



A pilot from Israel, left, and a pilot from Germany, right, pose in front of a Eurofighter at an airbase in Noerwenich, Germany, August 20, 2020.

German Troops Were Directly Involved in 'Dirty Work'

The Tehran Times reveals Germany's military role in Israel's 12-day aggression against Iran

Iran to give crushing response to enemies: IRGC Cmdr.

The commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corp (IRGC) has warned of a crushing response to any hostile move against the country.

"Any miscalculation by the enemies in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and the Iranian islands will incur a firm, immediate and crushing response that will make them rue the day," said Major General Mohammad Pakpour in a message on Wednesday, marking the IRGC's Naval Force Day.

"Undoubtedly, the IRGC's Naval Force today not only secures Islamic Iran's national and regional security, but also serves as the founder of new marine order based on justice, might and independence of nations against the domineering attitude of global hegemony," the top general added. ▶ Page 2

Anger continues to grow over EU's backing of UAE claims to Persian islands

TEHRAN – After a strong-worded statement from Iran's foreign ministry, the country's Parliament speaker has now turned up to condemn a joint statement issued by foreign ministers of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union over the three Iranian Persian Gulf islands of the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Bu Musa.

"We categorically condemn a rehash of baseless claims over the Iranian islands of Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa," said Mohammadbaqer Qalibaf in an open session of Parliament. He added Iran will show no "appeasement" over the unfounded allegations. ▶ Page 2

Israel's interception of Gaza aid flotillas sparks global outcry

By Shahab Sarmadi

TEHRAN – Israel's back-to-back interceptions of two international aid flotillas bound for Gaza have provoked a surge of global condemnation and legal scrutiny, casting renewed light on the blockade of the Palestinian enclave. The seizures — carried out in international waters — targeted the Global Sumud Flotilla a week ago, and the Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC) on Wednesday, including its lead vessel The Conscience.

Israeli naval forces stopped part of the Global Sumud Flotilla on October 1, 2025, a 40-vessel aid convoy attempting to deliver humanitarian supplies to Gaza. Over the following two days, Israeli units boarded additional boats,

Gaza genocide rages on without relief

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Forces of the Israeli occupation regime continue an unyielding campaign of violence against Gaza's civilian population.

Despite U.S. President Donald Trump's recent claim that Israeli should "immediately" stop bombing Gaza, reports from the ground show that the indiscriminate attacks continue unabated.

As ceasefire talks in Egypt's Sharm El-Sheikh entered a third day, Gaza's Health Ministry announced almost a dozen Palestinians, among them women and children, have been killed and 61 others have been injured over the past 24 hours in a new wave of attacks. Rescue teams also recovered additional bodies from beneath the debris of earlier strikes.

In Gaza City, rescue teams recovered two bodies following air raids by the occupation regime on the al-Jalaa and Nasr areas.

Why did Hezbollah enter the war to support Gaza?

By Sondos Al-Asaad

BEIRUT — Hezbollah entered the war in support of Gaza within a broader, cumulative context that went beyond political fervor or fleeting emotion.

The historic decision was not an uncalculated adventure; rather, it was the fruit of a strategic reading of the regional landscape and Hezbollah's position and role in the conflict with Israel since the July 2006 war, when it consolidated the deterrence equation that prevented the enemy from launching any large-scale aggression against Lebanon for eighteen years.

However, Operation Al-Aqsa Flood shifted the balance and reopened the conflict's fundamental issues, making war on Lebanon a matter of time, regardless of Hezbollah's position on opening a support front.

You can't unring the bell: The propaganda offensive that lost its grip

By Garsha Vazirani

Act I — The confession

TEHRAN — Picture a hush in a room. A nervous voice leans into a mic and admits what everyone has felt: "We have a major, major, major generational problem." That leaked fragment was less an accusation than a diagnosis: the old pipelines of influence were cracking as short, brutal images poured into young people's feeds.

Obtained and circulated by the Tehran Times in late 2023, after Israel launched its genocidal war on Gaza, the confession of the Israel Lobby's Anti-Defamation League chief, Jonathan Greenblatt, crystallized a new truth.

In the age of the smartphone and social media, message control is no longer a door you can simply shut.

False intelligence, Israeli pressure fuel U.S. miscalculations on Iran: Araghchi

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has criticized the U.S. President Donald Trump over his recent remarks on Iran's nuclear program, urging Washington to return to diplomacy instead of repeating past mistakes driven by false intelligence and Israeli influence.

In a post on X, Araghchi recalled his fifth round of talks with Trump's envoy, Steve Witkoff, on May 23, noting that Iran had made its position clear at the time: "Zero nuclear weapons means we do have a deal; zero enrichment means we do not have a deal."

He said that if the U.S. president were to review the minutes of those meetings, he would see how close the two sides had come to reaching a historic nuclear agreement.

Drawing a parallel with the 2003 Iraq invasion, Araghchi wrote that Washington should remember there was never any real intelligence proving Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. ▶ Page 2

Tehran, Warsaw underline expanding sci-tech ties

TEHRAN – Iranian and Polish officials have highlighted the importance of boosting scientific, research, and technological cooperation between the two countries.

During a meeting held on Tuesday, Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf and Polish Minister of Science and Higher Education, Marcin Kulasek, agreed to revive scientific and technological agreements.

The officials met on the sidelines of the 22nd annual meeting of the Science and Technology Society (STS) forum, held in Kyoto, Japan, from October 5 to 7.

Also, the two officials exchanged invitations to visit each other's countries and become more familiar with universities and their scientific achievements, msrt.ir reported. ▶ Page 7



Iran, Caspian Sea states reinforce maritime security through strategic accord

TEHRAN – Naval commanders from Iran, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan have signed a strategic agreement to enhance security and cooperation in the Caspian Sea.

The pact was finalized on Wednesday during a meeting of the four littoral states in St. Petersburg, Russia. Representing Iran, Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, Commander of the Iranian Navy, signed the document on behalf of Tehran.

The agreement is designed to strengthen comprehensive collaboration among Caspian nations, with a particular focus on maintaining sustainable security in the shared waters.

Under the terms of the pact, no foreign country or extra-regional power will be permitted to interfere in the internal affairs of the Caspian Sea, reaffirming the principle of regional control over the strategic body of water.

Iran-Russia treaty to shift regional power balance, says Russian Scholar



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

China and Russia's opposition to snapback is a move against the West, not support for Iran

Writing an analysis in the Hamshahri newspaper, international affairs analyst Mehdi Khorsand believes China and Russia oppose the return of UN sanctions against Iran not because they fear losing the Iranian market but because they fear they may be the next target: Khorsand writes: Unfortunately, both before and after the JCPOA, Iran has failed to capitalize on the potential of international agreements with various countries and blocs. Despite Iran's strategic position in global transit, it has not taken adequate steps to assert its role. While Iran holds membership in organizations such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, these affiliations have yielded minimal tangible benefits. Iran has not succeeded in establishing meaningful economic integration with China and Russia, despite recognizing their global economic influence. The reality is that China and Russia's opposition to the snapback mechanism is not driven by concern over losing access to Iran's market. Rather, they fear that if Iran is targeted, they may be next. Their stance is rooted not in affection for Iran, but in opposition to the United States and the West.

Javan: Consequences of a “no war, no peace” scenario

Javan explored the ambiguous state of conflict between Iran and Israel, highlighting the psychological and strategic implications of this uncertainty. It wrote: The amplification of perceived threats against Iran has become a central tactic in the psychological and cognitive warfare waged by hostile entities and certain Western media outlets. By exaggerating the enemy's capabilities and downplaying Iran's military strength and deterrence, these actors aim to legitimize potential threats and achieve their objectives with minimal cost. A key strategy is the creation of urgency around a possible military threat. This narrative increases public anxiety, disrupts economic stability, and cultivates dissatisfaction within Iran. The “no war, no peace” period is highly sensitive. The sensitivity of the “no war, no peace” period is no less—if not greater—than that of wartime itself, because its continuation can overshadow the key achievement of war: national unity and cohesion.

Iran: Consolidating Iran's position regionally and internationally

The Iran newspaper has examined the strategic imperatives for Iran to solidify its standing both regionally and internationally. The article said in recent years, Israel has reframed the Arab-Israeli conflict into a confrontation with Iran. Iran now finds itself at a critical crossroads, requiring internal reconstruction and a recalibration of its policies and strategic posture. The country's

current situation entails comprehensive reforms in both domestic and foreign policy. During the 12-day war in June, Iran's military response succeeded in partially shifting the balance of power, ultimately compelling Israel to agree to a ceasefire. It should be noted that Iran has been caught in conflict not only with Israel but also with several (Western) countries. Therefore, it is necessary to seriously think about the steps ahead and the future of possible wars and their consequences for the country. Iran needs reforms in its national, regional, and international strategies to strengthen its position. Iran needs to strengthen its public support base. Therefore, to maintain its national, regional, and international position, the Islamic Republic of Iran must update its strategies and define its behavior towards regional countries and Arab actors with new conditions.

Donya-e-Eqtasad: China's model for evading sanctions

In an article, Donya-e-Eqtasad explored how China evades sanctions to trade with Iran. It said reputable international media have confirmed China's use of barter mechanisms and hidden financial channels to enable sustainable economic cooperation with Iran under sanctions. This trade relationship operates on a “oil-for-infrastructure” model, where goods are exchanged directly between the two countries. Chinese institutions play a key role in financing Iranian projects and indirectly transferring oil revenues. These mechanisms help maintain Iran's oil exports, meet its infrastructure needs, strengthen China's interests, and weaken the sanctions system. Moreover, this approach enhances China's influence in the Middle East—a region long dominated by the United States. For Iran, beyond vital financial support, these agreements deliver essential infrastructure and reduce its geopolitical isolation.

Arman Melli: Netanyahu's new plan against Iran

Writing an article in the Arman-e Melli newspaper, Seyed Jalal Sadatian, Iran's former ambassador to London, said, Benjamin, given the extensive support he enjoys in the U.S., is seeking to implement a new plan against Iran. This support includes members of Congress, major capitalists, and American media groups who have aligned their positions in favor of his policies. The overall goal of this movement is to achieve influence and complete dominance in the Middle East, in such a way that they can both limit the power of China and Russia and also change the outlook and policies of European countries toward the region.

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

False intelligence, Israeli pressure fuel U.S. miscalculations on Iran: Araghchi

From page 1 ► Instead, he said, that war resulted in “unfathomable destruction, thousands of dead American soldiers, and seven trillion dollars of U.S. taxpayers' money wasted.”

The Iranian foreign minister added that similar false claims are now being made about Iran's nuclear activities, noting Israel's deceiving of U.S. officials into promoting the notion that Iran was close to developing a nuclear weapon. “With that plan's failure,” he said, “Israel is now trying to fabricate another threat from Iran's defensive capabilities. But the American people have grown tired of fighting Israel's forever wars.”

Emphasizing Iran's resilience, Araghchi declared that “Iran is a great country, and Iranians are a great nation—the heirs of an ancient civilization. Buildings and machines can be destroyed, but our determination will never be shaken.”

He concluded his remarks by reaffirming that “there is no solution but a negotiated outcome.”

Araghchi's remarks followed comments by U.S. President, who told sailors at a ceremony

marking the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Navy at Naval Station Norfolk that Washington “would have to take care of” Iran again if Tehran resumed its alleged nuclear activities. Trump also praised the U.S. airstrikes in June on Iranian nuclear sites as “perfectly executed.”

He claimed that the strikes — carried out under what the Pentagon called Operation Midnight Hammer — had targeted key facilities in Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan, and that they prevented Iran from being “within a month” of developing a nuclear weapon. Iran has repeatedly denied these allegations.

On June 13, Israel launched a blatant and unprovoked attack against Iran, triggering a 12-day war that killed at least 1,064 people, including senior military commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians. The United States also joined the conflict by bombing three Iranian nuclear sites, in what Tehran called a serious violation of international law.

In retaliation, Iran's Armed Forces targeted strategic positions across the occupied territories as well as the al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest U.S. military base in West Asia.

Anger continues to grow over EU's backing of UAE claims to Persian islands

Iran's top legislator says no ‘appeasement’ over the groundless allegations



Above, Parliament Speaker Qalibaf lambasted Europeans during a Wednesday open session. Below, Deputy FM Takht-e Ravanchi summoned EU envoys to protest



From page 1 ► In a statement published at the end of the 29th Joint Ministerial Meeting between the GCC and EU, the two blocs called on Iran to end what they called the “occupation” of the three Iranian islands, which belonged to Iran centuries before the UAE even existed.

