

An Olive Branch Between the Wolf's Teeth

Iran says Trump's words and actions don't match after he extends 'hand of friendship' to Tehran amid sanctions and threats



Donald Trump addresses the Knesset, Oct. 13, 2025.

Araghchi to attend NAM ministerial meeting in Uganda

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi will travel to Uganda to participate in the 19th Mid-Term Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei announced on Monday.

The conference, themed "Deepening Cooperation for Greater Global Prosperity," will bring together foreign ministers and senior delegations from more than 120 member states of the movement to discuss key international and developmental issues.

Baqaei said that, alongside general debates and the exchange of member states' views, a special session of the NAM Committee on Palestine will also convene with the participation of its member countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran. ▶ Page 2

France fails to free illegally detained Iranian academic despite pledges

TEHRAN – Iran's judiciary spokesperson, Asqar Jahangir, says the French government has failed to fulfil its promise to release Iranian academic Mahdieh Esfandiari from prison.

"At a certain point, they said if a proper location is designated, they would free her to be kept in that place. The Iranian Embassy in France did the same, but France refused to keep its promise," Jahangir explained.

He added the Iranian Foreign Ministry and the Judiciary are having good cooperation to secure the freedom of Ms. Mahdieh Esfandiari. ▶ Page 2

Shutdown of "Whish Money" accounts is another phase of financial blockade on Lebanon

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT—Lebanon has been witnessing an escalating financial blockade for weeks after Whish Money (a local money transfer company) closed the accounts of associations and activists supporting reconstruction projects.

While at first glance, the move appeared to be technical or banking-related, it quickly became clear that it was part of a broader context, part of a system of economic and security restrictions aimed at preventing any civil or local efforts to restore life to the areas devastated in the Israeli raids on Lebanon in September-October 2024 and are still continuing, though with a lesser degree.

Since the signing of the ceasefire agreement last year, the southern regions have been transformed into a scene of massive civil society efforts led by villagers and local associations to compensate for the lack of state and international aid.

Israel destroyed Christian presence in Palestine

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs in Palestine has stated that the Israeli occupation regime has destroyed the Christian presence in Palestine.

Following the Israeli regime's genocidal assault on Gaza, the committee reported that a number of churches and Christian institutions have been attacked, including St. Porphyrius Church, the Holy Family Church, the Baptist Hospital, and the Orthodox Cultural and Social Center.

It confirmed that 44 Christians have been killed since the start of the genocide, some due to direct Israeli regime attacks, others due to worsening humanitarian conditions.

The committee also highlighted repeated settler attacks on the Christian village of Taybeh in the occupied West Bank, the freezing of bank accounts belonging to the Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem (al-Quds), the imposition of heavy taxes on churches, and the seizure of Armenian Church properties, all in violation of the long-standing status quo agreements.

Paper peace: Sharm el-Sheikh's fragile promise to Gaza

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN — The October 13 summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, played out as choreographed pageantry: leaders posed, a ceasefire was hailed, and promises of reconstruction were laid out — alongside a round of ungainly flattery for Trump that blurred diplomacy with theater.

But as ceremonial confetti settled, a far louder reality took shape on the ground and in the mouths of experts, rights groups, and Palestinian leaders: the accord treats immediate relief as if it were a substitute for justice, and the gaps are dangerous enough to make the temporary calm unravel.

The deal's architecture rests on three brittle pillars. First, demilitarization is demanded of Palestinian groups while concrete, impartial enforcement measures are conspicuously absent.

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A ceasefire and ten achievements

By Mohammad Mehdi Imanipour
President of the Islamic Culture and Communication Organization

TEHRAN -The temporary end of an all-out war through a ceasefire provides an opportunity to assess its deeper consequences—particularly in the realms of culture and discourse formation. The recent war in Gaza, despite its horrific human devastation and the martyrdom of tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians, produced significant outcomes in terms of global narrative-building and strengthening the discourse of resistance against occupation and the policies of the Zionist regime.

Ten major cultural and discursive achievements can be identified in this regard: ▶ Page 5

Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan finalize roadmap to boost transit to 15m tons

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadegh announced that Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan have finalized a comprehensive roadmap to increase the volume of goods transiting among the three nations to 15 million tons annually.

The plan, she said, marks a major milestone in efforts to strengthen regional connectivity through the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC).

Speaking to reporters after attending trilateral and bilateral meetings in Baku on October 12, Sadegh described the gathering as "highly effective and long-awaited," emphasizing that the new roadmap would help resolve logistical bottlenecks and enhance coordination across multiple transport sectors. ▶ Page 4



'Iran-Tajikistan relations can be expanded through special mechanisms'

TEHRAN- Iran's minister of economic affairs and finance emphasized the expansion of brotherly relations and economic, commercial, and infrastructure cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan and proposed special opportunities for deepening these relations under the current conditions.

Seyed Ali Madanizadeh made the remarks in talks with Emomali Rahmon, the president of Tajikistan, on the sidelines of his participation in Dushanbe International Investment Forum. ▶ Page 4

Exclusive Interview

Iran-Russia treaty reflects new legal foundation for strategic cooperation, says Russian expert

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TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Troika's diplomatic isolation in the nuclear issue

In a note, Shargh said the European troika of Britain, France and Germany have been sidelined in regard to the Iran nuclear issue because they have turned from mediator into "pressure partner" by invoking the snapback mechanism that returned UN Security Council sanctions against Iran. It wrote: In their statement, the three countries described the activation of the snapback as a "correct and necessary step." The European troika's action in activating the snapback mechanism has effectively moved the three countries from the position of "mediator" to the position of "pressure partner" against Iran. The return of sanctions means that, in Tehran's view, Europe no longer has any new tools or levers for influence, and there is no incentive for Iran to talk. Therefore, it is not expected that even if new talks begin, Iran will be inclined to put Europe at the top of the negotiations. It seems that Tehran is redefining the path of its interactions based on cooperation with non-Western powers such as Russia, China, and some countries in the region; actors that, at least from Tehran's perspective, follow an approach based on mutual interests instead of a policy of threats and sanctions.

Etemad: FATF and rebuilding trust in global financial system

Etemad wrote about the disadvantages of being on the FATF blacklist and the advantages of joining it. The newspaper argues that Iran's political and economic relations have been deeply intertwined with the world in recent decades. After the intensification of sanctions, Iran's economy suffered from two major points: first, the country's trade exchanges faced extensive restrictions. Second, the banking and financial sector was practically excluded from the international banking network as Iran was put on the FATF blacklist. In such circumstances, joining FATF could be a positive step from an economic perspective. However, it is not expected that an implementation of the FATF can alone solve economic problems unless simultaneously new ways for financial interaction with the world are opened. If Iran can activate its banking relations through indirect but legitimate means, then the implementation of the FATF could be a positive sign for rebuilding trust in the global financial system. Even today, although this measure is on the right track, its effectiveness depends on the political conditions and the government's will

to rebuild international relations.

Vatan-e-Emrooz: Iran won't surrender

Vatan-e-Emrooz examined the U.S. strategic policy towards Iran and wrote: The U.S. government has now placed Iran at a crossroads with its policies: surrender or resistance. Through its behavior, whether in the form of nuclear negotiations with the U.S. or negotiations related to the snapback mechanism, Iran proved that it is ready for a win-win agreement with the Western parties. The JCPOA proved that contrary to the U.S. and Zionist regime's propaganda campaigns, Iran had never sought to militarize nuclear knowledge. The Islamic Republic did not back down from its red lines in any of these negotiations and showed that, despite the U.S. miscalculations, Tehran is unyielding in its positions, especially defending the nation's nuclear rights. Iran has fully observed security concerns in regard to its 60 percent uranium reserves. In any case, the Islamic Republic has shown that it is not ready to surrender, both in its declared positions and in its policies.

Iran: Middle East after the end of the Gaza war

In an interview with foreign policy expert Mostafa Najafi, the Iran newspaper discussed the Middle East after the end of the Gaza War. Najafi says: After the ceasefire, we are witnessing an increase in the role of the United States in the political and security arrangements in the region. Therefore, Iran will be the most important issue for the United States in the Middle East. Iran will remain a major challenge to American and Israeli interests in the region, and plans such as normalizing Arab-Israeli relations or security alliances with NATO support could conflict with Tehran's security interests in the long term. Therefore, Iran should follow the path of smart balancing by using the capacities of regional diplomacy, relying on hard and soft deterrence to prevent security pressures, and transforming its geographical location into a lever for economic and transit development. In general, the Middle East after Gaza is not necessarily on the verge of establishing a new order; rather, it is going through a phase of redefining roles. For Iran, the main challenge is to choose between joining the order of others or shaping a desirable order in partnership with others. In particular, the future of the region will be determined not by winning wars but by the ability of countries to manage the transition of order.

Araghchi to attend NAM ministerial meeting in Uganda



A view of Kampala, Uganda, the host city of the 19th Mid-Term Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), taking place on October 15–16, 2025, with the participation of foreign ministers and delegations from over 120 member states.

He added that during the meeting, Minister Araghchi will present Iran's perspectives on major international developments and reaffirm the country's commitment to the principles of the Non-Aligned Movement. On the sidelines of the event, he is also scheduled to hold bilateral talks with several of his counterparts to discuss issues of mutual interest and regional cooperation.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) traces its origins to the Bandung Conference, the first major Afro-Asian gathering held in Bandung, Indonesia, from April 18 to 24, 1955. The conference brought together 29 countries, mainly from Asia, as most African nations were still under colonial rule at the time.

The Bandung Conference sought to promote peace, decolonization, and economic cooperation among developing nations, while rejecting involvement in the Cold War's East-West ideological rivalry. The participating countries emphasized independence from power bloc politics and prioritized national sovereignty and development.

Building on the principles adopted in Bandung, the Non-Aligned Movement was formally established in 1961 during its first summit in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, attended by 25 countries including Egypt, India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia, and Ghana.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

France fails to free illegally detained Iranian academic despite pledges

From page 1 ▶ "In our opinion, supporting the Palestinian people and expressing opposition to genocide in Gaza are legitimate moves in line with safeguarding human rights and cannot be considered as an offense," the spokesperson noted. He added Iran is seriously pursuing the matter through Esfandiari's lawyer.

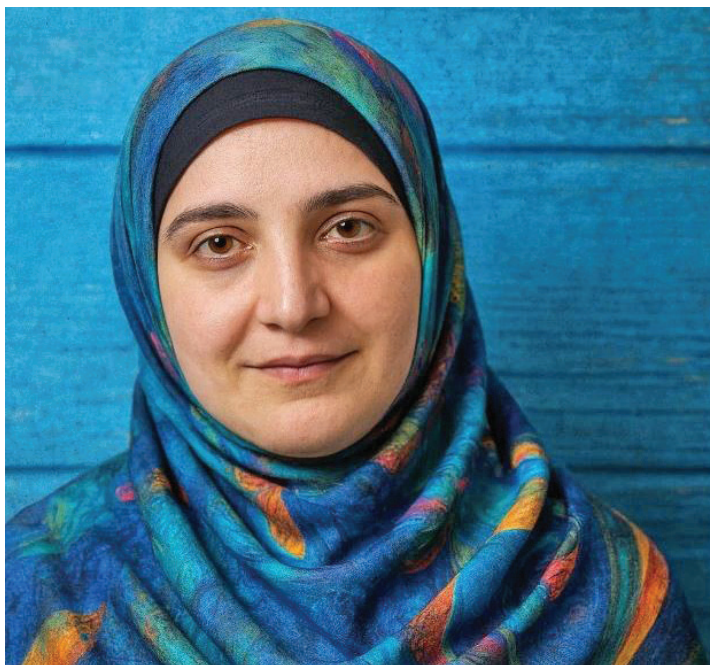
"Also, the Human Rights Committee is, in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry, seeking to secure her unconditional release and we hope the French government will end her illegal detention," he added.

