



Leader sits down with thousands of Iranian women from different walks of life

Iranian Women's Advances Demonstrate Hijab is no Barrier to Progress

► Page 3

Naqoura talks: Trojan Horse of economic and political normalization

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT—The Lebanese government's decision to appoint former ambassador Simon Karam, a civilian with openly political positions, to lead the Lebanese delegation in the so-called Military Technical Committee meetings in Naqoura is not a procedural adjustment. Rather, it is a political landmine.

What was designed as a narrow, officer-to-officer framework under the November 27, 2014 cessation of hostilities is being quietly repackaged into a civilian-led negotiating track. U.S. envoy Morgan Ortagus, an Israeli lover, is chairing the committee.

Translation: a technical ceasefire mechanism is being weaponized to advance normalization under Israeli and American pressure.

For decades, Naqoura meant one thing: field arrangements, maps, coordinates, and UNIFIL (the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) oversight.

The mirage of peace: Gaza under fire

By staff writer

TEHRAN – It has been more than 50 days since a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas took effect, intended to end the Gaza war. For Palestinians, however, that promise has meant nothing. The Israeli bombardment has continued unabated, and the humanitarian crisis has only deepened.

The toll is staggering. Since the war began in October 2023, more than 70,100 people have been killed and over 170,000 wounded. Since the October 10 truce, 360 Palestinians have also been killed.

Israel's actions have stripped the word ceasefire of any meaning. Rather than halting attacks, the military campaign has pressed on—destroying homes, overwhelming hospitals, and leaving families in constant grief. For Palestinians, there has been no pause, no safety, only more loss. The continuation of strikes reflects a deliberate disregard for international agreements and humanitarian law.

Global rebuke of Israeli occupation

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The United Nations overwhelmingly condemns the ongoing Israeli occupation of Arab lands amid opposition by the U.S. and a few of its allies.

The UN General Assembly delivered a resounding diplomatic setback to the Israeli occupation regime, adopting two major resolutions that underscored the international community's near-unanimous rejection of its continued violations of international law in Palestine and the occupied Syrian Golan.

In the first resolution, "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine," an overwhelming 151 Member States voted in favor, while only 11, led by the United States, opposed the measure. Eleven abstained.

The scale of support reflected global impatience with the regime's ongoing defiance of international norms and its entrenched occupation policies.

The resolution renewed demands for urgent, coordinated diplomatic efforts to revive credible negotiations on all final status issues.

► Page 5



Warsaw distorting history, sowing discord between Iran and Russia

By Alexey Dedov

The Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Iran

The Soviet people suffered more than any other nation in the world during the Second World War. Our ancestors sacrificed 27 million lives to liberate the world from the monstrous ideology of Hitler, who regarded both Russians and Poles as subhumans.

We have never denied the human tragedies of the past; we grieve and preserve in our hearts the memory of, and respect for, all who fell victim to the catastrophe unleashed by Hitler, his allies, and accomplices.

However, historical events cannot be viewed one-sidedly; history is accurate only when considered as a whole, based on the full complexity of facts and circumstances. ► Page 3

Mehr Media Group shines in Moscow, named as international Expert of the Year 2025

TEHRAN— In a distinguished ceremony held in Moscow on Tuesday, the Mehr Media Group has been recognized among the top three international winners at the 14th edition of the Expert of the Year 2025 awards.

This accolade underscores Mehr's influential role in fostering media cooperation between Iran and BRICS member countries.

The award event, which gathered media experts, industry leaders, economic officials, and prominent figures from 12 countries including Iran, India, and Brazil, celebrated outstanding projects across 16 categories. The Expert of the Year Award honors specialists introducing innovative ideas and groundbreaking initiatives in economics, media, public management, culture, industry, ► Page 8



43rd Fajr International Film Festival concludes in Shiraz

TEHRAN—The 43rd Fajr International Film Festival (FIFF) concluded on Tuesday night, with an awards ceremony held at the Honar Shahr Aftab Cineplex in Shiraz, Fars Province.