Qalibaf said Iran's territorial integrity “has been sealed and safeguarded by the blood of hundreds of thousands of this nation's brave youth”. His words come after Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the GCC-EU statement amounts to a threat to the country's sovereignty.

Iran's diplomatic apparatus also had its Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-e Ravanchi convey

the country's strong protest to EU diplomats. He summoned ambassadors of European Union countries to Tehran to on Tuesday, a day after European and Persian Gulf officials convened in Kuwait.

During his meeting with the summoned ambassadors, Takht-e Ravanchi reaffirmed Iran's indisputable and perpetual sovereignty over the islands of Abu Musa, Lesser Tunb, and Greater Tunb, calling them inseparable parts of the country. He said the EU's support for the UAE's “unfounded” claims over the islands violated the principles of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, strongly condemning the bloc's politicized and biased stance.

The Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, and the Greater and Lesser

Tunbs have historically been part of Iran, proof of which can be found and corroborated by countless historical, legal, and geographical documents in Iran and other parts of the world. However, the United Arab Emirates has repeatedly laid claim to the islands.

The islands fell under British control in 1921, but on November 30, 1971, a day after British forces left the region and just two days before the UAE was to become an official federation, Iran's sovereignty over the islands was restored.

In their statement issued in Kuwait, the two blocs also made interventionist statements about Iran's nuclear and missile programs. They “stressed the importance of ensuring the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program” and accused Iran of regional escalation through its ballistic missile and drone programs.

Addressing allegations about Iran's missile program, Takht-e Ravanchi dismissed them as interference in Iran's internal affairs and rejected false and exaggerated narratives. He emphasized that Iran's locally-developed defense capabilities, including its missile program, are an inherent right to self-defense and contribute to regional security and stability.

The deputy foreign minister also referred to a recent move by Britain,

France, and Germany—collectively known as the E3—to return UN Security Council sanctions against Iran under the so-called snapback mechanism of the 2015 nuclear deal officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

He said the EU, as coordinator of the JCPOA Joint Commission, had failed—along with the E3—to uphold its commitments and had instead misused the dispute resolution mechanism outlined in the agreement, thereby obstructing diplomacy. They should be held accountable for their destructive performance instead of repeating clichéd and entirely false allegations, Takht-e Ravanchi added.

The recent controversial statement is the latest in a series of escalatory measures Europe has taken against Iran in recent years. The reimposition of snapback sanctions and endorsement of the UAE's illegal claims to Iranian territory follow stringent sanctions imposed by Europeans against Iran for its refuted role in the Ukraine war. The West claims Iran has been supplying weapons to Russia for use in Ukraine, allegations Iran rejects, calling on Western states to provide evidence. To date, neither the Europeans nor their primary patron, Washington, have provided any such evidence.

AEOI chief reports major nuclear achievements despite war damages

TEHRAN – Iran's nuclear chief, Mohammad Eslami, has announced that the country continues to make significant advances in its peaceful nuclear program despite the damage inflicted on its facilities during the recent 12-day war.

Speaking at a session of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Eslami, who heads the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), presented a comprehensive report on Iran's latest nuclear achievements, the reconstruction and fortification of affected sites, and his recent visit to Russia.

According to the committee's spokesperson, Ebrahim Rezaei, Eslami stressed that the domestic production of radiopharmaceuticals has never been disrupted and will not stop under any circumstances. He said that Iran's radiopharmaceutical industry remains fully operational and continues to meet the needs of hospitals and research centers across the country.

Eslami explained that the AEOI has worked to move beyond the research phase and enter industrial-scale production so that nuclear technology can more directly benefit people's lives and the national economy. Between 2022 and 2024, he said, Iran achieved around 500 scientific

and technological milestones, many of which have had tangible effects on healthcare, agriculture, and industry.

The AEOI chief noted that the organization's irradiation projects have helped extend the shelf life of agricultural products, preventing up to one-third of produce from spoiling. He added that this technology has boosted agricultural exports and productivity. So far, several irradiation centers with a total capacity of 500,000 tons have been established nationwide, with plans for further expansion.

Eslami also pointed to progress in plasma research, emphasizing that plasma-based treatments have proven effective in healing diabetic wounds and treating breast cancer in women. In addition, he said, the AEOI has made major strides in purifying industrial waste and converting contaminated water into usable water, describing these as key achievements in environmental protection and sustainable development.

Iran, Russia to construct 8 nuclear power plants

Referring to international cooperation, Eslami said Iran and Russia are implementing a protocol

Iran to give crushing response to enemies: IRGC Cmdr.

From page 1 ► Earlier this week, Major General Pakpour also gave another stern warning to the enemies. He said the IRGC's naval troops will respond, with full force, to any move by the enemies in the Persian Gulf.

Major General Mohammad Pakpour made the comment while inspecting the IRGC's operational units in the Persian Gulf waters.

“As the [Iranian] Armed Forces brought the Israeli regime and the United States to their knees in the 12-day imposed war, the IRGC's Naval Force will respond to any move by the enemies in the sea or on the [Persian Gulf] islands with full preparedness,” said the top general.

General Pakpour's inspection of the IRGC's naval forces comes ahead of a potential second war with Israel and the United States.

In the event of another war, Iran could block and mine the strategic Hormuz Strait through which more than 20% of the world's oil and natural gas pass.

The blockage of the Hormuz Strait could deal a serious blow to the economies of world countries, namely the Western nations and the United States.

On June 13, Israel launched a

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

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

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

German troops were directly involved in ‘dirty work’

The Tehran Times reveals Germany’s military role in Israel’s 12-day aggression against Iran

By Staff Writer

TEHRAN – In June, Germany was one of the few countries to back Israeli strikes on Iran’s civilian, nuclear, and military sites, and arguably the most vocal among them. The German Chancellor angered both Iranians and Germans during the conflict when he defended Israel’s aggression, stating that it was doing “dirty work” for Western states.

Friedrich Merz also stated that he had been notified of the illegal attacks in advance, adding that not attacking Iranians was not an “option” for Israelis, who, he claimed, had the right to “defend themselves.” Israel carried out the attacks, killing over 1000 Iranians in the process, claiming they were intended to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

However, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had found no evidence that Iran was moving toward nuclear weapons—a fact most recently reiterated by the UN nuclear watchdog’s Director-General, Rafael Grossi, last week. Israel’s decision to launch an all-out war against Iran brought the region to the brink of a conflagration that, had it not been contained, would have had long-lasting reverberations not only for West Asia but also for the Western world, a fact Germany was fully aware of when it backed the action.

New information obtained by the Tehran Times reveals that Germany’s support for Israel during the 12-day war extended



Israel’s former Chief of the General Staff Herzi Halevi (R), hosted the Chief of Defense of the Bundeswehr, General Carsten Breuer on December 5, 2024.

beyond political and diplomatic statements. Berlin, in fact, played an active role in helping Israel achieve its war goals by deploying troops to the occupied territories.

A member of the Israeli army with knowledge of the matter has told Iranian intelligence that a group of German military forces was stationed in Israel at the request of the regime during the 12-day war. They participated in military operations, under an agreement that required Israel to keep Germany’s involvement a secret. The agreement was made in confidentiality between German and Israeli commanders, but it has been obtained by Iranians.

Germany’s aid to Israel marks the second time it has joined an aggressor against Iran. Berlin also supplied Iraqi Dictator Saddam Hussein with chemical weapons, which he used during his invasion of Iran in the 1980s.

The Tehran Times understands that German troops were financially compensated for their service to Israel but chose to leave the occupied territories immediately after the war ended despite their initial promises. As the conflict escalated and Iran targeted several military and sensitive sites, the Israelis discovered that the German forces were reluctant to continue their involvement.

German government must seek a majority vote in Bundestag before joining a foreign war

According to a leaked Israeli assessment, the German forces’ departure unnerved the regime. Zionists were, however, content

with how France participated in the war on Israel’s behalf.

It remains unclear whether the German parliament approved the deployment. The German government is constitutionally prohibited from sending troops to a foreign war on its own initiative and is legally required to seek a majority vote in the Bundestag first. This system was deliberately established after World War II to prevent the executive branch from unilaterally initiating war.

The Tehran Times has been informed that details regarding the names of the German personnel involved, the nature of the collaboration, and supporting documentation have been made available to Iran.

The revelation comes as Israel grapples with what Hebrew media calls a “spy crisis.” According to a report by Israel’s Internal Security Agency (SHINBET), espionage cases in Israel increased by approximately 400 percent in 2024. That figure is expected to have risen further in the first half of 2025. Several Israelis have been arrested on espionage charges in recent months, with the regime linking almost all of them to Iran. Iran’s Intelligence Minister Esmaeil Khatib has stated that a large number of Israelis collaborate with Iran either for money or out of hatred towards Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Iran–Russia treaty to shift regional power balance, says Russian Scholar

Dr. Ravandi-Fadai outlines the agreement’s potential to counter sanctions and deepen cooperation in energy, defense, and diplomacy

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – Following the official activation of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty between Tehran and Moscow, Iran and Russia have entered a new phase in their long-standing relationship. The 20-year agreement, encompassing cooperation in defense, energy, technology, and finance, is widely regarded as a milestone in strengthening bilateral and regional ties.

As both nations confront unprecedented Western sanctions, the treaty underscores their shared resolve to construct alternative political and economic frameworks — notably through organizations such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

To gain a deeper understanding of the implications of this strategic accord, the Tehran Times spoke with Dr. Lana Ravandi-Fadai, a prominent Russian historian and senior researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. A leading expert on Iran and Middle Eastern affairs, Dr. Ravandi-Fadai offers a nuanced analysis of how this treaty may redefine Iran’s geopolitical leverage, shift Eurasia’s power balance, and open new pathways for cooperation in energy and regional security.

Below is the full text of the interview:

How might this treaty influence Iran’s position in multilateral frameworks such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization?

I am confident that this treaty represents a genuine instrument for overcoming economic isolation. In fact, Iran began to gradually move in this direction as far back as the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, turning toward Russia and political alliances where Russia played a significant role — namely, the SCO and BRICS. Iran joined these two organizations during the presi-

dency of the late Ebrahim Raisi, who was clearly pro-Russian and actively worked to strengthen Iran’s ties with our country, including at the international level. This course was fully supported by the Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

It can be said that under the late President Raisi this process accelerated sharply and continues today under Masoud Pezeshkian, who recognizes that the West remains unwilling to change its policies or make concessions to Iran. As a result, he has decided to deepen cooperation with Russia, China, and the BRICS bloc.

Pezeshkian has recently stated that BRICS can help Iran assert itself globally and play a more active role in world affairs. He also emphasized that the organization should play a key role in preventing states such as Israel or the United Kingdom from committing acts of aggression against independent sovereign states.

Iran took part in the recent SCO summit in China, where the President reiterated that this organization could contribute to the creation of a multipolar world. At the beginning of his term, Pezeshkian had certain illusions that the West would offer economic support. However, after Western Europe — namely Germany, France, and the United Kingdom — effectively reinstated UN sanctions against Iran, the President lost any remaining hope that the West or Europe would be of help.

He has since decided that closer cooperation with Russia and other BRICS members is the only viable path forward and has even proposed creating a mechanism to circumvent sanctions. Most importantly, Iran can now position itself more confidently in such organizations, relying on Russia’s backing.

To what extent could this agreement alter Iran’s diplomatic leverage vis-à-vis Western powers, es-



Masoud Pezeshkian of Iran (L) and Vladimir Putin of Russia signed a strategic cooperation pact in January of 2025

pecially in the face of sanctions and international pressure?

Both Iran and Russia are under severe Western sanctions, but Iran finds itself in an even more vulnerable position. Therefore, the signing of this treaty will enable Tehran to assert its positions before major Western powers with greater confidence. Should both sides successfully establish a system of mutual assistance to counter sanctions, the positions of Russia and Iran vis-à-vis the West will become considerably stronger.

What challenges might both countries face in realizing the economic promises of this partnership?

Firstly, both Russia and Iran are currently experiencing a slowdown in economic growth, which in itself could negatively affect external economic cooperation. Secondly, closer Russia–Iran cooperation runs counter to Western interests, and new additional sanctions may be imposed on both states. Nevertheless, in my view, with sufficient political will, these obstacles can be overcome.

From your perspective, how does the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty change the strategic balance in Eurasia, particularly in the context of Iran–Russia relations?

