khajeh Nasir Toosi University of Technology.

The event served as a great opportunity to showcase Iran's capabilities in modern technologies, develop scientific and technological cooperation, and share expertise with BRICS member states.

The first day focused on showcasing capacities, capabilities, and opportunities for fostering cooperation among member states.



On the second day of the meeting, participants discussed and explored avenues for the expansion of collaborations in geospatial data and its applications.

The issues raised in the meeting will be summarized and approved in the form of a multilateral cooperation document. The document will lay the basis for joint practices of the states in spatial data in the coming year. A report on the actions taken based on the document will be presented in the next meeting.

Moscow hosted the third meeting of the BRICS working group on geospatial technol-

ogies and its application from September 16 and 17, 2024.

The meeting welcomed the proposal presented by the former director general of the National Cartographic Center of Iran (NCC) to establish the BRICS spatial data infrastructure (SDI).

Addressing the opening ceremony of the meeting, Ali Javidi said maps and spatial data are critical tools in the sustainable development of communities, which provide the information needed for informed decision-making, effective planning, and economic growth, ISNA reported.

The official also presented several proposals, among which BRICS SDI drew the attention of the participants, who agreed to lay the ground for its implementation.

Geospatial technology is a term used to describe the range of modern tools contributing to the geographic mapping and analysis of the Earth and human societies.

They play an important role in today's interconnected world and provide valuable assistance to individuals, governments, and various sectors of the economy.

The combination of spatial technologies with artificial intelligence, deep learning, and big data analytics creates favorable outcomes in communications, navigation, transportation, cadaster, cartography, and other applications.

Examples of geospatial technologies include remote sensing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Geographic Positioning Systems (GPS). Geospatial technologies can be used for all sorts of activities, such as military use, environmental use, and everyday use.

Iran ready to boost health ties with Qatar

TEHRAN – The deputy health minister, Alireza Raeisi, and the ambassador to Qatar, Ali Salehabadi, have announced the country's willingness to enhance cooperation in the health sector with Qatar.

The officials met on the sidelines of the sixth Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit held on September 30 in Doha, Qatar, ISNA reported.

Elaborating on the health ministry's programs and priorities on mental and public health, Raeisi underlined the significance of fostering joint efforts to improve medical services.

Salehabadi, for his part, welcomed expanding joint efforts and announced readiness to facilitate interactions between the two countries.

The 6th Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit, hosted by the Government of Qatar, continued the momentum established by previous summits held in London, Amsterdam, Paris, Rome, and Buenos Aires. These summits have collectively emphasised the critical need for integrating mental health into public policies and have highlighted the importance of a global commitment to mental health, building on other global initiatives, including the UN Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda, the High-Level Commission on Non-Communicable Diseases, and the WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2020–2030.

The underlying purpose of these summits is to foster international collaboration, share

best practices, and develop innovative solutions to improve mental health care systems worldwide.

The overarching goal is to address mental health as a critical component of overall health, social justice, and human rights, aligning with the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Mental Health and Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The 6th Summit aligned with Qatar's vision of a future founded on innovation and sustainable development. Under the theme of "Transforming Mental Health through Investment, Innovation, and Digital Solutions," the Summit explored several dimensions of innovation in mental health care.

Qatar interested in boosting health co-op with Iran

In October 2024, Salih Al Marri, the Qatari assistant minister for health affairs, held a meeting with Raeisi and Mohammad-Hossein Niknam, the deputy health minister for international affairs, expressing interest in enhancing cooperation with Iran in the health sector.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the seventy-first session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO). It was held in Doha, Qatar, from October 14 to 17 under the theme of "health beyond borders: action, access, equity," the health ministry's website reported.



The Qatari official highlighted Qatar's high capabilities in the field of health and expressed the country's willingness to increase cooperation with Iran's health ministry.

Raeisi, for his part, described the current relations between the two countries in the health sector as great and growing.

Underscoring that the two countries possess good capacities in health infrastructure, disease control, digital health systems, and other areas, he said that enhancing the cooperation will boost the capacities.

The official proposed improving ties in communicable disease management through early detection and sharing expertise.

According to Niknam, two memorandums of understanding were signed with Qatar, and the two countries established related working groups.

SOCIETY

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Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

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Iran marks Intl. Day of Older Persons 2025

TEHRAN – The International Day of Older Persons was observed on Wednesday, October 1, in Tehran in the presence of Chinese, Japanese, and South Korean ambassadors, and the representatives of the United Nations to the country.