The arbitrary and illegal detention of Iranian academic Mahdieh Esfandiari in France has revealed new dimensions of "double standards" and "political hypocrisy" in the so-called homeland of human rights and freedom of expression.

This particular case goes beyond an individual matter and has become a global symbol exposing the deceit of Western powers.

While the Iranian national has been in detention for several months in a Paris suburb prison without any legal basis, the Iranian judiciary has announced the acquittal of Lennart Monterlos, a young Franco-German arrested in Iran in June over espionage.

This news emerged as Paris and Tehran engaged in negotiations for the release of Cécile Kohler and Jacques Paris — also



Mahdieh Esfandiari has spent almost 8 months in French prison

imprisoned in Iran for espionage — in exchange for freeing Mahdieh Esfandiari, the Iranian national falsely accused of "glorifying terrorism."

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated in a televised interview recently that an agreement to exchange French prisoners for an Iranian academic was nearing its "final stage."

The case of Esfandiari highlights France's blatant violations of women's rights and the complete absence of freedom of expression, exposing the hollow rhetoric of the Élysée leadership.

Since March 2, Esfandiari has

been imprisoned in Fresnes, south of Paris, for social media posts condemning the genocide in Gaza and expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people.

No concrete evidence has been produced to substantiate France's spurious claims

However, her case is not isolated — it fits into a broader pattern of manipulating "freedom of expression" for political blackmail and hostage-taking.

Iran–Russia treaty reflects new legal foundation for strategic cooperation, says Russian expert

Margojev underscores that the new partnership framework strengthens bilateral ties without forming a military alliance



President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) and President Vladimir Putin sign the Iranian–Russian Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership on January 17, 2025

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, Adlan Margojev, a Russian expert on Iran and nuclear nonproliferation, and a researcher at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University), discussed Moscow's position at the United Nations regarding the recent the "snapback" of UN sanctions against Iran, as well as the implications of the newly enacted Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty between Tehran and Moscow.

Margojev stressed that from Russia's perspective, the Western bid to restore UN sanctions on Iran is "neither legitimate nor lawful," pointing out that Washington's withdrawal from the JCPOA and Europe's failure to fulfill its commitments render such actions invalid. He emphasized that Moscow's stance is rooted in both legal principles of nonproliferation and its strategic partnership with Tehran, which aims to counter unilateral Western pressure.

Commenting on the new treaty, the Russian analyst described it as an important step in updating the legal foundation of Iran–Russia relations, while clar-

ifying that it does not constitute a mutual defense pact but rather a flexible framework for comprehensive cooperation. He argued that the agreement strengthens Iran's diplomatic leverage in a multipolar world where regional states increasingly pursue balanced relations with major powers.

The following is the text of the interview:

How do you assess the legal and diplomatic basis for the recent attempt to trigger the snapback mechanism on Iran at the UN?

From a Russian standpoint, the effort to revive UN SC sanctions against Iran is neither legitimate, not legal. Snapback was designed as an insurance mechanism for Western participants of the JCPOA that they would have leverage on Iran in case it violated its provisions. The sad irony of this story is that no mechanism was developed to guarantee that those Western states would stay committed to their obligations under the deal. In a situation when the United States left the JCPOA, and the E3 could not meet Iran's expectations regarding its economic benefits promised under the deal, they have no right to trigger snapback. This is why

Russia denies Western claims that UN SC sanctions on Iran have been restored. And Western diplomats know that it was an unfair move on their part; it is just that they didn't want to miss an opportunity to put additional pressure on Iran.

To what extent is Russia's opposition to the snapback linked to its broader geopolitical interests in Iran and the Middle East?

Russian position on the snapback is based on three factors. I'll name them without putting in any order; they are all equally significant. One: as a depositary state of the NPT and guarantor of the nonproliferation regime, Moscow seeks balanced, fair and legally grounded diplomatic measures to ensure nuclear nonproliferation. Military attacks, threats to use force, and unilateral sanctions, as well as arbitrary attempts to impose UN SC sanctions, work against this goal and only motivate states to develop nuclear weapons. Two: Iran is Russia's strategic partner, and Moscow is motivated to safeguard Tehran from pressure that is unfairly put on Iran by the West. Russia and Iran are on the same boat when it comes to resisting Western pressure. Three: UN SC sanctions that E3 wanted to reimpose on Iran have to do with nuclear and military cooperation. Both are important for Russia-Iran bilateral relations. For as long as Iran cooperates with the IAEA, Russia sees no reason why it should limit its cooperation with Iran.

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

The importance of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty should be neither underestimated, nor overestimated. Its primary task is to update the

On March 2, 2025, Esfandiari, a 39-year-old Iranian academic living in Lyon, was arrested by French security agents after a surprise raid on her home. Her family described the incident as a kidnapping or hostage-taking, saying that police arrived unannounced, took her away in a van, and detained her without charge or legal assistance for months.

Her arrest was neither a criminal case nor a civil rights issue. No evidence of wrongdoing has been presented, and the accusations against her — vaguely worded as "glorifying terrorism" — lack any factual or legal basis, making the case highly suspicious.

Her only "crime" was defending the rights of Palestinians in Gaza, who have endured a modern-day holocaust at the hands of the Israeli regime — with France's support.

Under French law, any detention exceeding 48 hours without a judicial warrant is illegal. Yet Esfandiari has spent 226 days now behind bars under vaguely defined allegations of "endangering national security."

No concrete evidence has been produced to substantiate these spurious claims. Her detention violates the guarantees enshrined in the French Code of Criminal Procedure and the European Convention on Human Rights.

legal foundation of Russia-Iran cooperation and recognize that it has greatly improved since the previous treaty was concluded in 2001. The new treaty gives a new status to the parties and covers the potential spheres of cooperation more extensively. With that, one should notice that the treaty does not contain provisions on mutual defense: neither Russia, nor Iran is obliged to enter a military conflict if a third party starts military hostilities against one of them, but they must refrain from helping the aggressor and can consider ways of providing military assistance to their strategic partner based on their own capabilities. So when one speaks about the strategic balance in Eurasia, they should not confuse military alliances based on mutual defense obligations and strategic partnerships that consider military cooperation as an option, not as an obligation. This is what both Moscow and Tehran have agreed on, which means it suits their preferences and their vision for bilateral cooperation.

To what extent could this agreement alter Iran's diplomatic leverage vis-à-vis Western powers, especially in the face of sanctions and international pressure?

Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has proclaimed Neither East, Nor West policy, which meant securing Tehran's sovereignty from major global powers. The more the relations between Iran and Western powers deteriorated, the more Tehran looked towards the East, meaning China and Russia. Its membership in SCO and BRICS has been one of the examples of the Eastern policy. There are voices in Iran who seek balance between East and West, but to the detriment of their ideals, the West itself does not leave Iran credible, viable option to develop relations based on mutual respect and concessions.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

An olive branch between the wolf’s teeth

Iran says Trump’s words and actions don’t match after he extends ‘hand of friendship’ to Tehran amid sanctions and threats

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – The remarks U.S. President Donald Trump made in Egypt, as he had participating world leaders bathe him in adulation for ending a war he had done everything to maintain in recent months, did not sit well with many globally, including Iranians, who appear increasingly impatient with the president’s refusal to accept that he cannot force Iran into concessions through threats, sanctions, bombardments, and insincere messages of reconciliation.

At a Monday summit in Sharm El-Sheikh that gathered dozens of world leaders to sign a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas—whose representatives were both absent—Trump touched on a number of mostly unrelated topics. He mentioned being escorted by Egyptian aircraft before landing, called the Italian prime minister “beautiful,” asserted that only his opinion matters, and said he should have won the Nobel Peace Prize. He did not, however, address the core question that had drawn everyone to northern Africa: how the 20?point peace agreement he brokered between Palestinians and Israel would see its subsequent phases implemented.

He did, however, make statements that laid bare what the U.S. and Israel may be prioritizing at the moment. “The momentous breakthrough that we’re here to celebrate tonight is more than the end of the war in Gaza. It’s, with God’s help, it will be the new beginning for an entire beautiful Middle East,” Trump said. “From this moment forward, we can build a region that’s strong and stable and prosperous and united in rejecting the path of terror once and for all.”

Before landing in Sharm al-Sheikh, Trump spent several hours in the occupied territories, where he spoke more about Iran than the Israel-Palestine conflict. In remarks to the Israeli Knesset, Trump said he is ready to strike a new deal



U.S. President Donald Trump delivers a speech in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, Monday, Oct. 13

with Tehran.

Trump left an international accord on Iran’s nuclear program in 2018 and imposed stringent sanctions against the country. When Iran entered negotiations with his second administration earlier this year, he helped Israel strike Iranian civilian, military, and nuclear infrastructure in the middle of the diplomatic process, and later joined the aggression himself. He is now attempting to further strangle Iran’s economy by disrupting its trade through new means.

“We are ready when you are, and it will be the best decision that Iran has ever made, and it’s going to happen. The hand of friendship and cooperation is open. I’m telling you, they [Iran] want to make a deal. It would be great if we could make a deal,” he told Zionist lawmakers.

Iran’s foreign ministry responded by saying that Trump’s words are in “in complete contradiction” with his actions. “How can one speak of peace while attacking residential areas and peaceful nuclear facilities of a country and killing innocent people?” the ministry said in a statement published Tuesday.

Trump also called Iran a “bully” while in the occupied territories, and hailed the illegal and unprecedented attacks he car-

ried out against the country’s nuclear sites.

“The bully of the Middle East has been taken down,” Trump told Fox News in Israel. “And I think the bully of the Middle East may very well turn out to be a very productive partner for a lot of other countries, much different than what they look like before.”

A reaction from Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi’s was harsher than the initial Iranian response. Araghchi said Trump was simply telling a “big lie”.

“It is more than clear by now that POTUS has been badly fed the fake line that Iran’s peaceful nuclear program was on the verge of weaponization this spring. That is simply a BIG LIE and he should have been informed that there is zero proof of that, as confirmed by his own intelligence community,” the top diplomat said in a statement he posted on X.

“The real bully of the Middle East, Mr. President, is the same parasitic actor that has long been bullying and milking the United States,” he explained. A growing number of critics in the United States believe the White House is controlled by the powerful Israeli lobby.

Araghchi also said that it is very difficult for Iranians to trust the U.S. again. “There is

also the question of how the Iranian Nation can be expected to give any credence to an olive branch extended by the very same hand that was involved in the bombardment of homes and offices across Iran only 4 months ago. One can hardly be branded as President of Peace while provoking endless WARS and aligning with WAR criminals. Mr. Trump can either be a President of Peace or a President of War, but he cannot be both at the same time,” he noted.

Analysts believe Iran may retain much of its nuclear capabilities despite the attacks, as the extent of the damage remains unclear. Furthermore, Iranians can always restart their nuclear program due to the self-sufficient nature of their domestic nuclear industry. In a video message last month, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei told the Iranian people that the country has countless dedicated nuclear scientists and experts serving their nation. He also stated that under the current circumstances—where Washington demands negotiations include Iran’s military capabilities and foreign policies and continues to threaten and sanction the country—no talks would take place between Tehran and Washington.



Mohammad Amin Aghamiri, Secretary of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace and Head of the National Cyberspace Center

with the Israeli regime, and described the conference as the beginning of a new phase of cooperation in defending the country’s digital sphere.

Aghamiri noted that in 2023, the National Cyberspace Center issued a comprehensive directive to prevent vulnerabilities, calling it a “significant step toward strengthening national cybersecurity.” He said one of its main goals is to eliminate the culture of excessive data collection by both public and private sectors, requiring data to be gathered only with user consent and allowing citizens to delete their data at any time.

He stressed that proper implementation of this directive would preserve user privacy, adding that sensitive and identity-related data must be encrypted to limit access in case of cyberattacks.