I believe this agreement will shift the balance of power in Eurasia in favor of both Russia and Iran while diminishing the influence of Western countries and Israel. It should be noted, however, that Iran now faces opposition in the region not only from Israel but also from the regime of Ahmad al-Sharaa in Syria — a country that had previously been one of Iran’s most loyal allies.

Therefore, the strengthening of Iran’s regional role will be a gradual process accompanied by serious challenges. Yet it is bound to happen, with the support of Russia and other allies of the Islamic Republic.

Do you think this agreement will encourage other regional actors to pursue similar strategic partnerships?

Undoubtedly. Many countries in the region have taken note of how rapidly and effectively the Russia–Iran partnership is developing, and this motivates them to deepen cooperation with one another. A recent example is the mutual defense agreement between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, which is particularly significant given that Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons. Now Pakistan’s deterrence capability will also extend to Saudi Arabia, while Riyadh, with Pakistan’s assistance, intends to advance its own nuclear program.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



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SPORTS

Nekoulal Azad optimistic about shining at 2025 Deaflympics

TEHRAN – Head of the Iran Deaf Sports Federation, Mostafa Nekoulal Azad, says that Iran is ready to shine at the Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics.

The 2025 Summer Deaflympics, officially known as the 25th Summer Deaflympics (XXV Summer Deaflympics), will be held in Tokyo, Japan from Nov. 15 to 26.

This marks the third time an Asian nation has been awarded hosting rights for the Summer Deaflympics, after Taiwan (2009) and Turkey (2017). The event returns to its usual four-year cycle, following the 2021 Summer Deaflympics which was postponed to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nekoulal Azad expressed optimism that Iran’s delegation will raise the national flag at the Games.

“First of all, I must say a bright future awaits the deaf and hard of hearing people of Iran. Our society comprises about one million people, and we will strive to make our voices heard. Competing in the Deaflympics is a way to demonstrate how strong our deaf community is,” Nekoulal told Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

“The Games will feature 18 sports, but we plan to compete in 12. Iranian athletes will participate in football, beach volleyball, judo, karate, taekwondo, athletics, shooting, badminton, bowling, table tennis, freestyle, and Greco-Roman wrestling. This edition offers an opportunity for our athletes to move onto the podium and raise our flag multiple times,” he added.

Nekoulal noted that Iranian deaf athletes have previously excelled on the international stage.

“At the 2024 Asia-Pacific Deaf Games, we finished first with 24 golds, 16 silvers, and 21 bronzes — 61 medals in total. Additionally, we won the World Deaf Futsal Championships title in 2025 in Italy. This success is the result of the efforts of coaches, officials, and athletes. However, we must continue this path more vigorously to take fundamental steps toward eliminating discrimination, injustices, and gaps in our country,” he said.

“With full vigor and the experience we have gained, we are preparing to participate in the 2025 Deaflympics. It is also worth noting that Iran’s women will participate in six sports at the Games. Our slogan in Tokyo is ‘Until the Last Breath for Our Homeland,’ and we will be sending 160 athletes. The delegation’s name will be ‘Lovers of Iran.’ Our message is peace, friendship, cooperation, and good relations with the world, and we hope to raise our flag high in Japan by winning medals,” Nekoulal concluded.

Pordel claims silver at Asian Heyball Championship 2025

TEHRAN – Iran’s Ali Pordel won a silver medal at the 2025 Asian Heyball Championship 2025 at the Myna Tyche Hotel in Amman, Jordan.

In the men’s final, Indian cueist Sundeep Gulati produced a clinical performance to defeat Pordel 7-2, capturing his maiden international Heyball title.

The men’s bronze medals were shared by Arfan Dad of Pakistan and Ahmed Aloqaili of Jordan, both of whom delivered commendable performances to reach the semi-final stage.

The Asian Heyball Championship 2025, organized under the banner of the Asian Confederation of Billiard Sports (ACBS), concluded with high praise for its competitive standard and flawless organization. The championship not only marked a new chapter for Heyball in Asia but also reflected the growing depth of talent and international

appeal of the sport across the continent.

Heyball is a modern and fast-paced form of billiards known for its excitement and intensity, as players aim to clear a set of balls within a short time, making it more dynamic and engaging compared to traditional billiards formats.

Shahdab Yazd win four-team tournament

TEHRAN – Shahdab Yazd claimed the title of the four-team volleyball tournament Tuesday night.

Shahdab defeated Paykan 3-2 (25-16, 18-25, 25-21, 23-25, 15-9) in the match held at the Shahediyeh, Yazd Province, Iran.

Mes Rafsanjan and Mehregan Noor Mazandaran also competed in the tournament.

Shahdab setter Arshia Behnejhad was chosen as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the tournament.

The teams took part in the event as part of preparation for the 2025-26 Iran Volleyball Super League.

Iran football team arrive in Volgograd

TEHRAN – Iran’s national football team delegation arrived in Volgograd, Russia, on Wednesday.

Team Melli are scheduled to play Russia in a friendly on Friday.

Iran will then travel to Dubai to face Tanzania four days later.

Amir Ghalenoei’s side have already qualified for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and these two matches will serve as preparation for the prestigious tournament.

Brazilian coach Osmar linked with Persepolis: report

TEHRAN – Brazilian coach Osmar Loss has been reportedly linked with Iran’s Persepolis.

In a surprising turn of events, Thai League 1 powerhouse Buriram United have parted ways with Loss, just months after the Brazilian guided the club to one of the most successful seasons in their history.

Loss, who joined the Thunder Castles ahead of the 2024/25 campaign, delivered an astonishing four titles from five competitions last season. Under his leadership, Buriram swept the domestic treble — winning the Thai League 1, the Thai FA Cup, and the Thai League Cup — and went on to capture the 2024/25 ASEAN Club Championship, further cementing their dominance in the region. The only blemish came in the AFC Champions League Elite, where Buriram’s run ended in the quarterfinals.

The Buriram’s management decided to part ways with Loss. The move comes amid speculation that the Brazilian tactician could be set for a swift return to Iran, where he previously managed Persepolis in 2024.

During his brief spell in Tehran, Loss steered Persepolis to the Persian Gulf Pro League title, and reports circulating on X (formerly Twitter) suggest that the Iranian giants are considering bringing him back amid their current struggles.

Persepolis currently sit seventh in the league despite recruiting high-profile names, including former Tottenham Hotspur and Paris Saint-Germain full-back Serge Aurier, who is yet to debut as he serves a suspension for a failed hepatitis B test.

Buriram have since appointed Emerson Pereira as caretaker head coach — his second stint in the role — as the club looks to stabilize their campaign and mount another charge for silverware.

Loss’ departure, though abrupt, marks the end of a chapter defined by success, dominance, and the occasional unpredictability that comes with managing one of Southeast Asia’s most ambitious clubs.

NIOC vows legal action after UK court upholds asset seizure linked to Crescent dispute

TEHRAN – The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) said it will continue legal efforts through international and domestic channels to overturn a UK appeals court ruling that upheld the seizure of a London property belonging to the Oil Industry Pension Fund.

In a statement carried by Shana, the company said the ruling followed years of legal action by Crescent Petroleum seeking to seize NIOC's assets worldwide as part of a long-standing contractual dispute.

“Unfortunately, the UK Court of Appeal has confirmed a lower court's decision to seize the building owned by the pension, savings,

and welfare funds of oil industry employees in London,” NIOC said, adding that the verdict was “unjust and biased” despite extensive legal defenses presented by Iranian teams.

Crescent's legal bid to claim the building began in 2022 after years of failed negotiations.

The lower court ruling was issued on April 15, 2024, and upheld on appeal.

NIOC said it remains committed to protecting the assets of Iranian oil workers and will pursue all available legal remedies, including appeals and international arbitration, in coordination with the Presidential Center for International Legal Affairs.

ICCIMA drafting new plans to boost engagement with SCO

TEHRAN – Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) is preparing new proposals to deepen the country's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), according to Majidreza Hariri, head of the Iran-China Joint Chamber of Commerce.

Hariri told Iran Chamber Online that the plans will soon be reviewed by experts at the chamber to help Iran better utilize the SCO's economic potential.

“We are drafting initiatives that will soon be presented for professional discussion to ensure more focused engagement with the SCO framework,” he said.

He noted that Iran's ability to benefit from its full membership in the SCO has been limited in recent years due to a series of national crises. “Soon after gaining full membership, we faced the helicopter crash that martyred President Raisi, the assassination of [Hamas political leader] Ismail Haniyeh, and the escalation of open conflict with Israel and the United States. These developments distracted the government from advancing economic cooperation within the SCO,” Hariri said, adding that the same situation affected Iran's participation in other blocs such as the Eurasian Economic Union and BRICS.

While praising the Foreign Ministry's efforts to establish specialized structures for SCO engagement, Hariri said Iran still lacks comprehensive economic coordination within the organization.

“We don't even have accurate statistics on our trade with SCO members,” he said.

He added that sanctions have also shaped trade patterns, with most transactions focused on China and Russia.

“We can't clearly say whether the growth in trade with these countries results from SCO membership or from sanctions limiting our other options,” he noted.

Hariri identified the main obstacle to developing ties with SCO members as a lack of experience in international agreements. “Our biggest problem is not legal or political restrictions — it's inexperience. Both the government and private sector need more expertise in handling multilateral frameworks like the SCO,” he said.

Hariri concluded that the Chamber of Commerce is finalizing new initiatives aimed at improving Iran's participation in the SCO's economic programs.

“We will soon present these plans for expert review so that Iran can take fuller advantage of the organization's capacities,” he said.

Two years after formally joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in July 2023,

Iran has found its partnership with the group transformative, both for the nation and for the organization itself.

The process took 13 years to materialize, as in 2010 the SCO introduced a new membership criterion that excluded states under United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions. When UNSC sanctions against Iran were lifted in 2020—following the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and UN Security Council Resolution 2231—this breakthrough transformed long-sought membership into a reality for Iran and a strategic boost for the SCO.

For Iran, joining the SCO as a full member has helped mitigate the effects of years of U.S.-led sanctions. Membership has opened doors for cooperation with other members in politics, security, and technology—most notably in renewable energy. As 2025 marks the SCO's “Year of Sustainable Development,” Iran could leverage China's global leadership in solar and wind power to advance its own green goals. Beyond economics, the SCO strengthens Iran's position by countering U.S. pressure and expanding its regional influence.

The SCO, in turn, benefits from Iran's inclusion. It deepens the organization's footprint in the Middle East, a region critical to global security and stability. By embracing Iran, the SCO reinforces its core “Shanghai Spirit”: mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations, and the pursuit of common development. This aligns with its mission to foster multilateral economic cooperation and address regional security issues, including counterterrorism.

Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) head called for stronger economic and logistics cooperation among Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) members, stressing the need to streamline customs procedures, standardize regulations, and improve transport infrastructure to ensure sustainable growth in the region.

Speaking via video message at the SCO ministers' meeting on economic and trade affairs in Vladivostok in early September, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi said the complex shifts in the global economy highlighted the urgency of regional convergence. He described the ministers' draft statement as a strategic roadmap, not merely a document, urging members to adopt a more pragmatic and action-oriented approach.

Dehghan Dehnavi underlined the importance of resilient supply chains, noting that the statement's reference to developing international transport routes as the backbone of intra-regional trade was a unique opportunity for deeper connectivity. He said Iran's geostrategic location linking East and West positioned it to play a key role in expanding trade and diversifying exchanges.

nia, India, China, Portugal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, as well as national and provincial officials.

This edition of the exhibition features 40,000 tons of block stone from 400 mines across the country and includes representatives from 15 different countries.

The international event which kicked off on October 7 will wrap up on October 10.

Iran's steel output nears 15 million tons in H1

TEHRAN – Iran's steel production reached nearly 15 million tons in the first six months of the current Iranian year (March 21–September 22), marking a 3.2 percent year-on-year increase, according to the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA).

The latest ISPA data show the sector has rebounded from a 4.8 percent contraction recorded in the first quarter, signaling stronger coordination among producers in securing power supplies during the summer.

Despite severe restrictions on electricity access earlier in the year, major mills managed to stabilize production through purchases of “green” and “free-market” electricity and by using captive power plants.



Industry experts say the recovery reflects improved energy management strategies following last year's widespread power outages that disrupted heavy industries.

In May and June, some steel-

makers faced up to 90 percent power cuts, prompting firms to invest in alternative energy procurement plans.

Among the steel value chain products, rebar and iron ore concentrate registered the highest

Paknejad reports record growth in oil production, exports despite sanctions

Iran's oil sector continues to operate effectively and resiliently.