The 2025 United Nations International Day of Older Persons, observed under the theme "Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights", highlights the transformative role older persons play in building resilient and equitable societies. Far from being passive beneficiaries, older persons are drivers of progress, contributing their knowledge and experience in areas such as health equity, financial well-being, community resilience, and human rights advocacy.

Addressing the event, Kita Ohashi, representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UN-PFA), said, "We pay attention to the problems of aging in societies and work to combat ageism, empower the elderly, and create empowering environments."

Given the feminization of aging, gender challenges have to be considered. Health inequalities and discriminatory practices will hinder the social participation of the elderly. Therefore, elderly women must be able to fully enjoy social benefits, he noted, IRNA reported.

The social engagement of the elderly needs to be increased by developing elderly friendly environments, he added.

Lauding Iran's efforts in leading and pursuing services, as well as developing a roadmap for aging, the official highlighted addressing elderly women's problems.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator for Iran, Stefan Priesner, for his part, said People worldwide can live up to 60 years; Iran is a rapidly aging country due to increased life expectancy. Life expectancy in Iran is over 70 years.

It is estimated that 30 percent of the world's population will be elderly by 2050. With no strategy, these rapid demographic shifts will pose major challenges, he noted.

Referring to Article 29 of the Iranian Constitution, which underscores the health of the elderly, Priesner said the UN pledges to ensure that no one is left behind in sustainable development.

For his part, Japan's ambassador to Iran, Tsukada Tamaki, said, "Japan is one of the oldest countries in the world, with 29 percent of the population being elderly. We have the longest life expectancy. Japan is at the forefront of the challenges of aging countries. On the other hand, we have provided an amazing opportunity for older people to play an active role in the economic growth.

Japan is a pioneer in deploying robots, artificial intelligence, and technology for elderly care. Japan has developed a unique health insurance coverage, making healthcare free for those 70 and over.

South Korean Ambassador to Tehran, Kim Junpyo, also addressed the event, noting that "The elderly are not just beneficiaries of services, but active contributors to society."

By 2050, the population aged 60 and over is expected to reach two billion, impacting health systems and leading to social challenges.

South Korea had its lowest child population last year, while the elderly population is growing

rapidly. We have taken steps to address this, such as setting up dementia counseling centers and creating one million jobs for the elderly every year.

The country has started an artificial intelligence-based care service project in neighborhoods, the official further noted.

For his part, the Chinese ambassador to Iran, Cong Peiwu, voiced China's readiness to cooperate with Iran in economic growth. The official said, "China provides care services to 114 million people over 60 years of age. The country is constantly seeking to provide social care. We are also reforming the system of providing services to the disabled."

At the end of the ceremony, a poster of the health assistance for people with disabilities and the elderly in China was unveiled.

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

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, the 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, light physical workouts, meeting successful seniors, and offering free medical and consulting services at health stations are among the programs to be implemented during the week.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Special plan prepared to attract overseas Iranian researchers

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has prepared a special plan to attract scientists and researchers living abroad, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The project aims to promote "supporting technological activities and startups", "postdoctoral facilities", "supporting employment in innovation centers and accelerators as a trainer and consultant", "providing facilities for opportunity studies", "providing housing facilities", "supporting employment in reputable domestic companies", "support for lectures and specialized workshops" and "support for cooperation as invited and appointed professors".

It is estimated that about one percent of all Iranian students are studying abroad, which is not above the international average of around 3 percent.

طرح ویژه برای جذب پژوهشگران ایرانی مقیم خارج

جذب محققان و پژوهشگران خارج از کشور یکی از اولویت‌های کشور محسوب می‌شود و در این راستا معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری طرحی ویژه پیشنهاد کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا، معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری، این طرح شامل «حمایت از فعالیتهای فناورانه و ایجاد شرکتهای نوپا»، «تسهیلات پسا دکتری»، «حمایت از اشتغال در مراکز نوآوری و شتابدهنده‌ها به عنوان مربی و مشاور»، «تسهیلات دوره فرصت مطالعاتی»، «تسهیلات مسکن»، «حمایت از اشتغال در شرکتهای معتبر داخلی»، «حمایت از برگزاری سخنرانی و کارگاه‌های تخصصی» و «حمایت از همکاری به عنوان اساتید مدعو و معین» است.