Aghamiri also announced new initiatives such as cyber insurance, developed in coordination with the Central Insurance Organization, which recently issued Iran’s first cyber insurance license. He said the measure will help protect organizations against potential digital losses and promote resilience in the face of attacks.

The official further noted that the private sector now plays a growing role in national cybersecurity under recent directives from the Supreme Council of Cy-

berspace. This includes cooperation with FATA Police, which runs programs enabling cybersecurity experts to identify vulnerabilities before attacks occur.

“Cyber warfare may be silent, but Iran has turned it into a field of strength thanks to its skilled human capital,” Aghamiri said, calling on all cybersecurity professionals to “protect public trust, safeguard privacy, and ensure the nation’s digital stability.”

The conference also featured remarks from ICT Research Institute chief Mohammad Hossein Sheikhhi and FATA Police Commander Brigadier General Vahid Majid, both of whom highlighted the evolving nature of cyber threats and the need for

stronger cooperation between government, academia, and the private sector to counter increasingly sophisticated attacks.

Majid warned that modern cyberattacks have shifted from data theft and denial-of-service operations to data destruction and open announcements of attacks, while Sheikhhi underscored the urgent need to invest in cybersecurity education and talent development.

Officials concluded that Iran’s cybersecurity outlook remains positive, citing enhanced readiness, inter-agency coordination, and the establishment of new strategic frameworks designed to build a secure and resilient national cyberspace.

Atiyeh Hosseini aims to repeat gold in Para Powerlifting

TEHRAN – Atiyeh Hosseini, the 18-year-old Iranian para powerlifter, says that she wants to make history in the upcoming events.

Hosseini won the gold medal at the World Para Powerlifting Championships in Cairo in the 61 kg category.

She successfully lifted 85 kg and 90 kg in her first two attempts but failed at 94 kg in the third attempt. Despite that, she secured the world title and Iran’s first-ever women’s para powerlifting gold medal.

Hosseini expressed happiness about achieving Iran’s first women’s gold in para powerlifting and said she hopes to continue making history in future events.

“My plan is to compete in the 2026 Asian Para Games in Nagoya, with the aim of once again making history and winning a medal there,” Hosseini said in an interview with Tehran Times.

She also stated that winning the championship in Egypt paves the way for her to participate in the 2028 Paralympic Games, and she hopes to build more pride for her country in the future.

“I know I have a difficult task ahead of me, but I will do my best to win more medals. I want to repeat my gold medal in upcoming events,” she concluded.

Iranian woman Hesami Fard joins 8000-Meter Peak Club

TEHRAN – Iranian mountaineer Afsaneh Hesami Fard has become the first Iranian woman to summit all 14 of the world’s highest mountains above 8,000 meters, following her successful ascent of Mt. Cho Oyu (8,188m) on Tuesday morning.

According to Seven Summit Treks (SST), Hesami Fard reached the summit of the world’s sixth-highest mountain along with fellow climbers Chung-Han Lu from Taiwan and Anar Burasheva from Kazakhstan.

They were supported by Nepali mountain guides Tashi Sherpa and Pasang Tenji Sherpa.

With this achievement, she joins a select global circle of climbers who have scaled all of the world’s 8,000ers – a distinction previously held by only one Iranian, Azim Gheichisaz, in the men’s category.

Pasang Tenji Sherpa, one of Nepal’s most accomplished high-altitude climbers, also reached his 13th 8,000-meter summit during the expedition, Sherpa added.

Cho Oyu (8,188m), straddling the Nepal-China border, is the sixth-highest mountain in the world and a popular objective for seasoned climbers pursuing all 14 of the world’s highest peaks.

Bakhtiar wins silver at 2025 World Para Powerlifting Championship

TEHRAN – Mohsen Bakhtiar of Iran won a silver medal at the 2025 World Para Powerlifting Championship underway in Cairo, Egypt on Monday.

He finished in second place at the in the men’s up to 65kg category with a 201kg lift.

Chinese powerlifter Shiwei Zhousnatched the gold medal with 205kg and Hocine Bettir of Algeria took the bronze with 192kg.

Athletes from 70 nations have begun the quest for medals and LA28 qualification as Egypt hosts the first edition of the Para Powerlifting Worlds.

Iran open AFC U17 Women’s Asian Cup China 2026 qualifiers on high

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Saudi Arabia 2-0 in their opening AFC U17 Women’s Asian Cup China 2026 Qualifiers Group B tie on Monday.

In the match held at the Prince Saud bin Jalawi Stadium, Khobar, Saudi Arabia’s Danah Aldhuhiyan skewed a shot wide before Iran’s Tania Ghorbani’s 30-yard lob sailed just beyond the bar.

With both sides cancelling each other out, the game called for a moment of ingenuity and it came in the form of Fatemeh Lotfadeh who surged into the Saudi Arabia box only to be brought down with Yasna Jarfarnia converting past Dima Shaikh for the opener.

Iran had an opportunity to increase their lead a minute into the restart but Taranom Ansari fired straight at Shaikh but they came good two minutes later after a similar saw Ghorbani slotting home with ease.

Saudi Arabia were given a lifeline in the 68th minute when Iran goalkeeper Elina Shahbazi handled the ball outside of her box and was shown the red card but despite the numerical advantage, were unable to salvage anything from the game.

Next up for Iran are Kuwait on Wednesday while Saudi Arabia face another test in the shape of an impressive Lebanon.

FC Seoul eye Jahanbakhsh: report

TEHRAN – Iranian international winger Ali-reza Jahanbakhsh has been reportedly linked with a move to Korean club FC Seoul in South Korea.

The 31-year-old attacker, who recently parted ways with SC Heerenveen in the Netherlands, remains without a club and has not featured in competitive football for several months. Despite his lack of match sharpness, Iran head coach Amir Ghalenoei included him in the national team squad for upcoming friendlies against Russia and Tanzania, a decision that drew sharp criticism from pundits and former players.

Jahanbakhsh, once a mainstay of Team Melli and a former Brighton & Hove Albion winger, has made no secret of his desire to continue playing abroad rather than return to the domestic league. Previous talks with UAE clubs, including Shabab Al Ahli, reportedly broke down earlier this summer.

Jahanbakhsh’s representatives have also met with Persepolis officials in Tehran last Thursday to hear the club’s proposal. Sources close to the negotiations say Persepolis presented an “attractive offer” to bring the experienced winger home, but his agent revealed that discussions are ongoing with FC Seoul — one of the K League’s most established sides.

It is understood that Jahanbakhsh is currently prioritizing the South Korean option, viewing the K League as a more competitive environment that could help him regain top form ahead of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers. However, if talks with Seoul fall through, Persepolis is ready to finalize a deal swiftly.

Pakistani outside hitter Afaq Khan joins Mehregan Noor

TEHRAN – Iranian volleyball club Mehregan Noor of Mazandaran completed the signing of Pakistani outside hitter Afaq Khan.

The 25-year-old player was a member of Iran’s Mes Rafsanjan last season.

Afaq Kahn is the second Pakistani player in Iran Volleyball Super League.

His countryman Ali Usman Faryad currently plays for Shahdab Yazd.

Iran's steel export increases 26% in H1

TEHRAN – The Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA) has released export statistics for the steel chain during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 21-September 22), showing a 26-percent growth in the value of exports.

According to a report by IRNA's economic correspondent, the volume of iron and steel exports increased by 34 percent, while the total export volume of the entire steel chain saw a 45 percent rise. This is while the index had been declining in the three-month statistics.

The value of exports for the iron and steel chain in the first six months of the current year reached nearly \$4 billion, reflecting a 26 percent growth.

The Iranian Steel Producers Association reported that the upward trend in exports of raw materials for the steel chain continues, with the volume of iron ore concentrate exports doubling compared to the same period last year. This has raised concerns among steel producers.

A significant and continuing decline in the export volume of long steel products is another key point in this report. Rebar exports, which accounted for over 85 percent of the tonnage of long steel product exports last year, have decreased by 22 percent.

ISPA has previously reported that Iran's steel production reached nearly 15 million tons in the first six months of the current Iranian year, marking a 3.2 percent year-on-year increase.

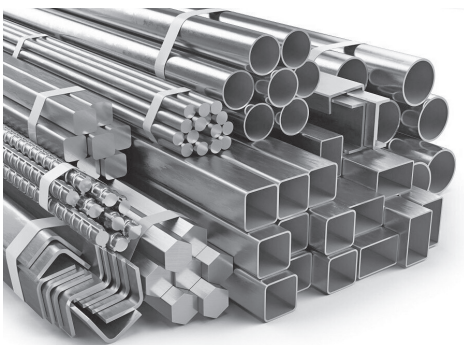
The latest ISPA data show the sector has rebounded from a 4.8 percent contraction recorded in the first quarter, signaling stronger coordination among producers in securing power supplies during the summer.

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 steelmakers 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 production growth, driven in part by



their lower energy consumption and rising export demand for concentrates.

By contrast, production of flat steel products such as sheets and plates declined due to weak domestic demand and continued imports, even though import volumes have been trending down. The association said such imports remain "unjustifiable," given the large idle capacity of Iranian rolling mills.

Iran ranked among the world's top ten steel producers in 2024, with output exceeding 30 million tons annually. Industry officials aim to boost capacity to 55 million tons by 2030 through new energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies.

According to a reports released by the World Steel Association (WSA) in late June, Iran has moved up to ninth place among the world's top steel producers, surpassing Brazil.

Data from the Iranian Steel Producers Association, citing figures from the World Steel Association, shows that Iran produced 14 million tons of steel in the first five months of 2025, including 3.4 million tons in May alone.

While Iran's steel output from January to May fell by 5.3 percent compared to the same period last year, production in May rose by 4.5 percent year-on-year.

Global steel production totaled 784 million tons during the first five months of 2025, marking a 1.3 percent decline compared to the same period in 2024. Output in May stood at 158.8 million tons, down 3.8 percent year-on-year.

Iran's year-to-date production is now just 400,000 tons short of Germany, which currently ranks eighth among global producers.

China, the world's largest steel producer, churned out 431.6 million tons from January to May, a 1.7 percent decline year-on-year. India, Japan, the United States, Russia, South Korea, and Turkey occupy the second through sixth positions in the global rankings.

Non-oil products worth over \$5.7b exported from Bushehr province in 6 months

TEHRAN- As announced by the director-general of the Customs Department of Bushehr province, in southwest Iran, in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), over 15.53 million tons of non-oil goods, worth more than \$5.7 billion, were exported through the customs offices of Bushehr province.

Ali Soleimani stated that this province holds the top rank in the country for export goods during the mentioned six-month period.

The official further mentioned that 13 customs offices are active in the field of commercial and trade services in Bushehr province.

He said the customs offices of Bushehr province provide services in the fields of export, import, and transit of goods.

Pointing out that the customs offices of Bushehr province secured the top national rank for exports in the first half of this year, he added: "In the first half of the current year, the customs offices of Bushehr province, by registering the export of over 15.53 million tons of various goods worth \$5.7 billion, have taken the first place in the country's exports."

The director-general of Bushehr Customs Department listed petrochemical products, methanol, cement and clinker, fish and shrimp, gypsum, and agricultural products as part of the export shipments from the province's customs.

He stated that the main destinations for the export shipments are China, the UAE, India, Pakistan, Brazil, Turkey, Oman, Qatar,

Bangladesh, and Kuwait.

Soleimani also described the 56-percent growth in revenue for Bushehr province's customs in the first half of this year compared to the same period last year as a sign of a leap in economic activities.

Regarding imports through Bushehr province's customs, the official announced that approximately 349,000 tons of essential goods and industrial equipment, worth \$1.062 billion, were imported into the country through Bushehr province's customs in the first half of this year.

These primarily included diesel power generators, power plant components and parts, various types of fabric, rice, various types of ball and roller bearings, passenger car parts and spare parts, motorcycle parts and spare parts, various types of tea, various automotive supplies, and electric motors, the official informed and added that these products were imported from countries such as the UAE, China, Russia, India, and Germany.