He noted that although the “snapback” could introduce new difficulties, Tehran is ready with countermeasures.

To strengthen performance, the minister said a high-level task force has been formed—comprising university experts, industry elites and oil engineers—to update technologies in Iran's oil and gas fields and improve recovery rates.

He said that Iran's current oil and gas recovery coefficients have room for improvement if modern techniques are deployed.

On the Pazan field discovery, he projected that, once developed, output could exceed 20 million cubic meters of gas per day, which would help buffer seasonal gas shortages during winter.

Paknejad also emphasized that some energy-intensive industries are investing in their own infrastructure: for example, a petrochemical conglomerate plans to produce gas for its

own use and supply surpluses to the national grid.

He discussed efforts to reduce flaring of associated gas (gas produced alongside oil), explaining that in the short term, the private sector may capture this gas—sometimes offered at zero base price—and convert it into higher value products.

Long-term projects, such as new NGL (natural gas liquids) facilities, will also play a role in capturing these wasted resources.

Finally, he announced that due to measures taken by Iran's petroleum products distribution and import management, the country has increased its stockpiles of gasoil (diesel) by 127 percent compared to the same period last year—ensuring a buffer for winter demand even if gas supply is constrained.

Base consumption and fuel imports have also been managed by reducing smuggling and optimizing internal output, helping reduce reliance on imports.

Iran-Turkey trade hits \$3.56b in 8 months

TEHRAN- The Turkish Statistical Office announced that trade exchanges between Turkey and Iran in the first eight months of the current year reached \$3.56 billion.

Trade between the two countries during this period decreased by three percent compared to the same period last year. In the first eight months of 2024, trade between the two countries was reported as \$3.66 billion.

According to the report, Turkey's exports to Iran in the first eight months of 2025 amounted to \$1.98 billion, which represents a six-percent decline compared to the same period last year.

Turkey's imports from Iran in the first eight months of 2025 also decreased by about two percent compared to the same period last year, reaching \$1.58 billion. The trade balance between the two countries from the beginning of 2025 has been in Turkey's favor by \$400 million.

Despite the decline in Iran-Turkey trade since the beginning of this year, in the eighth month of 2025 (corresponding to the Iranian fifth month Mordad), trade between the two countries experienced 12 percent growth and reached \$474 million.

Turkey's exports to Iran in August 2025 decreased by four percent compared to the same month last year, reaching \$270 million, but the country's imports from Iran grew by 24 percent, amounting to \$204 million

On October 3, senior Iranian and Turkish trade officials held talks in Tehran on ways to deepen economic ties, with Iran's Chamber of Commerce calling for tariff reforms to unlock the two countries' trade potential.

Hamed Asgari, deputy for international affairs at the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), told Turkish commercial attachés that the current level of trade is “not satisfactory” and urged a revision of tariff policies to strengthen bilateral economic relations.

He said Iran and Turkey have the capacity to expand trade to between \$15 billion and \$20 billion annually, but tariff barriers and restrictions have prevented Iranian goods from reaching their full potential in the Turkish market. Products such as cement and clinker were cited as key examples.

Asgari emphasized Iran's comparative advantages in energy and competitive goods and called for faster, less bureaucratic cooperation between Iranian and Turkish firms, especially in sectors such as steel and petrochemicals. He also stressed the need to leverage the Turkish embassy's support to facilitate tariff reform and boost bilateral exchanges.

The Turkish delegation, including commercial attachés Bilge Dinmez and Orhan, underlined the importance of removing trade barriers and clearing up commercial misunderstandings. They described Turkey as Iran's “gateway to Europe” and highlighted extensive ties, including a large Iranian community in Turkey.

They noted that preferential tariff negotiations between the two countries will resume soon and pointed to recent meetings of the joint commission and customs authorities.

Asgari said ICCIMA, as an advisor to the government, is committed to working with the Turkish embassy's economic section to address private sector concerns.

He promised follow-up meetings between business communities from both countries to craft practical solutions and advance cooperation, particularly in strategic industries such as steel.

The session concluded with plans to hold regular technical and expert meetings between ICCIMA and the Turkish embassy to drive trade development. Dinmez was introduced as the new commercial attaché at Turkey's embassy in Tehran.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) for planning and international affairs, Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$6.8 billion to Turkey in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, 2025.

Akbarpour said that Turkey was Iran's fourth top export destination in the previous year.

Exporting commodities valued at \$12.4 billion to Iran, Turkey was Iran's third top source of import in that year, the official added.

On April 14, the secretary of Iran's Free Trade and Special Economic Zones High Council said that Iran is pursuing the creation of a joint free trade zone with Turkey, as part of broader efforts to resolve long-pending investment challenges and boost cooperation with neighboring countries.

Speaking to Tasnim News Agency, Reza Masrou said a special task force has been formed to resolve unresolved projects that have lingered in Iran's free zones for over 15 years. “We are actively following up on the establishment of a joint free trade zone with Turkey,” he noted, adding that a joint working group between Iran and Turkey will take charge of advancing the plan.

Masrou stressed the need for a major shift in investment strategy across the country's free trade zones, stating, “We must move decisively

beyond what was done in the past. Investment incentives should be swiftly approved and implemented by each zone's board of directors.”

To facilitate bilateral cooperation, a joint forum is planned for July this year, bringing together Iranian and Turkish free zone officials and investors in one of Iran's free trade zones.

The official said that each zone must update its investment offerings and identify sector-specific priorities to attract investors based on its unique capacities. He added that investor satisfaction is critical, and new investment decisions are often influenced by the experiences of previous investors.

He criticized prolonged unresolved projects, noting that some have remained inactive for up to 15 years. “Creating task forces is necessary, but not enough. Problems must be addressed fundamentally. CEOs must be personally involved, and outcomes should be achieved within six months.”

On March 11, Iran's ambassador to Turkey announced a significant rise in bilateral trade between Tehran and Ankara, stating that the trade volume between the two nations reached \$11.8 billion last year and has surpassed \$17.5 billion as of February this year. The figure is expected to hit \$19 billion by year-end.

According to IRNA, citing Iran's Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Mohammad-Hossein Habibollahzadeh made the remarks during a virtual session of the Iran-Turkey Joint Transport Committee, emphasizing the importance of transit development. He noted that transit and transport volumes between the two countries have increased by \$7.0 billion this year, though further infrastructural improvements are required in rail, air, maritime, and port sectors.

Habibollahzadeh highlighted the significant traffic between Iran and Turkey, stating that six million passengers and approximately 330,000 trucks crossed the two countries' borders last year. In response to the growing trade volume, both countries have agreed to increase border crossings from three to five. Expanding rail connectivity and increasing flights are also part of the agenda.

The envoy welcomed the swift follow-up on recent meetings between the two countries' transport ministers, which reflects a strong commitment to expanding transport and logistics cooperation. He expressed hope that key decisions would be made to further advance transport ties between Iran's Ministry of Transport and Urban Development and Turkey's Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure.

Israel’s interception of Gaza aid flotillas sparks global outcry

From page 1 ► with the final vessel, the Marinette, seized on Friday, October 3, approximately 42.5 nautical miles off Gaza’s coast. More than 450 activists were detained during the multi-day operation. Among those seized were Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, French-Palestinian MEP Rima Hassan, and American activist David Adler.

Several detainees later described their treatment in Israeli custody as abusive — alleging beatings, strip searches, blindfolding, and denial of clean water and medical care. These testimonies have heightened concerns about Israel’s handling of detainees and the legality of its actions at sea.

The second naval assault occurred when Israeli forces intercepted the Freedom Flotilla Coalition’s convoy in international waters. According to the FFC, the lead ship The Conscience — carrying 93 journalists, doctors, and human rights defenders — was attacked first before three smaller boats were seized. The flotilla was transporting more than \$110,000 worth of essential medical and nutritional supplies for Gaza’s collapsing hospitals.



Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed both raids, calling them enforcement of a “legal naval blockade” and claiming all passengers were safe and would be deported. But the legality of such operations has been strongly contested. “Israel has no jurisdiction over international waters,” the FFC said. Turkey’s Foreign Ministry condemned the raid as “a grave violation of international law” and “an act of piracy,” while Malaysia’s Prime Minister demanded the immediate release of Malaysian nationals on board.

Both flotillas were part of a growing global civil society campaign to challenge Israel’s blockade, which rights groups describe as collective punishment against Gaza’s 2.2 million residents. These missions aim to deliver humanitarian aid directly to Gaza and confront the legal basis of Israel’s siege.

Legal experts have cited potential breaches of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, noting that intercepting civilian humanitarian vessels in international waters violates established mari-

time principles. “These were civilian aid ships, not combat vessels,” a maritime law scholar observed. “Their interception underscores Israel’s extraterritorial use of force in defiance of international law.”

The international reaction has been swift. Turkey and Malaysia have lodged formal protests. Global rights groups have condemned Israel’s actions. The detention of lawmakers, medical professionals, and prominent activists has amplified the diplomatic fallout.

Israel continues to defend the blockade as a security necessity. Critics counter that this framing ignores the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, where hospitals face severe shortages, malnutrition is widespread, and infrastructure is collapsing under siege conditions.

The near-consecutive targeting of the Global Sumud Flotilla and The Conscience marks a sharp escalation in Israel’s maritime enforcement. What Israel calls “blockade enforcement” is increasingly being framed internationally as an unlawful obstruction of humanitarian aid — a confrontation now playing out on legal, diplomatic, and moral fronts worldwide.

You can’t unring the bell: The propaganda offensive that lost its grip

When genocide went viral and propaganda struggled to hold sway

From page 1 ► “We really have a TikTok problem,” he admitted — a rare acknowledgment that the old levers of narrative dominance were faltering in real time.

Act II — When footage changed the moral math

What followed was a collision, not persuasion. Gaza’s devastation arrived as helmet cams, phone videos, and viral clips — sometimes uploaded by Israeli soldiers themselves — made the arithmetic of death immediate.

For a generation raised on feeds, actions outweighed press releases; seeing was believing. The consequence was measurable: polls recorded sharp declines in favorable views of Israel and rising shares of Americans saying the government had gone too far.

Young voters, no longer tethered to curated narratives from newspapers, television, or sermon halls, recalibrated their consciences in real time. The Palestinian cause — a sidebar before Operation Al-Aqsa Flood — had returned to the center of Western attention.

Act III — The blitz, the blunt force, the backfire

The PR machine responded with sophisticated brute force: influencer contracts, geofenced ads targeting sympathetic audiences, paid posts, rapid-response op-eds, and tools designed to shape algorithmic flows.

Where persuasion faltered, pressure followed — donors threatening universities, trustees pressing presidents, and public campaigns that misleadingly equated critique of Israel with an-

tisemitism.

Atrocity claims — lurid stories that circulated in the immediate aftermath of October 7, including fabricated tales of murdered infants, sexual violence, and the refrain that “ Hamas is ISIS ” — were used to manufacture public consent through fear and outrage.

In the short term, the campaign bent headlines and chilled campuses; in the medium term, fact-checking and relentless scrutiny hollowed parts of the offensive and, perversely, amplified the protests it sought to silence.

Politics followed the feeds. Progressive candidates such as Zohran Mamdani in New York City, who embraced Palestinian solidarity, surged in primaries.

On the right, anti-establishment figures like Nick Fuentes rose from the fringes into wider visibility, while others, such as Candace Owens, found common cause with noninterventionists questioning the costs of unconditional support.

Even more influential than before, Tucker Carlson emerged as a leading critic of Israel, denouncing civilian bombings, questioning U.S. aid, and exposing Benjamin Netanyahu’s influence in Washington.

What had once been taboo was now central to debate — actions had changed the story, and while propaganda could still roar, it no longer carried unquestioned authority.

Act IV — Technofeudalism and what cannot be undone

The present scene is stark. War criminals such

as Netanyahu publicly describe social media as “a weapon”; influencers are being courted as if they are flank battalions.

High-profile media moves and acquisitions by wealthy tech figures such as Bibi’s friend Larry Ellison — along with the appointment of hard-core Zionist figures like Bari Weiss in major media outlets — have stoked fears of concentrated narrative power and foreign influence.

Digital playbooks have evolved into cognitive warfare: geo-fencing Christian Zionist churches with pro-Israel ads, AI-driven content pushes, and paid influencer networks designed to reach specific communities and feeds.

Platforms such as the newly-acquired TikTok throttle Palestinian content; algorithms and moderation policies became battlefields.