بر اساس برآوردها نزدیک یک درصد از کل مجموع دانشجویان ایرانی در خارج از کشور تحصیل می‌کنند. این رقم در مقایسه با میانگین بین‌المللی که حدود ۳ درصد است، رقم بالایی محسوب نمی‌شود.



Families take part in "sport for all" event

On Thursday, retired employees of the Municipality of Tehran, along with their families, gathered at Taleqani Park, in northern Tehran, for a 'sport for all' event aimed at maintaining physical and mental health.

TEHRAN TIMES



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OCTOBER 4, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who adopts cupidity as motto in life will be disliked by people, and he who reveals his distress, abases himself before all, and he who is ruled by his tongue has no worth in his own eyes and those of others.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:53 Evening: 18:02 Dawn: 4:39 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:02 (tomorrow)

What's in Tehran art galleries

Painting

* An exhibition of paintings by Yazdan Sadi is underway at Saleess Gallery.

The exhibition will run until October 14 at the gallery located at 148 Karim Khan Ave.

* Paintings by Sheida Qolipour are on display in an exhibition at Sheidai Gallery.

The exhibit entitled “The Colorful Song of The Birds in My Garden” will continue until October 17 at the gallery located at 149 Bahar Shiraz Square near Hafte Tir Square.

* Paintings by Rozita Nosrati are on display in an exhibition at Doost Gallery.

Entitled “Present/Simple”, the exhibit will be running until November 4 at the gallery, which can be found at No. 4, 4th St. off Eshqyar St., Khorramshahr Ave.

* A collection of paintings by Elham Hossein Haji is on view in an exhibition at Sepand Gallery.

The exhibit named “To Be or Not to Be” will run until October 17 at the gallery located at No. 22, Sepand Alley, Ostad Jafar Shahri St., Karim Khan Ave.

* An exhibition of paintings by Saloumeh Pezashkpour, Nazanin Abdollahi, Mohammad Keshvari, Pouya Hashemi and Amin Momen is underway at Kavin Gallery.

The exhibit named “Trace of Absence” will be running until October 17 at the gallery located at No.24, Pesian St. Zaferanieh Neighborhood.

* Nazanin Karimzadeh is showcasing her latest paintings in an exhibition at Aliha Gallery.

The exhibit will run until October 13 at the gallery located at No. 31, Ahmadi-Moqaddam Alley, near Quds Square, Shariati Ave.

* Shamis Gallery is showcasing paintings by Samira Abdi in an exhibition.

The exhibit named “Caspian Blue” will run until October 17 at the gallery located at 8 Daniali St., Andarzgu Blvd. in the Farmanieh neighborhood.

* An exhibition of paintings by Hossein Mahjoubi is currently underway at Atbin Gallery.

The exhibit named “Echoes from the Beginning” will continue until October 14 at the gallery that can be found at 42 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave. near the Parkway Intersection.

Global Sumud Flotilla featured at new mural at Palestine Square in Tehran

TEHRAN – A new mural was unveiled at Tehran's Palestine Square featuring the Global Sumud Flotilla imagery, coinciding with reports of an Israeli assault on aid vessels. The mural bears the phrase: “The sea will never be safe for Pharaoh.”

The unveiling occurred as global attention intensifies on recent confrontations at sea, where Israeli forces intercepted and boarded Gaza-bound aid flotilla ships, ILNA reported.

According to international media, Israeli naval forces intercepted numerous vessels belonging to the Global Sumud Flotilla that sought to breach the maritime blockade of Gaza to deliver humanitarian aid.

The interception reportedly involved boarding multiple ships, detaining more than 100 activists, and blocking safe passage.

The Israeli government has defended its actions, citing security concerns over attempts to breach the blockade. Critics, however, have condemned the move as a violation of maritime and humanitarian norms, calling it a “terrorist act” targeting unarmed civilians.

The flotilla included international activists, some of them prominent figures. In statements, organizers insisted they aimed to deliver medical supplies, food, and aid to the besieged population in Gaza, emphasizing the peaceful nature of their mission.

Israel, as the occupying power, has previously attacked Gaza-bound ships, seized their cargo, and deported activists on board.