As previously announced by the province's governor-general, the value of non-oil export from Bushehr increased by 12 percent in the past Iranian calendar year, (ended on March 20).

Arsalan Zare said that over 30 million tons of non-oil products worth \$12 billion were exported from the province in the previous year.

The official also announced that 900,000 tons of non-oil commodities valued at \$2.8 billion were imported to the province in the previous year.

'Iran-Tajikistan relations can be expanded through special mechanisms'

From Page 1 ► During this meeting, the Iranian minister, thanking the provided opportunity for the meeting, announced that he carries a warm and sincere message of greetings from Mr. Masoud Pezeshkian, the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the president of Tajikistan.

He emphasized that Mr. Pezeshkian is eager to meet and host him in Tehran.

Madanizadeh, stressing the importance of brotherly relations and close cooperation between the two countries, stated: Mr. Pezeshkian always places special emphasis on developing these relations in all fields.

He sincerely appreciated the principled and courageous positions of the Tajik government in condemning the attacks by the Zionist regime and the U.S. against the Islamic Republic of Iran, describing this stance as indicative of a deep understanding of the sensitive regional conditions and the necessity of supporting stability and sustainable security.

The Iranian minister also congratulated the president of Tajikistan on the successful holding of international meetings, especially the recent summit of heads of state in the beautiful city of Dushanbe, and noted that Iran-Tajikistan relations have been noticeably growing in recent years.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Madanizadeh proposed that by defining special financial and banking mechanisms, using national currencies, bartering goods and services, and implementing



joint projects, cooperation between the two countries could be expanded away from the effects of sanctions.

He continued: "In this regard, significant capacities for cooperation in various fields have been provided; including in investment and infrastructure projects, Iranian companies are ready to actively participate in implementing construction, power plant, road construction, housing, and urban development plans in Tajikistan."

The minister also said: "In the field of energy and electricity, cooperation in the construction of hydroelectric power plants, Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran electricity transmission lines, and the development of renewable energies are among the practical axes of cooperation. In the field of trade and banking, establishing direct payment channels, using national currency, and reciprocal credit lines will play an important role in facilitating economic relations."

He also announced Iran's readiness to establish a joint science

Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan finalize roadmap to boost transit to 15m tons

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadegh announced that Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan have finalized a comprehensive roadmap to increase the volume of goods transiting among the three nations to 15 million tons annually.

The plan, she said, marks a major milestone in efforts to strengthen regional connectivity through the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC).

Speaking to reporters after attending trilateral and bilateral meetings in Baku on October 12, Sadegh described the gathering as "highly effective and long-awaited," emphasizing that the new roadmap would help resolve logistical bottlenecks and enhance coordination across multiple transport sectors.

She underlined that the Rasht-Astara railway project remains the "missing link" in the

corridor, and completing it is key to unlocking the full potential of the INSTC. "Land acquisition for the remaining sections will be completed by the end of this year, and we expect significant physical progress within the next three years," she said.

Sadegh added that the meetings also focused on streamlining customs procedures, improving border infrastructure, and enhancing truck and rail traffic between the three nations. Customs representatives discussed plans to establish a shared digital platform to simplify clearance processes and improve coordination among border authorities.

The minister proposed that Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan jointly develop an action plan within three months to achieve the 15-million-ton target by 2030. "The document will be signed at the next summit of the three countries'

leaders," she noted, describing it as a blueprint for transforming regional trade routes into a reliable and efficient logistics network.

Iran pursuing launch of freight train service along western branch of INSTC

Sadegh also revealed ongoing efforts to launch scheduled freight trains along the western branch of the corridor and offer preferential tariffs to attract more cargo.

"Consistency and predictability in logistics services are essential to achieving our targets," she said.

In her bilateral meeting with Azerbaijan's Minister of Transport and Digital Development, Rashad Nabiyeu, Sadegh highlighted the growing momentum of cooperation between Tehran and Baku, noting that transport issues have become a core focus of the Joint Economic Commission.

ICCIMA sets up joint committee to boost engineering service exports

TEHRAN – Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), and the Association of Exporters of Technical and Engineering Services signed a tripartite memorandum of cooperation aimed at forming a joint committee to expand Iran's export capacity in technical and engineering services.

The initiative, pursued by ICCIMA's Committee for Technical, Engineering and Construction Services, seeks to revitalize Iran's presence in regional markets by removing obstacles, coordinating

with financial institutions, and streamlining export procedures. A representative from the Central Bank of Iran also attended the signing ceremony, expressing readiness to cooperate in implementing the agreement.

ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh called the signing "a meaningful and promising step," saying that Iran urgently needs to expand exports. "Achieving this goal requires full institutional cooperation with a supportive and pragmatic approach. Regional countries recognize Iran as one of the largest exporters of engineering services, and demand for Iranian

expertise remains high," he said.

Hassanzadeh emphasized that collaboration among the TPO, Central Bank, and private sector can significantly enhance project execution and overall export value. "Iran possesses vast experience in engineering services, and by leveraging this strength through economic diplomacy, we can restore and expand our trade ties with neighboring countries," he said.

***Agreement marks a new chapter for Iran's engineering export revival

TPO head Mohammad Ali De-

ghan-Dehnavi described Iran's history in engineering service exports as "illustrious," noting that the sector once accounted for over 10 percent of the country's total exports. Although this share has declined, he said the new cooperation framework aims to restore and surpass those golden years.

'Tehran, Dushanbe accelerate toward a sustainable future'

Speaking on Tuesday at the Dushanbe International Investment Forum, Madanizadeh highlighted the strengthening of economic and cultural ties between Iran and Tajikistan, emphasizing green investment opportunities and regional cooperation in energy, technology, transport, and agriculture as the foundation for sustainable development across Central Asia.

He said the conference, focused on green investment, serves as "a bridge for sharing ideas and a gateway to a sustainable and prosperous regional future."

He added that the recent meeting between the presidents of Iran and Tajikistan marked a new chapter in bilateral relations, culminating in 23 cooperation documents worth \$500 million, underscoring both sides' determination to deepen economic engagement.

The official said the two countries share a common vision to expand bilateral trade beyond \$500 million, reinforced by agreements in transport, customs, fisheries, mining, and agriculture.

"Tajikistan, with its vast potential in renewable energy, mining, and water resources, offers a reliable base for sustainable investment," he said.

About 25,000 vehicles imported to Iran in H1

TEHRAN – According to the latest statistics from the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), approximately 25,000 vehicles worth nearly \$500 million were cleared through the country's customs in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 21-September 22).

As reported by the economic correspondent of the Tasnim News Agency, a comparison of these figures with the same period last year indicates an upward trend in vehicle imports.

As previously reported, Iran's three major

carmakers — Iran Khodro, SAIPA, and Pars Khodro — produced a total of 404,461 vehicles in the first six months of the current Iranian year, according to data from the Codal website.

The combined figure represents a 12 percent decline compared to the same period last year, when output reached 460,763 vehicles, marking a shortfall of 56,122 units.

Despite the overall drop, Iran Khodro maintained positive momentum, producing 263,468 vehicles, an 8.8 percent increase

from the 241,957 units manufactured in the same period a year earlier.

By contrast, both SAIPA and Pars Khodro experienced lower production levels, contributing to the industry's overall contraction in the first half of the year.

Industry analysts attribute the mixed performance to supply chain disruptions, market adjustments, and ongoing reforms within the domestic automotive sector, while highlighting Iran Khodro's resilience as a sign of gradual stabilization in parts of the industry.

Paper peace: Sharm el-Sheikh's fragile promise to Gaza

How Gaza's demands go unanswered

From page 1 ► Diplomats and observers—including Robert Malley—have voiced disbelief that the broader 20-point plan will be implemented as written; they expect only the most immediate measures to stick.

Expecting a power-asymmetric actor to surrender arms with no reciprocal guarantees invites either perfunctory compliance or covert retention of force. Both outcomes threaten a return to violence.

Second, legitimacy is in short supply. The summit's carefully staged consensus was reached without either Israel or Hamas present at the signing.

On October 14, Egypt announced a proposed interim administration of technocrats — reportedly 15 names already vetted by Israel and endorsed by regional mediators. For many Palestinians, this raises alarms about external control over their political future.

Palestinians and journalists on the ground called the ceremony “hollow choreography” because it sidelines the very people whose consent is decisive for lasting peace. Imposed technocracy, even when pitched as neutral, risks entrenching dependency rather than restoring sovereignty.

Third, accountability was largely deferred. Human Rights Watch warned that the truce is essential but “no substitute” for action on aid, justice, and lasting political



change.

For many Palestinians, a ceasefire that does not explicitly dismantle the blockade, guarantee rights, or open credible pathways for accountability amounts to a pause that preserves structures of domination.

Israeli forces violated the truce on October 14, killing nine Palestinians in Gaza and torching homes and shops during their withdrawal — reinforcing fears that “cease-fire” offers no real safety.

These structural doubts translate into stark scenarios. If optimism prevails — unlikely without robust UN verification and political will from powerful states — phased implementation could yield limited reconstruction and a fragile political transition.

More plausibly, a temporary lull will be followed by a protracted stalemate: reconstruction trickles,

governance fights stall, and Palestinians remain under constrained sovereignty.

Israel has also moved to tighten the siege, blocking aid and keeping Rafah closed until Hamas returns bodies of captives — even though many were killed by Israeli airstrikes and remain buried under rubble. For Palestinians, this signals that collective punishment continues under the guise of a ceasefire.

The worst case, tragically plausible, is a collapse that spirals back into full-scale hostilities, leaving Gaza's civilians once again to absorb the highest human cost.

Voices from Gaza and its advocates see this for what it is: urgent humanitarian relief wrapped in a diplomatic package that dodges the structural remedies Palestinians demand.

As historian Rashid Khalidi and

frontline journalists have argued, without addressing occupation, accountability, and control over borders and resources, Sharm el-Sheikh risks being remembered not as the start of justice but as another interlude — a pause that lets the machinery of dispossession recalibrate.

If the world truly intends to break the cycle, it must treat the ceasefire as a platform for enforceable rights — independent investigations, unconditional humanitarian access, and a political horizon that recognizes Palestinian self-determination — rather than as a finale.

Otherwise, the summit's applause will only echo over rubble and uncertainty, and Gaza's people will be left to ask whether their brief respite was relief or merely the calm before a renewed storm.

Shutdown of “Whish Money” accounts is another phase of financial blockade on Lebanon

From page 1 ► Humble but effective initiatives have emerged, relying on domestic donations and remittances from expatriates, to provide shelter, education, and basic needs for families who lost their homes and livelihoods.

These volunteer initiatives, however, quickly faced a series of organized obstacles, beginning with the assassination of engineers and threats against activists participating in reconstruction efforts, and finally ending with the cutting off of community funding through local financial platforms.

The closure of the Whish Money accounts was not an isolated incident; rather, it coincided with a series of Western and American measures and pressures on Lebanon aimed at imposing a blockade on the resistance environment and preventing the flow of funds to border areas.

The account of Hussein Saleh, a member of the Ramia Municipal Council member, was closed based on Circular No. 170 issued by the Banque du Liban, which raised questions about the nature of the relationship between internal banking decisions and external instructions dictated by international financial institutions.

It later emerged that dozens of other accounts belonging to relief organizations and local associations were closed, sparking a wave of anger in southern circles, who viewed these steps as a new form of collective punishment.

Wa Ta'awano Cooperative expressed regret over the closure of its donation account, saying that it had submitted all the legal documents required to reactivate it, but the company insisted on deactivating it without clear justification.

The volunteer association—which played a pivotal role in restoring damaged homes and establishing temporary education centers—considered this measure part of “a series of practices aimed at disrupting reconstruction efforts and supporting residents”. The association said the move signifies a dangerous alignment by a Lebanese company with international and Israeli policies that aim to “suffocate the south economically and humanely.”