On the ground, policing has hardened around dissent: National Guard deployments to blue states, masked arrest squads, expanded surveillance authorities, and covert operations have become blunt instruments to suppress protest.

Taken together with billionaire control over media and algorithms, these dynamics reveal the outlines of a new technofeudal age — where power may own the story, but never the memory.

However loud the machinery of persuasion, propaganda can only roar while testimony endures. Silence may be purchased, but belief resists the sale.

You can’t unring the bell. The feeds have shifted the moral ledger — and the echo will not fade.

Why did Hezbollah enter the war to support Gaza?

From page 1 ► From the first hours of October 8, 2023 operation, Hezbollah realized that what happened in Gaza was not a passing event, but rather a political and military earthquake in the West Asia region.

Benjamin Netanyahu’s rhetoric from the start of the war clearly revealed his intention to exploit Al-Aqsa Flood to reshape the region, a pattern repeated on subsequent occasions.

For Hezbollah, leaving Gaza to face its fate alone was tantamount to political, moral and ethical sin; it would be perceived as abandoning the Palestinian cause, which has been the foundation of its existence and identity since its inception.

Hence, the decision to join the support front was made to preserve the principle and the credibility of the Resistance discourse before its audience and the Axis of Resistance in general.

But the religious-moral motive alone was not decisive; Hezbollah, which had been monitoring military and technological transformations

in Israel for years, was aware that the enemy was seeking to launch a preemptive strike against it sooner or later.

Statements by enemy leaders, from Galant to Eisenkot, confirmed that the discussion of a preemptive strike against the Resistance was already on the table in the first days after the Al-Aqsa Flood attack and that Washington’s intervention was what froze implementation.

In other words, Hezbollah’s involvement in the war was not the cause of its outbreak, but rather a factor in determining its timing and form.

The Israeli enemy was looking for a pretext, not a justification, to launch an aggression it had been preparing for years.

On the other hand, the balance of deterrence that had protected Lebanon since 2006 was unlikely to last long after the earthquake that struck Israeli national security in Gaza.

The image of the “invincible army” was shaken, the Israeli sense of threat deepened, and voices rose

in the northern settlements demanding the elimination of what they called the “Lebanese threat.”

Here, Hezbollah found itself faced with two bitter choices: either stand idly by to observe the genocide in Gaza, or open a limited front to impose a new equation.

In its field calculations, Hezbollah attempted from the outset to control the pace of engagement so that it would not escalate into a full-scale war, focusing on exhausting the enemy on the northern front without expanding the scope of the confrontation.

This approach aimed to prevent a major explosion while simultaneously affirming that Lebanon was not a bystander but rather an integral part of the Resistance equation.

Over time, the support front transformed into a real pressure point on the Israeli occupation entity, forcing it to redistribute its forces and resources between Gaza and the north, which contributed to relieving some of the pressure on the Palestinian Resistance.

Indisputably, the decision to participate was not without costs. Lebanon bore enormous economic and security burdens, and its southern regions were targeted almost daily, with hundreds killed and wounded.

Nevertheless, Hezbollah remained committed to its choice, believing that the cost of abstention would have been higher.

Its withdrawal would have been interpreted in the Arab and Islamic consciousness as a betrayal, leading to a dangerous rift between the Resistance factions and perhaps even sectarian strife, which Washington and Tel Aviv had been betting on for years.

Engagement in the war, despite the heavy losses, protected the unity of the Axis of Resistance and kept the Palestinian flag high in the public consciousness.

It also thwarted, at least partially, the Israeli enemy’s attempts to strip Hezbollah of its nationalist and Islamic dimension and isolate it politically.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

The Guardian publishes names, photos of over 18,000 Palestinian children killed in Gaza



Yaqeen Hammad, 11, was killed in May 2025 when Israeli airstrikes struck her family home in the Al-Baraka area of Deir al-Balah, central Gaza.

The Guardian on Wednesday published a special report featuring the names and photographs of 18,457 Palestinian children killed during Israel’s war in Gaza—a figure that continues to rise amid ongoing bombardment. The report, based on Gaza’s Ministry of Health data, humanizes statistics by giving each child an identity, reflecting losses spanning nearly two years, with a child killed roughly every hour since the conflict began.

Children account for nearly one-third of all identified deaths, many dying alongside siblings and friends. The list includes only verified hospital-processed cases, excluding those still buried under rubble or dying indirectly from starvation and disease. Aid agencies warn that the blockade has turned essential needs into scarce

resources, with at least 150 children starving to death and countless others succumbing to preventable illnesses. Over 40,000 children have been injured, and Gaza now has the world’s highest number of child amputees.

Rights groups and genocide scholars assert that Israel’s actions in Gaza constitute genocide, citing mass killings and attacks on essential civilian infrastructure. The scale of casualties dwarfs previous conflicts: Israel’s 2008 operation killed 345 children in 22 days, and the 2014 offensive claimed 548 in 50 days—far fewer than in the current war. Research by the Peace Research Institute Oslo classifies Gaza as an area of “extreme conflict intensity,” with one in every 50 children killed, making it one of the deadliest regions for children in modern times.

Gaza genocide rages on without relief

From page 1 ► Meanwhile, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) detonated car bombs in the Sabra neighborhood, western Gaza City; a tactic that has drawn international condemnation for its indiscriminate impact on civilians. The IOF also waged attacks with quadcopter drones and heavy artillery.

Witnesses in the south reported that people waiting for food aid were again hit by IOF fire.

The humanitarian crisis continues to spiral. Dr. Rik Peeperkorn, the World Health Organization’s representative for the occupied Palestinian territory, described scenes of “unimaginable suffering.”

Speaking from Gaza, he said hospitals are inundated with trauma victims, many of them children, suffering from severe burns, crush injuries, and amputations.

“When we were delivering medical supplies to al-Ahli Hospital, bombardments were happening all around us,” Peeperkorn said.

“We saw young girls with severe burns, boys gasping for air, a relentless stream of trauma patients.”

WHO regional director Dr. Hanan Balkhy added that Gaza’s health infrastructure is collapsing under constant assault. Only 14 of 36 hospitals are even partially functional, and just one-third of the Strip’s 176 primary care centers remain operational. Electricity, clean water, and medicine are scarce, and facilities that have been repaired are often struck again within days.

Malnutrition is also deepening the crisis. WHO data shows that 70 percent of pregnant women and those who have just given birth are suffering from acute malnutrition, and one in five newborns is being delivered underweight or prematurely.

In Rafah, tragedy struck yet again when the IOF opened fire on civilians waiting near a food distribution center. Local medical sources said at least one person was killed and several others were injured. According to the Wafa news agency, one of the victims suffered a critical head injury.

These attacks on aid seekers are part of a broader pattern. Gaza’s Government Media Office reports that an average of two medical workers and one journalist are being killed every three days. Every day, more than 200 Palestinians are wounded, and 13 people lose limbs due to bombings and artillery fire. The statement also noted that one health facility is targeted or damaged each day.

Although officials from the Israeli regime have publicly claimed to be limiting operations to “defensive actions,” field reports suggest the

opposite.

Occupation forces have expanded their ground incursions into central Gaza City, accompanied by powerful explosions believed to come from remotely operated armored vehicles packed with explosives.

Entire neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble, residents say, with flashes of red and orange lighting up the night sky from burning debris.

Families trapped in these areas have described relentless drone activity and the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure. While occupation troops have withdrawn from some small pockets, they continue to tighten control over key intersections and urban routes, deepening the humanitarian catastrophe.

Trump’s call for a halt in airstrikes appears to have done little to slow the Israeli regime’s violence, which shows no sign of easing.

The evidence emerging from Gaza paints a stark picture: hospitals collapsing, aid convoys targeted, children maimed, and civilians killed in their homes. Despite international appeals and mounting global outrage, the devastation in Gaza persists. It shows a grim reminder of how far reality remains from rhetoric.

Claire Magone, executive director of the French branch of medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF), has returned from a week-long visit to the Palestinian enclave, saying that “In Gaza, death is everywhere. It’s not just a feeling, it’s palpable. Death lurks, it hovers, it strikes anywhere, anyone.”

Speaking to French newspaper Le Monde, Magone said she visited MSF teams treating patients as “tanks approached, drones flew over the neighborhoods, and the water was cut off.”

She told Le Monde that “The (occupation) army is conducting a strategy of asphyxiation, attacking, for example, water tanker trucks, as it did in mid-September with one of ours, which was clearly identified, and blocking all vital services.”

A UNICEF statement on Wednesday underlined that “in the last two years, a staggering 64,000 children have reportedly been killed or maimed across the Gaza Strip, including at least 1,000 babies. We don’t know how many more have died due to preventable illnesses or are buried under the rubble.”

Since October 7, 2023, the Israeli occupation regime has killed over 67,183 Palestinians and injured nearly 170,000 others, according to figures released by Gaza’s Health Ministry. These staggering numbers, which experts note are less than the actual casualty rates, highlight the depth of the U.S.-backed genocide.

‘Urban archaeology essential for understanding identity of a city’

TEHRAN—Head of the Cultural Heritage Ministry’s Research Institute, Mohamad-Ebrahim Zarei, has called urban archaeology the necessity of knowing the identity of a city.

According to Miras-e Arya (CHTN), speaking at a specialized gathering titled ‘Privacy in Historical Texture’ which was held at the place of ICOM (the National Committee of Iranian Museums), he pointed out the importance of understanding the historical layers of cities and stated: “We have two types of archaeology: archaeology in the city and urban archaeology.”

He added: “Archaeology in the city is related to the exploration of different parts of a city, but urban archaeology includes the examination of maps, documents, excavations, and other historical evidence so that we can understand the structure and identity of a city.”

Zarei clarified: “To accurately understand historical textures, it is necessary to use the urban archaeology approach.”

Two Lorestan villages can be nominated for world’s top tourist villages

TEHRAN—There are 11 target tourist villages across Lorestan province, of which two villages, namely Bisheh and Kapar Judaki, have the potential to be nominated for registration in the world’s top tourist villages list.

Head of Lorestan Cultural Heritage Department Ata Hassanpour told ISNA: “Three years ago, we handed over the affairs of Bisheh village in terms of tourism services to the governor of that rural district so that local communities can benefit from the village’s waterfall.”

“That is why all the financial credit for the infrastructure of this village is provided from this place, and in addition, in recent years, all the infrastructure, including picnic platforms, a connecting bridge, toilets, a prayer room, and even an access road, was built there.”

Regarding the access road, he said that the route to the Bisheh Waterfall is a drift due to the geological formation there, which is always a problem. But with the plan that the Road Maintenance Department has on its agenda, this problem of trenches on the route will definitely be solved.

Hassanpour stated that this village has become famous as a village without unemployment due to the presence of the waterfall and the use of the 12-month benefits of this waterfall, adding that perhaps another reason for this is the railway route of this village.

He continued that the most beautiful part of the route, which is located in Iran in terms of geotourism and has become famous in the world, is this route from Doroud to Khuzestan due to its tunnels, bridges, pristine attractions such as a waterfall, endemic animal species such as salamander, as well as the hospitality of its people, which are along the

While referring to various examples and presenting historical and old images of these works to this day, he stated: “For example, in one image, we see that the ancient citadel of Hamedan (Hegmataneh Hill) and the caravanserais are intact and the connection to the market is still established; however, throughout history and especially during urban development, these textures have undergone changes and transformations.”

He gave several examples from Iranian cities and emphasized that Hamedan is a city in which no direct traces of the Median era have been found, but pottery and architecture from that period have been discovered, showing that urban structures existed at that time.

It is worth mentioning that this meeting was held at ICOM under the chairmanship of Seyyed Ahmad Mohit Tabatabaei and in the presence of Zarei, Zohreh Bozorgmehri, Hossein Rayiti-Moghaddam, Fariba Kermani, and Alireza Gholinejad Pir-Bazari.



railway axis and are among the attractions that have been attached to Bisheh.

Hassanpour stated that last year, the River and Rail Festival was held in the village of Bisheh with the presence of foreign journalists residing in Iran, and this village was among the eight candidates to introduce Iran for possible registration with the World Tourism Organization, but for various reasons, it could not gain points.

He said: “In terms of infrastructure, Bisheh itself does not have any particular problem for registration, it is only in the matter of narration, which is also a ritual and in fact a spiritual issue that we need to work on. If the people of Bisheh village help and spontaneously cooperate and work in this field, and this is accepted by the world organization, the village will definitely be registered nationally.”

He noted: “But we have another village in Borujerd called Kapar Judaki, and one of the elements that this organization pays attention to is the spontaneous presence of people in environmental issues, where people build nests for storks on top of electric light poles.”