The mural's phrase, “The sea will never be safe for Pharaoh,” evokes the story of Moses and Pharaoh in Exodus, where Pha-

raoh pursued Moses and the Israelites across the Red Sea and was drowned when the waters parted. The analogy suggests that tyrannical force (here symbolized by Israel) will ultimately be challenged and undone by those seeking justice.

In political and activist discourse, invoking “Pharaoh” often serves to frame an oppressor as historically destined to fail.

At least 66,225 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip since October 2023 and the number of

injuries has reached 169,000 in the Israeli onslaught, the Health Ministry said.

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

Israel has maintained a blockade on Gaza, home to nearly 2.4 million, for nearly 18 years, and further tightened the siege in March when it closed border crossings and blocked food and medicine deliveries, pushing the enclave into famine.

The UN and rights groups have repeatedly warned that the enclave is being rendered uninhabitable, with starvation and disease spreading rapidly.

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

Iran participating in Baku International Book Fair

TEHRAN – The 11th Baku International Book Fair is underway in the Azeri capital under the theme “Techno-Human: Yesterday's Dream, Today's Reality”.

Iran's Book and Literature House is participating in the event, representing the country's publishing industry at the Baku Expo Center.

Around 400 titles in classical and contemporary literature, children's books, Iranology, Persian language education, scientific works, history, and culture are on display at the Iran pavilion, where the Tehran International Book Fair, the Iran Book Grant Scheme, and the World Award for Book of the Year are also introduced.

These efforts serve to promote the Persian language, encourage international translation and copyright partnerships, and boost Iran's role in cultural

diplomacy and literary exchange.

Notable Iranian publishers such as Candle and Fog, Nimaj, and the Seljuk Literary Agency are also present at Iran's pavilion. They also engage in professional meetings and workshops to share experiences with international publishers, translators, and literature enthusiasts.

The Iranian delegation hosts several specialized and cultural panels, focusing on topics such as translating Persian literature into foreign languages, showcasing Iran's publishing capacities, the role of technology in promoting reading habits, and strengthening cultural cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan.

These sessions aim to enhance dialogue and collaboration between publishers, translators, and authors from participating countries.

This year's fair hosts 41 foreign

institutions from 18 countries and over 100 local publishers, with Qatar as the guest of honor.

Over the exhibition's 7 days, over 220 events are scheduled in presentation zones, stands, and conference rooms, including master classes, book presentations on topical issues like inclusion, book signings, conferences, and cooperation platforms for

the book industry.

The fair will also feature a dedicated “Children's World” with storytimes and performances, offering reading opportunities for every member of the family.

This year's edition of the Baku International Book Fair started on October 1 and will end on October 6.

Iran-Tajikistan joint film on screen at German festival

TEHRAN- Tajik director Muhiddin Muzaffar's movie “Fish on the Hook,” a joint production of Iran and Tajikistan, is competing at the 30th edition of the SCHLINGEL International Film Festival for Children and Young Audiences, which is currently underway at Chemnitz, Germany.

The film is about Daler, a ten-year-old boarding school student, who sets out on a journey with Samad, a gambler, to find his mother, Khursheda. Along the way, they face various challenges that help Daler mature and understand the importance of choice. Upon meeting his mother, the boy must make a fateful decision that could change his life forever.

“Fish on the Hook” is produced by the newly established film studio Dovfilm, in collaboration with Iranian partners from the television companies iFilm and 30Cup, as well as Tajikfilm.

The concept of the film was developed in 2022 in cooperation with the director of the boarding school in the city of Buston, Tajikistan. The screenplay was originally written by Bakhtiyar Karimov. It was later revised under the guidance of Valery

Akhadov's workshop, with contributions from Muhiddin Muzaffar.

SCHLINGEL is one of Europe's leading platforms dedicated to international children's and youth films. Each autumn, the festival showcases a curated selection of the latest and most diverse productions from around the world. The event features not only film screenings but also engaging panel discussions, talks, workshops, and the SCHLINGEL Industry Forum, fostering dialogue among filmmakers, industry professionals, and audiences.

A special focus is placed on educational initiatives, offering practical activities tailored for kindergartens and schools to promote media literacy and filmmaking skills among young audiences.

Beyond the festival week, SCHLINGEL actively supports the dissemination of its films by acquiring licensing rights and assisting with dubbing versions. This effort encourages German distributors and broadcasters to include festival films in their programming, broadening their reach.