In practice, this decision led to a near-total paralysis of civil society funding, as associations relied on quick transfers via Whish Money as an alternative to the faltering banking system.

With the closure of these financial channels, donors find themselves unable to deliver aid, while the associations' ability to implement their vital projects declines.

This once again empty the southern villages of their residents, as residents are unable to rebuild their homes or secure the most basic necessities of daily life.

Legally, most observers agree that what is happening goes beyond technical or legal issues.

Closing accounts is merely an additional pressure tool in a broader context of the economic war waged by external powers against Lebanon, targeting specific communities seeking to withstand the ongoing U.S.-led Israeli aggression.

While the military attacks have been limited, the financial war continues in more complex and quieter forms, using Lebanese economic and banking tools to achieve external political objectives.

However, the Lebanese experience has demonstrated that civil society alternatives are capable of adapting, as Wa Ta'awano Cooperative did by announcing the opening of a new account in Qard al-Hassan to continue receiving contributions.

This civil steadfastness, despite intense pressure, reflects the steadfast will of the people of the south to confront the blockade in all its forms. They are adamant in their will to rebuild what has been destroyed despite banking restrictions.

It is clear that closing accounts is merely a new chapter in the policy of prohibition and blockade, that the goal of which is to prevent the south from being rebuilt except on foreign terms.

Nevertheless, experience confirms that the will of the people, when combined with civil solidarity, is capable of breaking any siege, whether financial or military.

Israel destroyed Christian presence in Palestine

From page 1 ► The statement noted that Christians face daily harassment, including spitting, physical assaults, and desecration of churches and cemeteries. In addition, movement is heavily restricted due to checkpoints and the separation wall, often preventing Christians from practicing their faith or celebrating religious events such as Easter.

It also drew attention to the siege of Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, which is now surrounded by over 150 checkpoints, settlements, and sections of the separation wall. The city's area has been reduced from 37 square kilometers to just 7.3.

The committee warned that the Israeli settlement plan, known as “E1,” would further isolate Jerusalem from its Palestinian surroundings and tighten the siege on Bethlehem.

It concluded by stating that the Israeli regime, not anyone else, has systematically dismantled the Christian presence in the Holy Land. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's lies cannot erase history or the reality of Palestinians living under occupation,” the

Before the Nakba of 1948, Palestinian Christians made up about 12.5% of the population in historic Palestine. Today, they make up only 1.2%, and just 1% in the territories occupied in 1967.

statement said.

The committee released a statement accompanied by a photo of an Israeli tank outside the Church of the Nativity during the 2002 invasion of the West Bank, emphasizing that the Israeli regime's colonial policies, including ethnic cleansing, apartheid, and acts of genocide, have led to the destruction of Christian life in Palestine.

It noted that before the Nakba of 1948, Palestinian Christians made up about 12.5% of the population in historic Palestine. Today, they make up only 1.2%, and just 1% in the territories occupied in 1967.

According to the committee, 90,000 Palestinian Christians were displaced during the Nakba, and around 30 churches were forced to close. Zionist militias also carried out massacres against Christian civilians, including the killing of 25

people at the Semiramis Hotel in Jerusalem and the execution of 12 others in the village of Eilabun near Nazareth in 1948.

The statement also recalled the Christian villages of Iqrit and Kafr Bir'im in the occupied Upper Galilee, where residents were barred from returning despite court rulings in their favor.

In 1953, Israeli occupation forces demolished the villages to prevent any return. Today, only the churches and cemeteries remain as testimony to the forced displacement.

The committee called on the international community to hold the regime accountable under international law, urged global churches to speak out in defense of their fellow Christians in the Holy Land, and demanded that the United Nations protect freedom of worship and the Christian presence in Palestine.

A ceasefire and ten achievements

From page 1 ► 1. Breaking the hegemony of the narrative

The greatest achievement of the Gaza war was the gradual erosion of mainstream media's monopoly over defining the “reality” of the conflict. Social media platforms and local journalists—especially those in Gaza—were able to present raw, unfiltered, and live images of on-the-ground realities, directly contradicting the official narratives of the opposing side. This widened the trust gap between Western publics and their mainstream media outlets.

2. Globalizing the Palestinian cause and raising youth awareness

Through the perseverance and resilience of the resistance front, the Palestinian issue transformed from a “regional conflict” into a “global cause.” Young generations across the West and other parts of the world—using modern communication tools and social media—came to see Palestine not merely as a political matter, but as a civilizational and human rights challenge. The widespread pro-Palestine campaigns in universities and city squares are tangible expressions of this discursive shift.

3. Exposing the nature of systematic violence

This war completely dismantled the conventional perception of “ordinary conflict.” The deliberate targeting of vital infrastructure, hospitals, and schools projected to the world the image of a “militarized and unconventional state” rather than a “victim of terrorism.” In clearer terms, the systematic and enduring nature of Zionist violence against Palestinians became starkly visible and globally understood.

4. Reviving the discourse of “legitimate resistance” against “occupation”

After years of Western efforts to label resistance movements as “terrorism” through mainstream media influence, the resistance narrative regained legitimacy. This time, resistance was framed not only as a natural reaction but as an inherent right of a people living under occupation—fully consistent with international law.

5. Creating cultural solidarity among justice-seeking movements

The Gaza war became a focal point for global “justice movements,” strengthening cultural and discursive ties among various anti-imperialist and freedom-seeking groups worldwide. This solidarity found expression in slogans such as “From Gaza to Everywhere—Freedom!” Gaza's

resistance became the common bond linking liberation movements across five continents—a trend likely to continue in the post-war era.

6. Intensifying confrontation with the regime through sanctions and boycotts

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement reached unprecedented levels of influence within academic, cultural, and commercial institutions. This demonstrated that the “soft power of resistance” can produce tangible results through social pressure, creating real challenges for supporters of the Zionist regime in the global arena.

7. Legal accountability through international law

Judicial proceedings in institutions such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) transformed the Palestinian issue from a purely political matter into an international legal case. In the long term, this compels the Zionist regime to face accountability in frameworks it has long sought to avoid.

8. The emergence of “moral shame” among Western elites

Despite official political support for the regime, a growing sense of “moral shame” emerged among segments of intellectuals, artists, and even government employees in countries supporting Israel. This internal division within the Western bloc represents an important discursive achievement that weakens the cohesion of the pro-status-quo alliance in the U.S. and Europe.

9. Strengthening Islamic unity around the Palestinian cause

Despite regional differences, recent events have revived and amplified the collective voice of the Islamic world in support of Palestine as the central cause of the Muslim Ummah. At the grassroots level, this unity has challenged divisive narratives that have long been promoted among regional states.

10. Expanding popular resistance against normalization

One of the main goals of the Zionist regime in recent years has been normalization of relations with Arab states. This war decisively proved that as long as the core issue of Palestine remains unresolved, any attempt at normalization will be rejected and condemned by the public opinion of Muslim nations.

Taliban minister with Indian female journalists



Female journalists occupied front-row seats at the Afghan Taliban foreign minister's press conference in Delhi on Sunday

It's often said that a picture can speak a thousand words.

The one in Indian newspapers on Monday morning showing female journalists occupying front-row seats at the Afghan Taliban foreign minister's press conference in Delhi is certainly one of those.

The conference - the second press event by Amir Khan Muttaqi at the Afghan embassy in about 48 hours - was called after a huge uproar over the exclusion of women from his first meeting on Friday.

Muttaqi said at Sunday's conference that the exclusion was unintentional and not “deliberate”.

“With regard to the [Friday's] press conference, it was on short notice and a short list of journalists was decided, and the participation list that was presented was very specific.

“It was more a technical issue... Our colleagues had decided to send an invitation to a specific list of journalists and there was no other intention apart from this,” he added.

The UN has referred to the situation in Afghanistan as “gender apartheid” where women and girls are not allowed to attend secondary school or university, visit parks or gyms. The jobs they are allowed to do are increasingly restricted and the Taliban government enforces head-to-toe coverings and

restricts their travel.

The Taliban government, which retook power in 2021, has previously said it respects women's rights in accordance with their interpretation of Afghan culture and Islamic law, but Western diplomats have said their attempts to gain recognition have been hampered by the curbs on women. The suppression of women's rights under their rule is the harshest in the world.

Muttaqi arrived in India on Thursday for a week of high-level talks with the government from Russia, the only country so far to fully recognise their government.

Delhi has not formally recognised Afghanistan's de facto rulers, but it is one of a number of countries that maintain some form of diplomatic or informal relations with them, even maintaining a small mission in Kabul and sending humanitarian aid there.

The visit is being seen as a ramping up of relations between the countries and is key for both - the Taliban government receives a boost in its quest for recognition, while India advances its strategic and security interests. On Friday, Muttaqi met Foreign Minister S Jaishankar who announced that India would reopen its embassy in Kabul which was shut after the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran-China joint cultural heritage plays effective role in deepening ties

TEHRAN--Joint cultural heritage of Iran and China plays an effective role in deepening relations between the two countries and should be considered as a bridge between the hearts of the people of the two nations, said Minister of Cultural Heritage Reza Salehi-Amiri.

Salehi-Amiri's message, which was read on Tuesday, at the opening ceremony of the 'Armaghan-e Abrisham; a Review of Iran-China Relations' exhibition, states: "Cultural diplomacy is an important strategy in securing and advancing cultural, economic, and political development. Therefore, it can be considered one of the effective tools in cultural ties between countries. Iran and China, two large countries in East and West Asia with cultural and historical similarities, have had deep ties in the field of cultural and commercial relations since ancient times. In Iran's cultural diplomacy, shared cultural heritage plays a special role in expanding relations between the two countries."

This joint heritage, which shows the cultural influence and mutual influence of the religious roots of the Iranian world, has played an important role in the formation and cohesion of economic and political relations in form of Zoroastrian and Manichaean rituals, he said.

"The dispatch of ambassadors and trade caravans in the past has also been a manifestation of this civilizational connection. In today's cultural policies, this convergence must be pursued in such a way that the relations between Iran and China are not limited to the economic dimension alone and become a deep bond between the hearts and cultural identities of the two nations; a bond that is rooted in a brilliant past and illuminates the light of today's interactions."

Emphasizing the necessity of scientific and accurate recognition of the common cultural roots of the two countries, he stated that the correct and scientific recognition of the common heritage provides a clear picture of the common ancient identity in the culture and art of Iran and China and can make the current relationship between the two nations more meaningful.

Visually-impaired individuals granted free entry to museums on White Cane Day

TEHRAN - In a significant move to promote cultural accessibility, the Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage in Iran has announced free admission for blind and visually-impaired individuals to its all museums and historical sites across the country on the occasion of the international White Cane Day.

"The blind and visually impaired visitors, along with one companion, will be granted free access to all museums, heritage sites, and historical monuments managed by the ministry on Wednesday, 23rd of Mehr (October 15)," Ali Darabi, Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, said in statement on Tuesday.

Darabi added that the decision aims to honor the status of the visually impaired and promote cultural justice by ensuring equal access to the nation's rich cultural and historical heritage.

He emphasized that White Cane Day serves

Pashtab castle undergoes restoration

TEHRAN—Head of East Azarbaijan Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department has announced the start of operations to secure, restore and create an access road to the ancient Pashtab Castle in Horand county, northwest Iran.

Ahmad Hamzehzadeh said that the work has begun with the efforts of East Azarbaijan Cultural Heritage Department, with the aim of facilitating tourist visits and increasing safety in the high and difficult-to-access parts of the castle, IRIB reported.

Pointing to the historical importance of this valuable building, he added that Pashtab castle is one of the prominent monuments of northeastern East Azarbaijan, built in the heart of natural cliffs and atop the rocky heights of Horand county, and it demonstrates the intelligence and engineering abil-

ity of past people.