Qeshm Island, where eco-lodges help foster community growth and sustainable tourism

TEHRAN – Home to 149 guesthouses and eco-lodges, Qeshm Island--southern Iran’s crown jewel in the Persian Gulf--is emerging as a model for community-based and sustainable tourism.

These locally run accommodations are not only boosting the island’s tourism economy but also helping to preserve its unique cultural heritage and ecological diversity.

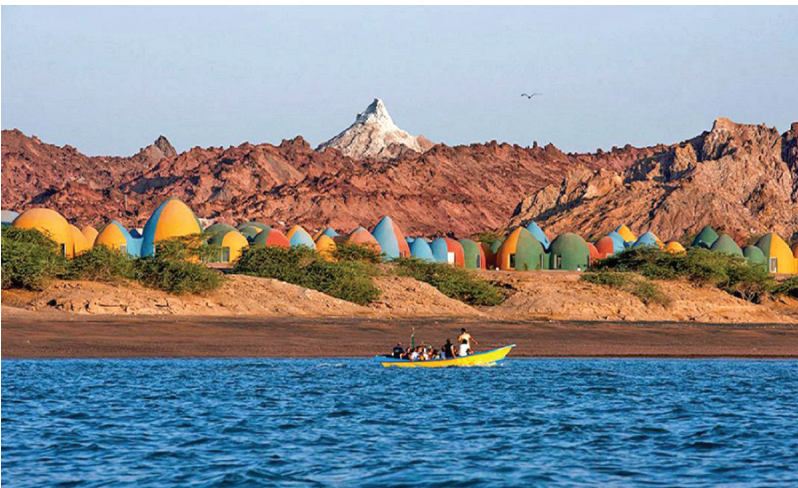
In fact, eco-lodges on the island play a crucial role in creating employment, supporting small businesses, and encouraging environmental stewardship by using locally sourced materials and promoting traditional lifestyles.

By offering visitors authentic cultural experiences rooted in the island’s customs, cuisine, and natural environment, the eco-lodges help foster deep and

meaningful connections between tourists and the local way of life.

Qeshm is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and breathtaking landscapes. The island’s eco-lodges, particularly those in the western region, showcase traditional architecture adapted to the local climate—thick walls, wind towers, and natural materials—all of which reflect centuries-old knowledge passed down through generations. This blend of sustainability and heritage not only attracts environmentally conscious travelers but also motivates residents to preserve their traditions.

Located along the Strait of Hormuz, Qeshm stretches parallel to Iran’s southern coast. It spans 135 kilometers in length and averages 11 kilometers in



width. With a land area of approximately 1,491 square kilometers, Qeshm is larger than several countries, including Bahrain and Singapore. The island is

part of Hormozgan Province and, along with nearby Larak Island, forms Qeshm County, home to around 190,000 residents.

Rarely-seen Qajar-era carpet unveiled for Tehran Week

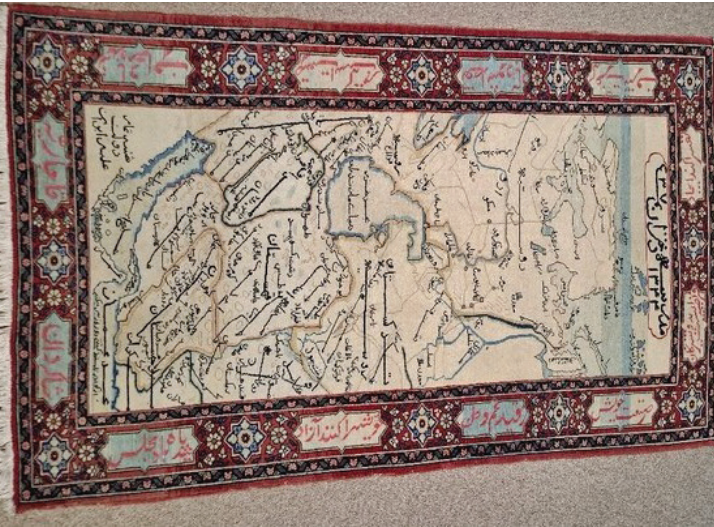
TEHRAN – A rare historical carpet woven by Qajar-era schoolgirls was unveiled at the Carpet Museum of Iran in central Tehran this week, as part of celebrations marking Tehran Week, which runs from October 3 to 9.

The carpet, woven in 1344 AH (1925 CE) by young female artists at a girls’ school during the late Qajar dynasty, was presented to the public in a ceremony attended by cultural officials and museum representatives.

“This carpet is not only a unique artwork, but also a historical document reflecting Tehran’s cultural identity,” said Mohammad Javad Inanlou, the museum director.

Inanlou said the border inscription on the carpet reflects the beliefs and historical awareness of its young weavers. The design features motifs representing Iran, Tehran, and the Persian Gulf, woven in vibrant patterns.

“The name ‘Tehran’ stands out as the capital of Iran in the design, and ‘Persian Gulf’ is prominently displayed in the text,” Inanlou added. “Through this piece, the artists expressed their love



for their homeland and cultural roots in a visual, poetic form.”

Located northwest of Laleh Park, the Carpet Museum of Iran houses about 2,000 carpets and floor coverings, including pieces from the Safavid era and beyond. The museum, spanning 3,400 square meters, also showcases rare rugs, kilims, and tableau rugs from across the country.

Inanlou emphasized the educational and cultural role of museums in preserving heritage. “Museums are not just storage

places for objects—they are living universities where history, art, and culture can be experienced,” he said.

He also called on citizens, researchers, and visitors to view the newly unveiled carpet. “This exhibition is an opportunity to understand the deep connection between art and history,” he said. “Tehran Week is the perfect time to reflect on the city’s cultural heritage.”

The carpet will remain on display at the Carpet Museum

during Tehran Week.

Glimpses of Persian carpet

Persian carpets are sought after internationally, with patterns of Persian garden being arguably the most characteristic feature of them all. Weavers spend several months in front of a loom, stringing and knotting thousands of threads. Some practice established patterns. Some make their own.

Each Persian carpet is a scene that seems ageless, a procedure that can take as long as a year. These efforts have long put Iran’s carpets among the most complex and labor-intensive handicrafts in the world. When the weaving is finally done, the carpet is cut, washed, and put out in the sun to dry.

Throughout history, invaders, politicians, and even enemies have left their impact on Iran’s carpets. As mentioned by the Britannica Encyclopedia, little is known about Persian carpet-making before the 15th century, when art was already approaching a peak.

Salehi-Amiri: Iraqi tourists visiting Iran will increase from 3.5 million to 5 million

TEHRAN—The Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has declared that with the implementation of a new agreement with Iraq, the capacity of road travel from Basra to various Iranian cities will rise, predicting that the number of Iraqi visitors will reach five million from the current 3.5 million.

According to Miras-e Arya (CHTN), speaking on the sidelines of a cabinet session, he said that 80 individuals from the Iranian hoteliers and travel agencies are currently in Iraq to implement a new direction for land travel from Basra to other cities in the country and expand tourism capacity.

He also said the agreement is a milestone in the development of tourism between the two countries, which was proposed by the Iraqi side and will be implemented soon.

Salehi-Amiri gave news of his travel to Baghdad for finalizing and signing the memorandum of understanding, adding that, fortunately, Iraqis are currently traveling to the cities of Mashhad, Isfahan, Shiraz, Kish, Rasht, and other cities in Iran, and one of the main centers of Iran’s tourism policies is Iraq, and the relevant agreements will be finalized soon.

He also noted about domestic cultural and tourism projects: “The physical progress of the tomb of Shams Tabrizi has currently reached 58 percent and is expected to be completed in less than a year. This tomb will be inaugurated on the day of commemoration of Rumi and Shams, in September 2026, designed and built by our country’s expert architects. With the inauguration of this magnificent building, the city of Khoy will also become a pilgrimage site for lovers of Rumi and Shams, like Konya.”

Salehi-Amiri concluded by emphasizing: “Developing tourism and creating cultural and pilgrimage infrastructure not only plays a key role in promoting cultural and econom-

ic exchanges between Iran and Iraq, but also strengthens Iran’s position as a strategic and luxurious destination for regional tourists.”

A memorandum of understanding to develop tourism cooperation between Iran and Iraq was signed in Baghdad in the presence of the head of the Iraqi Tourism Organization, members of the parliaments of the two countries, the Iranian ambassador to Iraq, the director general of marketing and foreign tourism development, and a large group of tourism industry activists, the Young Journalists Club (YJC) reported.

In this memorandum, which was signed simultaneously with the Iranian roadshow in Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, by Hormatollah Rafiei, the director of the Association of Iranian Travel Agencies, and Haider Amer Al-Dujaili, head of the Iraqi Travel Service Bureaus Association, the private sectors of the two countries were obliged to send five million tourists to each other’s countries annually.

Rafiei, who is present in Baghdad with the members of the board of directors of the association, referred to the importance of concluding this memorandum of understanding in the private sector of the two countries: “The efforts of the private sectors of Iran and Iraq, which are the pioneers of the tourism industry of the two countries and make the wheels of the economy in the field of tourism in Iran and Iraq turn, are commendable in the understanding for the bilateral development of tourism.”

Rafiei considered the holding of the Iranian tourism roadshow in Iraq and the signing of the bilateral memorandum of understanding to develop tourism interactions between the two countries to lead to a change in the perspective of the target markets of tourism from the West to neighboring countries, and added that with the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the private sectors of Iran and Iraq, the share of incoming tourists from the two countries will reach

50 percent.

He announced that, fortunately, with the establishment of the Iranian Tourism Roadshow in Iraq and the signing of a bilateral memorandum of understanding to send tourists to various destinations in the two countries, in addition to pilgrimage destinations, the Iranian and Iraqi tourism road will be two-way and the level of tourist attraction from both countries will be the same.

Rafiei said that based on the memorandum of understanding signed with the Iraqi side and with the efforts of private activists in the tourism industry and the support of the Iranian and Iraqi governments, the result of the understanding with the Iraqi tourism private sector will be a share of five million in sending tourists from Iran and Iraq, and thus 10 million tourists will travel between the two countries annually.

He said that as a result of a joint meeting between the Association of Iranian Travel Agencies and Ahmed Al-Hakak, the Iraqi Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, a memorandum of understanding for cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries was drafted and signed in Baghdad.

Rafiei announced: “The memorandum of understanding on cooperation in tourism between Iran and Iraq focuses on four axes: pilgrimage, which is currently underway and must be systematized; sightseeing tourism, which the two countries have not been able to use seriously so far and is being implemented for the first time; health tourism, which Iran continues to be the leading tourism sector in the region, and Iraqi tourists, without knowing it, went to other countries for treatment at much higher costs than in Iran; and finally, scientific tourism, which was specifically put on the agenda so that universities in the two countries could benefit from the presence of Iranian and Iraqi students. It was focused on and was ultimately signed by the private sectors of the two countries.

Strategically positioned at the mouth of one of the world’s most vital maritime trade routes, Qeshm is where geography, biodiversity, and ancient culture converge.

The island is celebrated for its ecological richness, including the Hara Forests—an expansive mangrove ecosystem covering more than 8,000 hectares. Designated a UNESCO biosphere reserve, these forests serve as vital breeding grounds for migratory birds, fish, and reptiles, and play a key role in maintaining the ecological balance of the Persian Gulf.

Qeshm is also home to 26 geosites that form part of the Qeshm Island Geopark, the first UNESCO Global Geopark in the Middle East. Initially designated in 2006, the geopark was

temporarily removed from the list before being reinstated in 2017 following improved conservation measures and infrastructure development.

Often referred to as a “natural geology museum,” Qeshm is famed for its surreal rock formations and dramatic landscapes. Among its most iconic natural attractions is the Valley of the Stars—a labyrinth of wind-carved canyons and towering sedimentary structures shaped over millennia. Local legend claims a star once fell in the area, lending the site its mystical name.

With its unique blend of nature, culture, and community-driven tourism, Qeshm Island continues to draw travelers seeking meaningful, responsible, and immersive experiences.

Tehran, Warsaw underline expanding sci-tech ties

TEHRAN – Iranian and Polish officials have highlighted the importance of boosting scientific, research, and technological cooperation between the two countries.

During a meeting held on Tuesday, Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf and Polish Minister of Science and Higher Education, Marcin Kulasek, agreed to revive scientific and technological agreements.

The officials met on the sidelines of the 22nd annual meeting of the Science and Technology Society (STS) forum, held in Kyoto, Japan, from October 5 to 7.