This recognition will create a common sense of civilizational heritage and will be like an inspiring torch in the path of cultural interactions between the two countries, he added. Salehi-Amiri noted that although religious exchanges in form of Zoroastrian, Manichaean and Islamic rituals are considered a religious indicator, the Silk Road or the Royal Road is a symbol of commercial interactions on land and sea routes.

The manifestation of literature, art, pottery, and metalworking at trading posts between the two countries can be clearly identified in the remains of cultural heritage and can be the subject of joint research between researchers, research centers and universities of Iran and China, he said.

Referring to the role of cultural diplomacy in the development of official relations between the two countries, he emphasized: "Cultural heritage, as a civilizational indicator, is a gateway to increasing the level of relations in various dimensions between Iran and China. Holding cultural heritage conferences and exhibitions such as 'Silk Gifts', which has been organized by the Cultural Heritage Ministry's Research Institute - as a research hub of the ministry - is an example of this targeted cultural diplomacy."

Salehi-Amiri continued: "The next program of this ministry is dedicated to the maritime cultural heritage of the two countries. It is hoped that this cooperation, by focusing on understanding maritime culture and technology, can provide the Iranian and Chinese communities with a valuable understanding of the ancient creativity of the two nations."

He expressed the hope that these cultural interactions will be a valuable introduction to increasing the presence of Chinese tourists in the ancient land of Iran.

The exhibition, featuring a selection of archaeological and artistic treasures from Iran and China, was officially open at the National Museum of Iran on Tuesday.

According to organizers, the exhibition aims to highlight the longstanding cultural exchanges between Iran and China through the lens of art and history.



as a reminder of the importance of respect, awareness, and social participation for blind individuals, adding that cultural heritage gains greater value when it becomes accessible and tangible for all people.

He also noted that special programs have been organized at select cultural and historical venues to engage those visitors on this important day.

Nahavand ancient fortress to be revived in major restoration effort

TEHRAN – The ancient fortress of Nahavand, also known as the Yazdegerd Citadel, is set to undergo restoration as part of a significant cultural heritage initiative in west-central Iran.

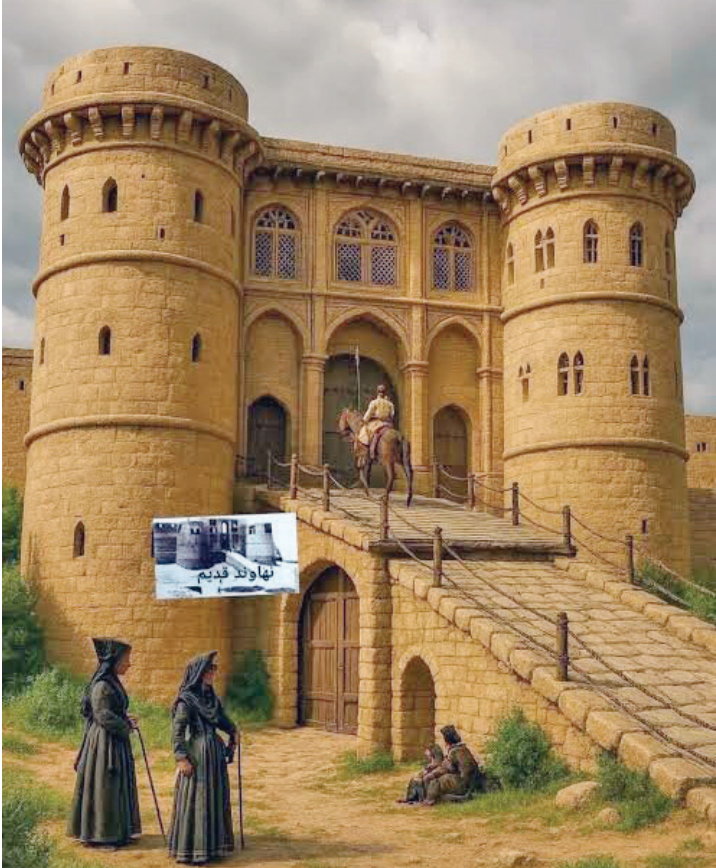
The head of Nahavand's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, Mohsen Khanjan, himself an archaeologist, announced the revival plans for the centuries-old stronghold, highlighting its historical and cultural importance.

Speaking to CHTN, Khanjan emphasized the necessity of preserving ancient structures as cultural and tourism assets. He noted that the project is being carried out with the support of the local municipality and the city's representative in the Iranian Parliament.

"The Nahavand fortress is one of the most significant ancient monuments in the region, dating back to the Sassanid era," Khanjan said. "It once played a vital role in protecting Iran's territories. Its fall during the Battle of Nahavand marked a turning point in the country's history."

The fortress, perched strategically on a hill overlooking the surrounding region, served as a key defensive structure during the late Sassanid period. Its architecture reflects ancient Iranian military engineering, with thick stone walls, numerous towers, and fortified watchpoints designed to withstand sieges and invasions.

Khanjan explained that the fortress's elevation allowed de-



A depiction of Nahavand defensive fortress, which stood tall for centuries, in the ancient Iranian city, situated in Hamedan province, west-central Iran.

fenders to monitor incoming threats and respond accordingly. The rugged terrain around the site added to its defensive advantages.

Describing the structure as a symbol of ancient Iranian resilience and ingenuity, the archaeologist remarked that the fortress represents the military power and architectural inno-

vation of civilizations that once flourished in the region. "It is a powerful reminder of the Sassanid era and early Islamic history, embodying a rich and turbulent past."

However, the fortress suffered significant damage during the Qajar era. According to Khanjan, during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah in the 19th century, a large

Home of 20th-century Iranian writer Jalal Al-e Ahmad set to reopen as cultural site

TEHRAN – The paternal home of prominent Iranian writer and intellectual Jalal Al-e Ahmad is set to reopen soon as a cultural and artistic center, following the completion of an extensive restoration project.

Located in the Sangelaj district, one of the oldest neighborhoods in Tehran, the Qajar-era house has undergone major repairs and is now in its final phase of restoration, according to Mahboubeh Kazemi-Doulabi, cultural manager of the project.

"The restoration is nearly complete, and the house will soon be reopened as a space for cultural, artistic, and ceremonial events, as well as a venue for hosting both domestic and international visitors," Kazemi-Doulabi said on Tuesday.

Designated as a national heritage site in 2004, the two-story building reflects traditional Iranian architecture and is closely associated with Al-e Ahmad, one of Iran's most influential 20th-century literary figures.

Best known for his 1962 essay Gharbzadegi ("Westoxification"), Al-e Ahmad was a sharp critic of what he viewed as the uncritical adoption of Western values in non-Western societies.

The building had fallen into disrepair prior to the restoration effort, which began in 2021. At the time, the house lacked basic utilities and had become a shelter for drug users and a location for waste sorting.

Wooden balconies to be revived in Bushehr

TEHRAN--Wooden balconies (known as Shanashir) of historical houses have become the focus of attention of Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department.

Their counterparts in the city of Basra, Iraq, are known as Shanasheel. Studies have begun in Iran to register these practical elements in the traditional architecture of historical houses in Bushehr and Basra, ILNA reported.

The Bushehr Shanashirs are elements of the native architecture of the Persian Gulf coast, which are known as the architectural element of introversion and extroversion of traditional houses in this region. They are wooden panels with cut-out letters and words.

Iranian Shanashirs and Iraqi Shanasheels are shuttered wooden balconies that are installed in front of the windows of the upper floors of traditional houses, and their structure is such that light and air easily enter the building and guard the view of the houses. In such a way that from behind the wooden words, the outside space can be easily viewed, but there is no view of the inside of the houses from the outside.

Ali Mahini, a cultural heritage chief of Bushehr, called Shanashirs as the most remarkable indigenous architecture in the hot and humid climate of the region, which are of great importance in terms of aesthetics and functionality in historical monu-

ments.

He said that according to the latest surveys of Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department, about 30 percent of the houses located within the historical texture of Bushehr are equipped with Shanashir.

He announced that among these houses, Tabib Mansion, Dehdashti Mansion, Golshan-e Irani Mansion and Behbahani Mansion have been registered in the country's National Heritage List, and documentation of other notable buildings is also underway so that other historical houses of Bushehr with wooden balconies can be gradually registered in the country's National Heritage List.

Referring to the condition of Bushehr's historical houses, he said: "In general, within the framework of the Bushehr historical texture restoration plan, protective measures have been taken to reduce environmental damage to the historical buildings, and some of the houses also require urgent restoration due to dilapidation and climatic conditions, and their restoration is on the agenda of Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department."

Mahini referred to the similarity of the shuttered houses in the two port provinces of Bushehr and Basra, adding: The existence of historical and cultural roots between Bushehr and Basra in Iran and Iraq has led to the formation of many similarities in the traditional architecture of these two ports.

He said: The formation of the shuttered structure in traditional houses is actually the result of cultural and commercial interaction between the people on both sides of the Persian Gulf in past centuries.

Referring to the potential for global registration of shuttered wooden balconies as a common architectural heritage of Iran and Iraq, he said that from a technical and legal perspective, there is a possibility of transnational registration of this type of architecture as a common heritage of Iran and Iraq.

Mahini emphasized that a preliminary study to prepare a file for possible registration of Bushehr Shanashirs on UNESCO World Heritage List is on the agenda of Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department, and in coordination with the Iraqi side, traditional wooden shuttered balconies can be presented in the form of a joint file between the two countries.

Regarding the restoration and revival of historical houses and installation of Shanashirs in the historical texture of Bushehr, several key programs are being implemented in Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department, the first of which is to encourage private investors to restore and upgrade traditional houses into eco-tourism residences.

He added that another issue is organizing educational and cultural tours focused on visiting houses with Shanashirs.

According to Mahini, the sci-

treasure was discovered while digging a qanat near the site. The Shah subsequently ordered extensive excavation and photography around the fortress, which led to its near-total destruction under the pretext of finding more treasure. Locals were told the reason for demolition was that the structure overlooked private homes, though the actual motive was likely treasure hunting.

Despite its long decline, efforts are now underway to bring the fortress back to life. Khanjan confirmed that restoration has begun under the leadership of the Nahavand Municipality, with collaboration from the Cultural Heritage Department. The initial phase includes re-zoning properties adjacent to the site and purchasing nearby lands to facilitate the reconstruction process.

The Nahavand region has been continuously inhabited since pre-historic times, as evidenced by major excavations conducted in 1931–32 at Tepe Giyan, about 10 kilometers southeast of the city. French archaeologists Georges Contenau and Roman Ghirshman revealed that the area was occupied from at least 5000 BCE to around 1000 BCE.

Classical sources also highlight Nahavand's ancient roots. The Greek geographer Strabo noted that the city was re-established by Xerxes the Great of the Achaemenid Empire and later became a Greek polis during the Seleucid era, complete with magistrates and a governor.

entific documentation of architectures with Shanashirs in cooperation with the Persian Gulf University is also another program of Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department to promote the use of this traditional architectural heritage.

He announced the production of educational and research content to introduce Shanashirs as a model of sustainable architecture in a hot and humid climate as another program of Bushehr Cultural Heritage Department.

Mahini continued that Shanashir is part of the historical and cultural identity of Bushehr and a symbol of the connection between the people of this region and the sea and the climate. The preservation, restoration and introduction of this valuable element in the traditional architecture of the Persian Gulf coast is an important step in preserving the cultural heritage of the Persian Gulf coast and moving towards its global registration, he added.

At end, he expressed hope that the programs currently underway to restore, revive and introduce the importance of using the Shanashir element in the architecture of Bushehr Province will not only preserve this architectural heritage of the Persian Gulf coast in Iran and the shared architectural heritage with the city of Basra in Iraq, but also promote its use in the modern lives of the people of Bushehr and revive this architectural heritage in the traditional buildings of Bushehr.

Tehran, Ankara to boost ties in emerging sciences



TEHRAN – The science attaché of Iran in Turkey has met with Turkish university officials, exploring avenues to promote scientific cooperation, particularly joint research in emerging sciences.

During a meeting held between Mohammad-Reza Pour-mohammadi, and Mehmet Cahit Güran, the Rector of Hacettepe University, the two officials reviewed former agreements and highlighted the need for the expansion of ties, including collaborative research projects in cutting-edge fields, IRNA reported.

They also discussed offering sabbatical leaves for postgraduate students, and holding scientific seminars and conferences focusing on regional issues.

In a meeting with Hatice Bakkaloğlu, the Vice Rector of Hacettepe University, the two sides underlined the significance of fostering scientific collaborations between the two nations, particularly by organizing joint postgraduate courses and conducting scientific research.

Iran's science attaché also attended a meeting with Kürşat Aydoğan, the Rector of Bilkent University.

Aydoğan presented a report on the academic status of Iranian students. The official said that they value scientific cooperation with Iranian universities, calling for further

joint efforts.

For his part, Pour-mohammadi highlighted implementing formerly signed memoranda of understanding and expanding partnerships between the universities of the two countries.

Recent agreements

Shiraz University of Medical Sciences and Suleyman Demirel University of Turkey have signed a scientific, research, and educational memorandum of understanding.

The MOU was signed by Seyyed Basir Hashemi, Chancellor of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, and Alim Koşar, Vice Rector of Suleyman Demirel University.

According to the MOU, the two universities will develop their academic interactions through exchanging students and professors, implementing joint research projects, as well as holding international courses and Seminars, Mehr news agency reported.

The signed MOU will play a key role in promoting science diplomacy and expanding international collaborations. It will also lay the basis for sharing expertise, promoting modern technologies, and improving health indices, Hashemi noted.

For his part, Koşar said the MOU is a milestone in the development of scientific and research relations between the two countries. "Cooperating with Shiraz University of

Medical Sciences, as one of the most reliable universities in Iran, will be a great opportunity to enhance our scientific, educational, and research activities," he added.

In a meeting held on April 26, Mohammad Nabi Shahiki, the deputy science minister of innovation and technology, and Mustafa Aydin, the president of the Eurasian Universities Union (EURAS), elaborated on the capacities of each country and explored the potentials for expanding scientific cooperation, the science ministry's website reported.

The officials proposed the establishment of a technology transfer office, cooperation in the fields of water technology, energy, artificial intelligence, and the implementation of joint projects between the Scientific and Industrial Research Organizations of Iran and Turkey, with a priority on transferring technology to the industrial sector.

The two sides agreed on launching a joint digital economy research center. Partnership in holding start-up events, periodically, as well as defining collaborative postdoc projects in modern agriculture, biomaterials, and biotechnology sectors, were among the other agreed programs.

The officials also announced their readiness to foster ties among universities of the two countries to enhance scientific and technological collaborations.

Rural women's empowerment safeguards our future

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN – Rural women are responsible for half of the world's food production, while working as environmental and biodiversity stewards; empowering them will safeguard everyone's future.

In 2007, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) established the Day to recognize "the critical role and contribution of rural women, including Indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty".

Now, the International Day of Rural Women is marked annually on October 15. It highlights taking actions to promote gender equality and empower women living in rural communities.

According to the UN website, empowering women is a critical ingredient in the fight against extreme poverty, hunger, and climate change.

Women and girls in rural areas suffer disproportionately from multi-dimensional poverty. They may be as productive and enterprising as their male counterparts, but are less able to access land, cred-



it, agricultural inputs, markets, and high-value agri-food chains and obtain lower prices for their crops.

Structural barriers and discriminatory social norms continue to constrain women's decision-making power and political participation in rural households and communities. Women and girls in rural areas lack equal access to productive resources and assets, public services, such as education and health care, and infrastructure, including water and sanitation, while much of their labour remains invisible and unpaid.

Globally, with few exceptions, every gender and development indicator for which data are available reveals that rural women fare worse than rural men and urban women and that they disproportionately experience poverty, exclusion, and the effects of climate change.

Under the theme 'The Rise of Rural Women: Building Resilient Futures with Beijing+30', this International Day, promoted by UN Women, seeks to shed light on the inequalities they still face; advocate for their recognition and participation in decision-making; demand stronger social protection systems; and reduce the digital divide. The commemoration aligns with the spirit of Beijing+30, a global plan for gender equality focused on eradicating poverty, achieving climate justice, and ensuring the full participation of all women and girls in sustainable development. Wherever they live.

Let's promote their work as food providers and protectors of the environment. Let's demand their participation in decision-making within their communities. Let's promote rural areas where women can have the same opportunities as men.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

"Noora" vaccine successfully passing first phase of clinical trial

"Noora" coronavirus vaccine, domestically made by Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences affiliated to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), is successfully passing the first phase of the clinical trial.

The vaccine is well undergoing the first phase of human testing, he noted, adding, the first phase of human testing lasts 2 months, so far more than a month has passed, IRNA reported on Saturday.

He stressed the need to integrate the human testing phase of the Noora vaccine and said that "this must be done to make the vaccine available for the mass vaccination; while many vaccine producing countries have done the same."

واکسن نورا مرحله پایانی فاز اول تست انسانی را طی می کند

تهران - رییس دانشگاه علوم پزشکی بقیه الله گفت: تزریق دز اول واکسن نورا به تمام داوطلبان انجام شد و دز دوم هم به نیمه تزریق رسیده است. دکتر حسن ابوالقاسمی روز شنبه در گفت و گو با ایرنا، روند فعالیت کارآزمایی بالینی واکسن نورا را مطلوب ارزیابی کرد و افزود: این واکسن به نحو مطلوبی در حال طی کردن فاز اول تست انسانی است.

وی با یادآوری اینکه طبق برنامه ریزی انجام شده طول دوره مرحله اول تست انسانی ۲ ماه است، ادامه داد: تاکنون بیش از یک ماه از این دوره سپری شده است.

وی بر لزوم ادغام مراحل تست انسانی واکسن نورا تاکید کرد و گفت: این کار باید صورت گیرد و بسیاری از کشورهای تولید کننده واکسن هم از این ظرفیت بهره بردند.

SOCIETY

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

FAO highlights Iran's strategic role in regional food production and agricultural innovation

TEHRAN – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Representative in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Farrukh Toirov, recognized Iran's strategic position in regional food production and agricultural innovation.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 24th Tehran International Livestock, Poultry, and Industries Exhibition, he expressed readiness to expand technical and specialized cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran in advancing sustainable agricultural development and food security.

He emphasized that FAO operates in all its member countries and is actively engaged in supporting Iran's agricultural priorities and national development goals.

"Our mission is to help people around the world improve their livelihoods and ensure food security for all. The Islamic Republic of Iran plays a special role in this global mission thanks to its diverse ecosystems, rich agricultural resources, and strong potential for both freshwater and saline water-based production," he said.

Recognizing Iran's strategic position in regional food production, Toirov added that "God has blessed the Iranian people with fertile lands and valuable natural resources. With proper assessment and scientific management, these assets can drive economic growth and improve the quality of life for communities across the country."

He commended the achievements of Iran's agricultural sector, noting that such progress facilitates broader cooperation with the United Nations system. "Iran's advance-



ments in agriculture make FAO's work easier and more meaningful. We can build on these successful experiences and share them with other countries that can benefit from Iran's technical expertise and innovations," he stated.

Toirov also highlighted the active role of the private sector in Iran's agricultural development, calling it an important factor in increasing productivity and fostering innovation. "The strong presence of both the public and private sectors creates a solid foundation for deeper collaboration. Together, we can develop a roadmap for the future that supports sustainable agriculture and ensures better food for all," he said.

Reaffirming FAO's commitment, the FAO Representative concluded that "FAO stands ready to continue its close cooperation with Iran's agricultural sector, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, technologies, and best practices that contribute to food security and sustainable development both nationally and globally."

National women's health week to be marked

TEHRAN – The health ministry will hold national women's health week from October 16 to 22, with the theme 'women's health supports individual, family, and social resilience'.

The days of the week will be centered around specific topics.

Thursday, October 16, 'Pregnancy care and miscarriage prevention during crisis'

Friday, October 17, 'Empowering and training women to deal with crises'

Saturday, October 18, 'cyberspace and media: risks and opportunities on women's health in crises'

Sunday, October 19, (the topic of the day will be chosen by medical universities in each region based on the death toll, and the latest national non-communicable disease survey)

Monday, October 20, 'Self-care during crises'

Tuesday, October 21, 'Gynecological emergencies in crises'

Wednesday, October 22, 'Mental health in crises'

Women and family health

The 28th Technical Meeting of the G5 Forum was held in Tehran from February 13 to 15, 2024,

with the theme "Women and Family Health".

G5 member states, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Iran, Uzbekistan (as an observer member), and the World Health Organization, attended the meeting.

The participants examined joint strategies to improve the health of women and mothers. Additionally, indicators, achievements, challenges, and threats to women's health in physical, mental, and spiritual categories, as well as future approaches, were discussed, according to the Health Ministry's website.

Addressing the meeting, former Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said the main objective was to improve health conditions in regional countries. "A mother's health is the pillar of a family's health, which leads to the expansion of health in a country. So, mothers have a central role in the family."

"Making up half of the country's population, mothers can play an essential role in the nutritional and mental health of families by maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Women's physical, mental, cultural, emotional, and spiritual well-being improves health care. Healthy women make a healthy family and subsequently a healthy society."

Iran shakes with 133 earthquakes in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 133 earthquakes were recorded across the country in a week from October 4 to 10, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 117 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3; 15 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4; and one earthquake with a magnitude between 4 and 5 have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

Among the provinces of the country, Isfahan, with 24, experienced the highest number of earthquakes, followed by Fars and Yazd (with 11 earthquakes each), Kerman and Khorasan Razavi provinces, each with 10 earthquakes.

During the same period, an earthquake hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded in West Azarbaijan, Alborz, Ilam, Qazvin, Kordestan, Sistan-Baluchestan, 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.



OCTOBER 15, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If someone's deeds lower his position, his pedigree cannot elevate it.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:50 Evening: 17:47 Dawn: 4:48 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:12 (tomorrow)

Renowned Iranian filmmaker Nasser Taghvai passes away

TEHRAN – Prominent Iranian filmmaker and screenwriter Nasser Taghvai passed away on Tuesday at the age of 84.

His wife, Marzieh Vafamehr, shared the news on social media, describing him as an artist who embraced the challenge of living freely, Mehr reported.

During his lifetime, Taghvai directed six films, a television series, and several documentaries during his career.

Born in the southwestern city of Abadan, Taghvai rose to fame following the 1972 release of his first film, “Tranquility in the Presence of Others,” a raw portrayal of the conflict between tradition and modernity in Iran.

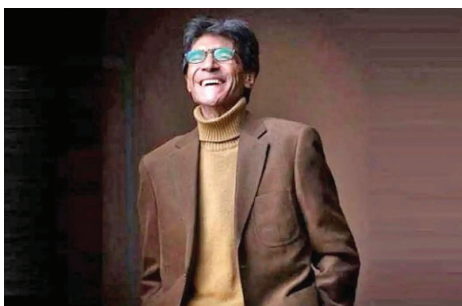
As his father was a customs official, he traveled to the southern border regions of Iran in Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan Province. Therefore, in many of his movies, Taghvai has depicted the ethnography and atmosphere of southern Iran, where he grew up.

Taghvai is also interested in literature and most of his other works have been based on stories by Iranian or foreign authors.

His close collaboration with literary figures like Gholamhossein Sa’edi is also noteworthy. Taghvai adapted “Tranquility in the Presence of Others” from Sa’edi’s story “Nameless Anxieties.” They often traveled together to southern Iran, resulting in the documentary “Wind of Jin” and Sa’edi’s book “People of the Air.”

In 1986, Taghvai directed “Captain Khorshid,” which is adapted from Ernest Hemingway’s “To Have and Have Not” and was filmed in southern Iran.