Also, the two officials exchanged invitations to visit each other's countries and become more familiar with universities and their scientific achievements, msrt.ir reported.

Established in 2004, the Science and Technology in Society (STS) Forum is an annual international conference held each October in Kyoto. The 2025 edition, taking place from 5–7 October, marks the 22nd Annual Meeting.

The Forum provides a global platform for policymakers, business leaders, scientists, researchers, and media representatives to discuss how science and technology can best serve humanity.

Nearly 1,400 global leaders from over 80 countries, regions, and international organizations attended the event.

The Iranian official also met his Japanese counterpart; they emphasized maintaining and promoting scientific relations, utilizing the elites' capabilities



in the two countries to improve scientific interactions between them.

During the meeting, Simaei-Sarraf called on Japan to increase the number of scholarships for Iranian students.

A successful model of sci-tech development

In September, Muhammad Iqbal Chaudhry, the coordinator general of the Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMSTEC), highlighted Iran's capacity in innovation and technology as one of the most successful countries in the world.

The official made the remarks while addressing the inauguration of the COMSTEC center in Tehran's Pardis Technology Park.

Pardis Technology Park is the best model of an innovative ecosystem in West Asia

that has experienced a notable growth over the past two decades, IRNA quoted Chaudhry as saying.

The park's infrastructures and extensive network play a pivotal role in promoting scientific cooperation in the Islamic world, and the establishment of the joint academy in the region will be a milestone in promoting joint scientific and technological advancement, the official noted.

Iran ranks 72 in technology, innovation

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Technology and Innovation Report 2025, Iran is ranked among upper middle-income countries, ranking 72 among 166 countries.

The country's ranking has improved by one position compared to 2022.

UNCTAD has categorized 17

types of technologies as frontier technologies, including artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, big data, 5G, 3D printing, robotics, drone technology, solar photovoltaic, concentrated solar power, biofuels, biogas and biomass, wind energy, green hydrogen, electric vehicles, nanotechnology, and gene editing.

The Technology and Innovation Report 2025: Inclusive Artificial Intelligence for Development surveys the complex artificial intelligence landscape, aiming to help decision-makers design science, technology, and innovation policies that foster inclusive technological progress.

The Report 2025 calls for AI that puts people first and is shaped through global cooperation in which all countries have a say. The Report identifies three key leverage points – infrastructure, data, and skills – offering a broad socioeconomic perspective on AI while analyzing requirements and policies to promote sustainable industrialization and innovation.

The sub-indices of readiness for frontier technologies in 2025 show that Iran's best ranking is in the research and development sub-index (35th in the world).

In the finance sub-index, the country's ranking has improved from 62 in 2022 to 56 in 2025. In other sub-indices like skills and the establishment of information and communication technology, its ranking has lowered from 74 and 78 in 2022 to 82 and 94 in 2025, respectively.

with the DOE, as saying.

These students will later train other students to raise their environmental awareness. The project is assumed to cover all schools in five years, the official added.

Moreover, informal education in the format of extracurricular activities is planned to be carried out. Consequently, the development of a national environment subject is placed on the agenda. It will contribute to creating a roadmap for formal environmental education according to which relevant content would be included in the curriculum, he further noted.

To instill eco-friendly behaviors, environmental education has to be introduced at an early age, when children are in elementary school or even preschool. However, there will be some challenges. Education is an ongoing process; temporary or short-term courses would not induce long-standing behavioral changes. It requires time to see favorable results, Medadi said.

(commemorating the memory of the children and adolescents martyred in Iran and Gaza), Saturday October 11: 'Books, the wonderful world of children', Sunday October 12: 'The sweet world of children with special needs' and Monday October 13: 'Children and the modern world of sciences and technologies'.

Since education plays a key role in boosting environmental protection, the Department of Environment is planning to implement a national project which aims at training eco-friendly students, dubbed as 'environmental helpers', in 20 percent of elementary schools across the country.

The project was launched in cooperation with healthcare providers concurrent with the beginning of the new academic year, on September 23.

It aims to identify students who are interested in environmental issues, and encourage them to participate in a working group focusing on environmental-related subjects, IRNA quoted Mohammad Medadi, an official

ENGLISH IN USE

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Iran to build desalination plants along Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman

The Department of Environment (DOE) is preparing a plan to deploy desalination plants on the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in order to supply drinking water to the coastal provinces.

Ahmad Reza Lahijanzadeh, deputy chief of the marine environment of the DOE, announced that suitable areas that cause the least damage to the environment have been identified in Hormozgan province.

According to him, the project, which is to be carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy, will supply water for 17 drought-ridden provinces.

برنامه ایران برای تامین آب شرب از طریق خلیج فارس و دریای عمان

سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست ایران در حال مطالعه طرحی برای استقرار آب شیرین کن‌ها در سواحل خلیج فارس و دریای عمان به منظور تامین بخشی از آب شرب استان‌های ساحلی است. به گزارش ایرنا، احمد رضا لاهیجانزاده معاون محیط زیست دریایی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست اعلام کرد مکان‌یابی در استان هرمزگان به پایان رسیده و محل‌های مناسبی که کمترین آسیب را به محیط زیست وارد کند، در این استان مشخص شده‌اند. به گفته او، این طرح که قرار است با همکاری وزارت نیرو انجام شود شامل ۱۷ استان خشک و بی آب می‌شود.

SOCIETY

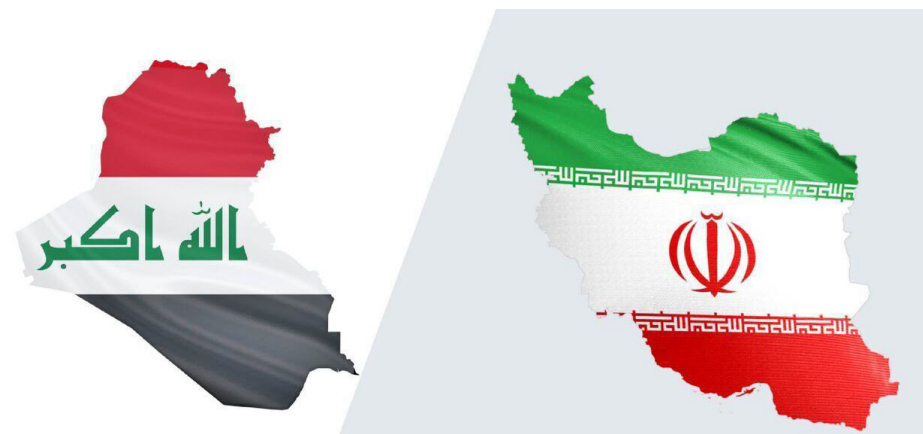
OCTOBER 9, 2025

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Iranian, Iraqi universities to boost co-op in environment sector



TEHRAN – Amirkabir University of Technology and Iraq University of Technology have agreed to enhance collaborations in the field of environment, as well as mechanical and electrical engineering, energy, and biomedical sectors.

A delegation of Iraqi officials from University of Technology in Baghdad paid a visit to Amirkabir University of Technology. The two sides agreed to develop a joint working group, hold joint educational courses, and provide sabbatical leaves. Also, prominent professors from Amirkabir University will deliver lectures in scientific events that will be held at the University of Technology in Baghdad, IRNA reported.

The Iraqi delegation also visited the science and technology park at the university, as well as some knowledge-based companies.

Following these meetings, the two sides proposed fostering cooperation through organizing joint scientific and technological events such as AUT-Talk, Startup Weekend, and Idea Bazaar, with the participation of industrialists, professors, students, companies, and investors.

On the second day of their visit, the talks focused on establishing research centers in areas such as fine dust, energy, environment, and water resources, as well as the need to direct cooperation towards applied and industrial projects.

Developing joint scientific groups, initiating specific research activities with financial support from both sides, and boosting cooperation in the biomedical field, holding short-term educational programs, joint sport events, developing and equipping laboratories, as well as collaborative teaching were among other agreements reached.

The created working groups will follow up on the reached agreements online and in person and lay the basis for implementing these programs.

Iraq seeks to benefit from Iranian academic capacities

In August, Haider Abd Dahed, the Iraqi deputy minister of higher education and scientific research, travelled to Iran to foster scientific relations between the two countries.

The head of the Organization of Student Affairs, Saeed Habiba, welcomed the Iraqi of-

ficial to the country, IRIB reported.

Dahed held meetings with the Iranian science minister and his deputies. He also paid visits to some universities and higher education centers. Signing a memorandum of understanding with Habiba was on the agenda.

In September, Dahed said his country is interested in sending talented students to study in Iran's top state universities.

"We are optimistic to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to realize this goal," IRNA quoted Dahed as saying.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with Habiba.

Referring to Iranian universities' positions in international rankings, Dahed said the quality of education and the academic degree are really important for us. Iraqi students start majoring in medical fields, but according to the law, they have to return to Iraq after a year. We want this problem to be solved so that Iraqi students can benefit from the educational opportunity to complete their courses here in Iran.

For his part, Habiba highlighted the cultural, religious, and historical commonalities between the two nations, which can lay the ground for the enhancement of scientific and educational cooperation. Referring to the country's five-year plan, the official said, "We look forward to attracting the best Iraqi students to study here, and we will not ignore their educational weaknesses even if it leads to their expulsion."

Currently, 30,000 Iraqi students are majoring mainly in engineering and medical field majors, in different universities of the country; a large proportion of them are post-graduates.

The official went on to propose exchanging professors and students to further the collaborations between the two countries.

On September 1, Dahed met Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf. The official agreed to sign an MOU according to which Iran will grant scholarships to top Iraqi students to study in the best Iranian universities.

He had also paid visits to some universities and higher education centers, and signed MOUs with Shahid Beheshti University and Sharif University of Technology, saorg.ir reported.

Over 140 earthquakes shake Iran in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 142 earthquakes were recorded across the country in a week from September 27 to October 3, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 122 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3; 15 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4; four earthquakes with a magnitude between 4 and 5, and one with a magnitude between 5 and 6 have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

Of the total quakes, two had a magnitude of 5.3 on the Richter scale, which occurred on October 3 in Isfahan province.

Among the provinces of the country, Isfahan, with 27, experienced the highest number of earthquakes, followed by Kerman (with 16 earthquakes), and Khorasan Razavi, Semnan, and Fars provinces, each with 10 earthquakes.

During the same period, an earthquake hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded in Ardabil, Ilam, Qazvin, Kermanshah,

Gilan, and Zanjan provinces.

A total of 6,272 earthquakes were recorded across the country over the past calendar year (March 2024 – March 2025), according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Out of registered earthquakes, 150 were more than 4 on the Richter scale; at least five earthquakes with a magnitude of more than 4.5 occurred monthly in the country.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran, but more than 6 percent of the victims of the world's earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Time wears out bodies, renews hopes, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever gets anything from the world lives in anxiety for holding it and whoever loses anything passes his days grieving over the loss.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:52 Evening: 17:55 Dawn: 4:43 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:07 (tomorrow)

Arasbaran Cultural Center screens “The Fantastic Four: First Steps”

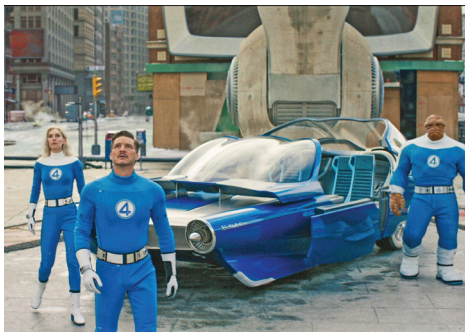
TEHRAN- American filmmaker Matt Shakman’s 2025 superhero film The Fantastic Four: First Steps” went on screen at the Arasbaran Cultural Center in Tehran on Wednesday.

Film critic Amir Qaderi attended a screening of the film followed by a review session.

“The Fantastic Four: First Steps” introduces audiences to a fresh take on the “Fantastic Four,” set against the vibrant backdrop of the 1960s with a retro-futuristic aesthetic. The film boasts an ensemble cast led by Pedro Pascal as Reed Richards, Vanessa Kirby as Sue Storm, Ebon Moss-Bachrach as Ben Grimm, and Joseph Quinn as Johnny Storm.