His satirical series, “My Uncle Napoleon,” depicts the decline of a former imperial army officer, consumed by suspicion and unable to admit that



his time had passed.

In 1999 he directed a segment of the film “Tales of Kish,” which was nominated for the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

His last officially released film was “Blank Paper,” released in 2001 after a 12-year hiatus. He also began work on “Bitter Tea” in 2003, a film set against the backdrop of the Iran-Iraq War. However, financial difficulties and lack of support hindered its completion.

Despite facing many obstacles, Taghvai made lasting contributions to Iranian cinema. His documentaries, such as “Wind of Jin” and “Arbaeen,” are considered significant works. “Wind of Jin,” created in 1969 with the narration by Ahmad Shamlu, explores the Zār rituals in southern Iran.

Taghvai received numerous national and international film awards, including the Bronze Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival in 1988 for “Captain Khorshid” and the Silver Lion for Best First Work at Venice International Film Festival for “Tranquility in the Presence of Others” in 1972.

Last year, Taghvai was honored at the “Captain of Cinema” celebration, illustrating the lasting impact of his work. His innovative approach and commitment to artistic integrity earned him recognition within the film community.

Iran, Turkey deepen cultural cooperation

TEHRAN– Iran’s Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyyed Abbas Salehi, has emphasized Iran’s desire to expand bilateral relations with Turkey, as 2025 has been designated as the Cultural Year of Iran and Turkey.

He made the remarks upon his arrival in Ankara on Monday, where he is attending the Hafez Day event, Persian media reported.

“The year 2025 has been agreed upon by both countries as the Cultural Year of Iran and Turkey,” he said and expressed hope that this initiative would contribute to the serious policy of the Iranian government toward fostering broader neighborly ties.

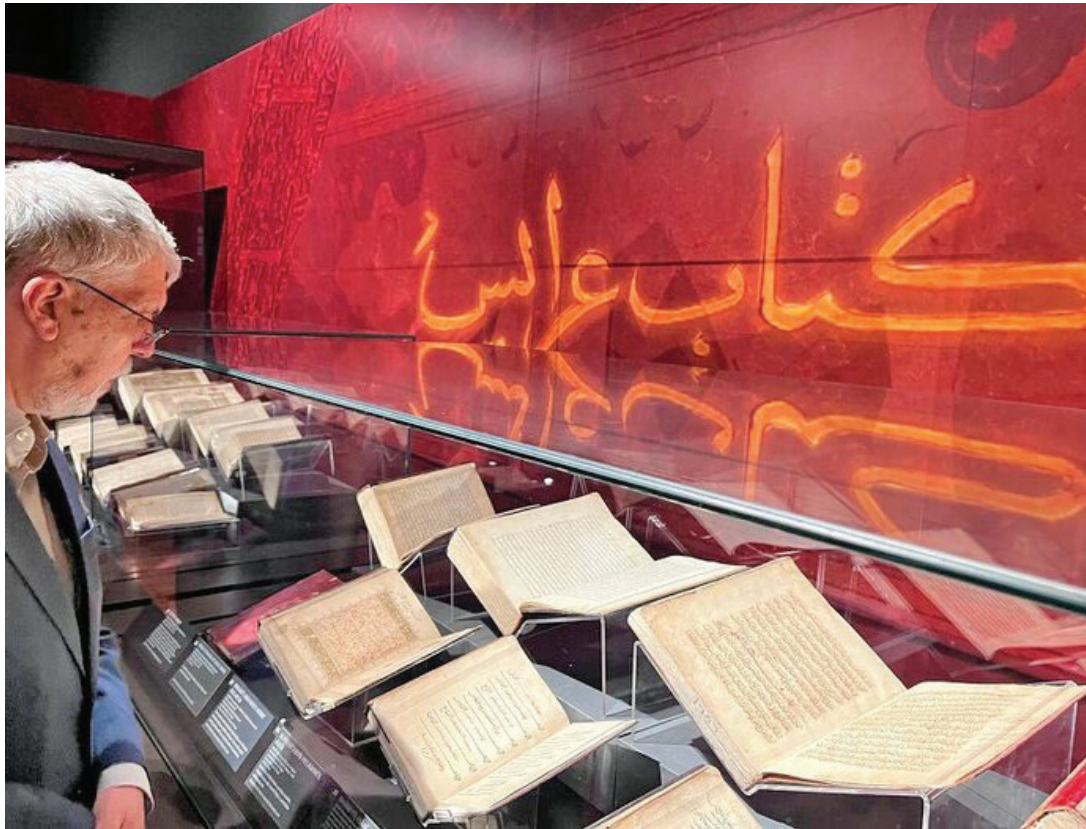
He acknowledged that due to recent events in Iran and the region, the commencement of programs has been slightly delayed. Nevertheless, in honor of Hafez Day, a series of events have been planned in Turkey, including seminars on Hafez and performances by the Iranian national orchestra, featuring traditional Iranian instruments.

“In addition to these programs, we will hold meetings with Turkish officials and cultural figures, visit some of Turkey’s cultural centers, and engage in dialogues with Iranian institutions active in cultural fields within Turkey. We also plan to meet with Iranologists and individuals working on Iranian studies and the Persian language in Turkey,” he added.

The minister expressed hope that these efforts would deepen and broaden relations, aligning with the serious policies of the Iranian government for more extensive regional cooperation.

Moreover, Salehi visited the National Library of Turkey located within the Presidential Palace complex, engaging in discussions with its officials.

After listening to the explanations provided, Salehi remarked, “National Library and Archives of Iran has achieved commendable progress across various fields. There is potential for collaboration with Turkey’s National Library, creating a mutually beneficial partnership.”



He highlighted some of the ongoing initiatives related to libraries, particularly those involving rare manuscripts, noting that both countries possess significant collections. “There are considerable prospects for cooperation between Iran and Turkey in this area, and expanding these efforts can greatly benefit our shared cultural and scholarly heritage,” Salehi stated.

He also proposed the possibility of formal agreements between National Library and Archives of Iran and other Iranian institutions, emphasizing that a substantial part of Islamic manuscript heritage resides in both Iran and Turkey. “Our joint efforts will undoubtedly serve cultural and scientific advancement,” he added.

The minister pointed out that much of the cultural heritage of nations is interconnected, and increasing mutual knowledge enhances national understanding. “In the digital heritage sector, Iran has made notable progress, gaining valuable experience. Additionally, artificial intelligence applications in libraries are an emerging field—exploring how AI can opti-

mize information utilization,” he explained.

Salehi reaffirmed that libraries are fundamental to preserving the past and building the future. “Enhancing relations with libraries will not only deepen our understanding of history but also help us envision a brighter future,” he said.

He expressed the hope that Turkey’s participation in the Tehran International Book Fair would positively influence the relationship between the two countries’ library communities.

In conclusion, Salehi presented several books to the Turkish officials, and in return, officials of the Turkish National Library gifted the Minister a copy of the Persian poet and mystic Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi’s Masnavi-ye Manavi in Persian.

During his visit to Turkey, Salehi will meet and discuss with the Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, Mehmet Nuri Ersoy, along with other cultural officials of the country. The main focus of these meetings will be exploring ways to expand cultural and artistic coop-

eration between the two nations, implementing joint programs in cinema, music, translation, and publishing, and developing interactions between Iranian and Turkish cultural institutions.

Additionally, during his trip, the minister will meet with cultural elites, Iranology researchers, professors, and Persian language educators in Turkey for dialogue and exchange of views.

As part of the visit’s program, a ceremony commemorating Hafez, the renowned Iranian poet, will be held in Ankara with the participation of Iranian and Turkish cultural figures and enthusiasts. Following this event, a joint concert by prominent Iranian and Turkish artists from the national orchestras of both countries will showcase the deep cultural and artistic bonds between the two peoples.

This trip is part of the broader efforts by Iran and Turkey to honor the cultural year, a year designated to deepen cultural relations, promote civilizational dialogue, and strengthen friendship and unity between the two nations.

Palestinian photo exhibit launched in Iraqi capital

TEHRAN- A photo exhibit by Palestinian photographer Mahmoud Abu Hamda was inaugurated at the Bait al-Jamal Lil-Funun art center in Baghdad on Tuesday.

The exhibit, titled “Malam Yoshahid” (“What Was Unseen”), opened in the presence of Iraqi artists, enthusiasts, and officials, including prominent figures such as Mohanad Hussien, Ahmed Al Fkai-ki, and Mohammed al-Ammy.

According to the public relations office of the Art Bureau of Iran’s Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, the exhibit showcases the artist’s work created over the past two years and during the Gaza genocide, a time of great hardship and suffering for the people of Gaza, who have endured a brutal Israeli aggression.

Featuring 57 photos, the exhibit highlights the sufferings of innocent children, who have been exposed to the horrors of war, including injury, displacement, and emotional trauma.

Iran Photographers House, after directly purchasing the rights to publish the works of Abu Hamda from him, has put them on display for sale in this exhibition and intends to donate the proceeds to help the people of Gaza.

This exhibition is one of the few dedicated showcases by a Gaza-based photographer that provides a vivid and authentic image of the heart of Gaza during the Al-Aqsa storm. Its unique and documentary nature makes it rare worldwide.

Abu Hamda’s photos, with an artistic blend of technique, light, and emotion, offer an unmediated portrayal of the human impact of the crisis in Gaza. Regarding his work, he says: “My work in photography goes beyond capturing images; it is a journey to discover the secret of the hidden soul in every corner, an effort to embrace the beauty that beats in this land.”

Through his powerful photographs, Abu Hamda sheds light on the human cost of conflict and the resilience of the Palestinian people. The exhibit is a testament to the enduring spirit of resistance and hope in the face of adversity.

The exhibit is providing an opportunity for the people of Baghdad to engage with the struggles and aspirations of their Palestinian brothers and sisters.

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.

Dima Srouji’s London exhibition interrogates myth, history, and the erasure of heritage

Ab-Anbar Gallery is hosting “A Cosmogram of Holy Views,” the first ever solo exhibition in London by the Palestinian artist Dima Srouji.

According to the gallery website, the exhibition confronts the profound dissonance between the sacred architecture and geography of Christianity and the ongoing erasure of Palestinian life under genocide and settler colonial violence.

Palestine, often referred to as “The Holy Land” is simultaneously revered in abstraction and obliterated in practice. Churches, relics, and imagined landscapes are venerated, while the living communities and ar-

chitectures that hold them are systematically displaced and destroyed.

The exhibition unfolds as a triptych across three spaces: the body, the spirit, and the land. Each installation reclaims fragments of Palestinian presence—material, architectural, and emotional—through acts of reconstruction, ritual, and refusal.

Together, these works form a cosmogram: a re-presentation of the Holy Land and a reorientation of the cultural cosmology of the collective. It is not a map of heaven, but a ground of memory—where the sacred is not abstracted from land, body, and history, but embedded

within them.

The cosmogram resists the severance between the spiritual and the political, offering instead a vision of continuity, rootedness, and return.

Dima Srouji, 35, is an architect, artist, educator, and researcher interested in layers of the ground. She is the founder of the glass sculptures project “Hollow Forms”.

Srouji was the 2022-2023 Jameel Fellow at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Her work is part of the permanent collections at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Victoria & Albert Museum, Institut du Monde Arabe, Coming Museum of Glass,

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Art Jameel, and the Sharjah Art Foundation.

Srouji is a graduate of the Yale School of Architecture and currently leads the MA City Design studio Underground Palestine at the Royal College of Art, London.

She has exhibited her work at the Venice Biennale, Sharjah Art Biennial; the Diriyah Biennial, Jeddah; the Sharjah Architecture Triennial; Coming Museum of Glass; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; the Victoria & Albert Museum; the London Design Festival; The Palestinian Museum; and others.

Cartoon of Day



Bodies Fall, Not Ideas

Cartoonist: Ameen Alhabarah from Saudi Arabia