The film centers on the iconic superhero team’s evolution from celebrated heroes to cosmic protectors. Set in 1964 on Earth-828, the story begins with the team’s fourth anniversary since gaining superpowers from a cosmic ray experiment. Over the years, Reed Richards, Sue Storm, Ben Grimm, and Johnny Storm have become global icons, fighting villains and driving technological progress through Reed’s inventions and Sue’s diplomacy via the Future Foundation. Their efforts have promoted peace worldwide, and Sue is expecting her first child, adding a personal stake as cosmic threats loom.

The plot shifts when the Silver Surfer arrives on Earth, warning of an impending catastrophe: the planet-destroying being Galactus. Reed and Sue investigate planetary disappearances, confirming Galactus’s approach, and decide to confront him in space. They travel to a distant planet just as Galactus’s ship destroys it. The team is captured, and Galactus reveals his insatiable hunger for planets. Sensing a powerful cosmic en-



ergy within Sue’s unborn son, Franklin, Galactus offers to spare Earth if they relinquish the child. Refusing, the team escapes using a neutron star’s gravity, and Sue goes into labor during their return. She gives birth to Franklin, while public opinion on their decision becomes divided.

Johnny Storm begins deciphering Silver Surfer’s language, uncovering her tragic backstory as Shalla-Bal, a former inhabitant of Zenn-La who became Galactus’s herald to save her world. As Galactus nears, the team devises a bold plan: to build massive teleportation bridges across Earth, allowing humanity to escape to another solar system. Sue leads efforts to coordinate global resources through the Future Foundation. However, the Silver Surfer, conflicted and remorseful, returns to destroy the bridges and reveals her identity. She is Shalla-Bal, a survivor coerced into serving Galactus. Using Franklin as bait, the team attempts to trap Galactus in a portal in New York City. Sue pushes Galactus toward the portal with her powers, while Reed rescues Franklin. Johnny sacrifices himself to push Galactus into the portal, but Shalla-Bal sacrifices herself to close it, saving Earth. Sue is injured but revived by Franklin.

Cartoon of Day



Trump and Nobel Prize
Cartoonist: Fahd Bahady from Syria

Iranian artists show solidarity with Gaza in “Symphony of Crime” exhibition

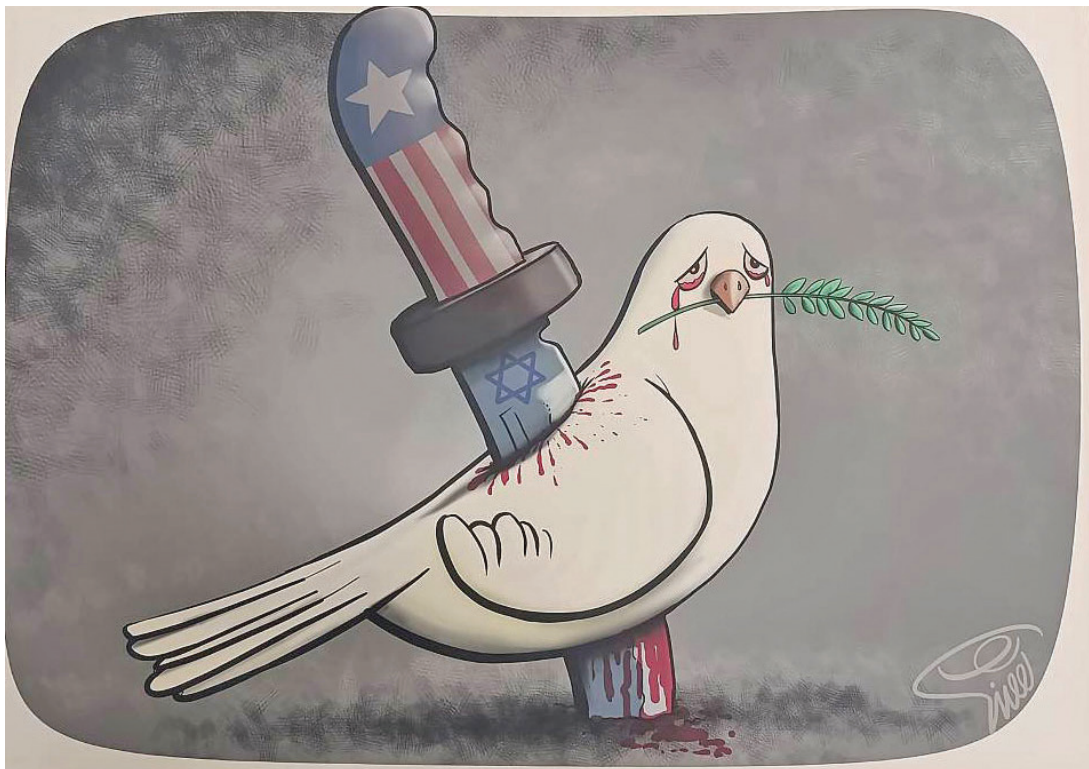
TEHRAN- The “Symphony of Crime” cartoon and caricature exhibition opened at the Palestine Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran on the second anniversary of the Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, serving as a gesture of support for the oppressed Palestinian people and Gaza.

The opening ceremony was attended by Majid Shah-Hosseini, the Head of the Academy of Arts, along with several officials from the academy, representatives from the Palestine Defense Society, and a large number of resistance artists and media figures.

The exhibition features works by Iranian artists who have created art in solidarity with the oppressed people of Gaza. Through this exhibition, they express their support for the Palestinian cause, with a particular focus on Gaza.

Maziar Bijani, a veteran caricaturist with numerous works on the Holocaust, has contributed several pieces to the exhibition. Among the other artists featured is Fatemeh Taslimi, whose work mainly involves illustration. Abbas Goudarzi, a prominent figure in resistance art with years of experience, also contributed pieces that echo the cry for humanity and justice.

Additional artists including Farshad Khosravi, Mohammad Hossein Sasani, Sajad Jafari, Maryam Mohebi, Hossein Naqib, Mohammad Ali Rajabi, Mehdi Rasouli, Seyyed Mohammad Salem, Seyyed Mohammad Javad Taheri, Fatemeh Tayyoub, Peyman Alishahi, and Mohsen Faraji also have works



Cartoon by Iranian artist Abbas Goudarzi, currently displayed at the “Symphony of Crime” exhibition at the Palestine Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran.

displayed in the exhibition.

The “Symphony of Crime” will run until October 19.

It has been two years since Israel launched its genocide in Gaza, beginning on October 7, 2023, in response to attacks by Palestinian fighters. Over this period, at least 67,000 Palestinians have been killed, with thousands still trapped under rubble. Among the dead are more than 20,000 children, with many others injured—over 169,000—many suffering life-changing wounds.

The healthcare system is overwhelmed, with more than 125 facilities damaged, including 34 hospitals. Medical workers have been killed or detained; as of July 2023, Israel held 28 senior doctors, some of whom have died under torture.

Israeli strikes have targeted hospitals and aid workers, violating international laws that protect medical facilities. Since October 2023, over 790 attacks on health infrastructure have been documented.

The blockade and military restrictions have also caused a severe

famine, with at least 459 deaths, including 154 children, due to starvation. The UN officially recognized Gaza’s famine in August 2023, the first in the Middle East in recent history, with conditions expected to worsen.

Malnutrition among children has soared, with thousands suffering from severe acute malnutrition, and many infants born prematurely or underweight. The ongoing violence and blockade have created a humanitarian catastrophe for Gaza’s population.

Three Iranian films attending Sport Movies & TV 2025 in Milan



TEHRAN – Three films from Iran are present at the Sport Movies & TV 2025 – Milano International FICTS Fest, which is the Final of 20 festivals (around the five continents) of the World FICTS Challenge Championship of Television, Cinema, Communication, and Sport Culture.

The feature films “Sattar El Classico” written and directed by

Hadi Shariati and “Trick” by Jafar Sadeghi as well as the short film “Chekhov’s Gun” by Seyyed Abbas Hosseini are the Iranian films at the festival, which started in Milan, Italy, on October 7 and will run until October 11, Mehr reported.

“Sattar El Classico” is a 75-minute movie about Elyas, who goes to racetracks at the weekends

and bets on horses. Oftentimes his money is on Sattar Mehrani, a jockey widely known as Sattar El Classico.

The story unfolds around this bond, one of anticipation, predictions, and intensely experienced races, highlighting the atmosphere of racetracks and the fascination the world of racing holds for those who frequent it.

In “Trick,” running for 100 minutes, a young wrestling coach starts a club for kids in a poor region. Yesterday’s impossible dreams of the children have now become their goals today, after 10 years, thanks to the efforts of the coach.

The eight-minute “Chekhov’s Gun” tells the story of a young boy in a smoky wasteland who

makes a strange mistake.

The festival is characterized by international and national participation and is articulated into 100 screenings (selected from about 2,000 participating movies, including 25 world and European premieres), four meetings, three workshops, four exhibitions, two conferences, eight side events, the Paralympic International Movies & TV Fest, and 20 award ceremonies by national and international guests.

The event – through “FICTS is Culture through sport” slogan – is organized by FICTS – Federation Internationale Cinema Television Sportifs, joined with 130 Member Countries and recognized by the International Olympic Committee for which it promotes the values of sport through footages.

Children with disabilities to perform

“The Little Prince”, celebrating National Children’s Week

TEHRAN- An adaptation of French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s 1943 novella “The Little Prince” is set to be staged at the Akhlaq Cultural Center in Tehran on October 9 and 10, in celebration of National Children’s Week.

Directed by Roya Khosronajdi, the cast of the play consists of children and youth with Down Syndrome, and the production is dedicated to families of children with disabilities. The project has been in development for the past two years, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

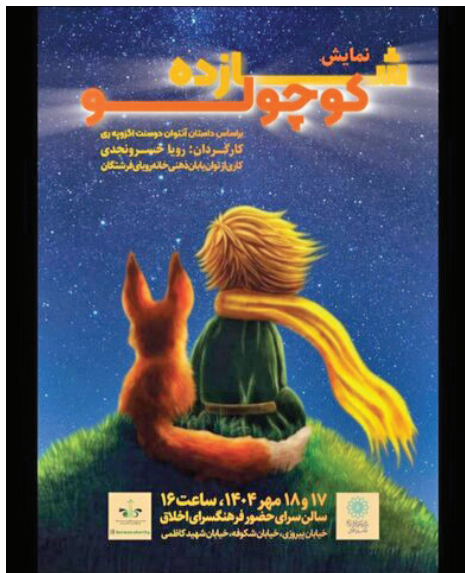
Khosronajdi expressed her thoughts on the production, stating, “This was a challenging script, and we worked very hard to bring it to fruition. ‘The Little Prince’ is one of the most renowned literary works, performed by many groups.”

“However, I chose this piece because I believe children’s abilities go far beyond what is often perceived, and I wanted to create a more serious and professional theatrical experience with them. The innocence, honesty, and transparency of the character resonate deeply with all my children.”

“In this project, 24 children with disabilities, aged between 13 and 38, are participating, all of whom have demonstrated exceptional capabilities,” she added.

“I hope that by watching this play, society will support these children and pay more attention to their talents and potentials,” she concluded.

“The Little Prince” tells the story of a young



prince who travels from his home asteroid, B-612, to explore the universe and learn about life, love, and human nature. The narrative begins with the narrator, a stranded pilot in the Sahara Desert, who encounters the Little Prince. The prince asks the pilot to draw him a sheep, initiating a conversation that reveals the prince’s journey and insights.

As the prince recounts his story, he explains that he comes from a small asteroid where he tends to three volcanoes and his beloved rose. His rose, though unique and cherished, is also vain and demanding, leading the prince to feel lonely and confused about love. Seeking under-

standing, he leaves his asteroid to explore other planets.

The prince visits six other asteroids, each inhabited by a solitary adult representing various flaws of adulthood. He meets a king who believes he rules the universe, a vain man obsessed with admiration, a drunkard who drinks to forget his shame, a businessman fixated on owning stars, a geographer who values knowledge over experience, and a lamp lighter who mindlessly follows orders. Each encounter reveals the absurdities and emptiness of adult behaviors, emphasizing the prince’s longing for companionship and genuine connections.

Finally, the prince arrives on Earth, where he meets a fox, who teaches him valuable lessons about relationships and emotions. The fox explains that true connections are formed through love and commitment, stating, “One sees clearly only with the heart. Anything essential is invisible to the eyes.” This profound realization leads the prince to understand the significance of his bond with his rose, as she is unique because of the love he has poured into her.

The story culminates in a poignant moment when the prince encounters a snake, representing both danger and transformation. The snake offers the prince a way to return to his asteroid, emphasizing the cyclical nature of life and death. The book concludes with the narrator reflecting on loss and the enduring nature of love and friendship.