According to the festival website, the closing night brought together senior officials, including the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyed Abbas Salehi, the Head of the Iranian Cinema Organization Raed Faridzadeh, and the Governor of Fars Province Hossein Ali Amiri, along with filmmakers, industry professionals, and media representatives.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, the Culture Minister welcomed Pakistan's Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, high-ranking cinema delegations from 15 countries, ambassadors residing in Iran, and distinguished guests from across Iran and around the world, and said: "The Fajr International Film Festival is an opportunity to reflect on an art that, ► Page 8

SCO anti-terror drill enters critical phase

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – A multinational military exercise taking place in Iran was preparing to enter its most important phase Wednesday, with the hosts hailing it as an important sign of cooperation toward ensuring regional security and peace.

The Sahand 2025 joint anti-terrorism drill began in Iran's East Azerbaijan Province earlier this week and is set to wrap up by Friday. It is being held under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) framework, with the participation of special and operational units from all ten SCO member states: Iran, China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Belarus. In exclusive interviews with the Tehran Times, senior Iranian commanders overseeing the exercise outlined its strategic objectives and operational scope. ► Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Enhancing deterrence and military cooperation via joint exercises

Jam-e-Jam, examined the anti-terror military exercises -- codenamed "Sahand 2025" -- that Iran is holding jointly with five countries from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Shabestar, East Azarbaijan Province, arguing the drills will enhance Tehran's military deterrence and help foster military cooperation between the SCO states. It said the drill represents a golden opportunity for Iran to enhance its military capabilities within the SCO framework. By focusing on joint counterterrorism operations, the drill allows Iran to share its experience in confronting cross-border threats with other member states. Cooperation with military powers such as China and Russia—core members of the SCO—facilitates the exchange of advanced technologies, strengthening its deterrence against external threats. Such collaboration not only guarantees Iran's security but also contributes to regional stability across Eurasia and reinforces initiatives in the fight against terrorism.

Kayhan: A distorted narrative of the 12-day war

Kayhan, in a commentary, criticized the distortion of the truth about the 12-day war by the West, Israel, and their supporters inside Iran. The paper wrote that the 12-day war was the moment when the United States and Israel imagined they could inflict a military blow on Iran by destabilizing the country. Yet the reality on the battlefield shattered that dream with a heavy defeat. This truth is repeated in Hebrew and Western outlets. However, when the ceasefire was declared, the machinery of distortion was activated. What is striking, Kayhan commented, is that at this very historical juncture, pro-Western currents inside Iran attempt to downplay the enemy's defeat. The truth of the 12-day war is now clear and recorded, and what remains is the necessity of confronting distortion. If the military arena marked the defeat of the U.S. and Israel, the media must not become a space where the defeated can conceal their loss with inverted headlines. The post-war period, Kayhan concluded, is a time to consolidate achievements; achievements that will be preserved not through compromise, but through clear narration and steadfast defense of national authority.

Iran: Tehran-Beirut ties still based on interests, strategic principles

The Iran newspaper, in an interview with regional affairs expert Seyyed Reza Sadr al-Hosseini, analyzed the latest developments in Tehran-Beirut relations. The analyst noted that after the October 7 operation, the Lebanese

government did not show a positive reaction; an approach that raised expectations that Lebanese officials, unlike in the past, would tread more cautiously in strengthening ties with the Islamic Republic. Beyond the political differences between Tehran and Beirut, there is a deliberate effort by regional and international media linked to the U.S. and Israel to portray natural disagreements between the two governments as deep rifts and political crises. Importantly, the level of diplomatic relations between the two countries has remained unchanged compared to the pre-October 7 operation. This reality contradicts the narrative of media outlets that exaggerate differences to suggest structural coldness in Iran-Lebanon relations. Given the deep historical and social roots of the bond between the two nations, and their shared needs—such as the importance of independence, resistance against occupation, and opposition to land seizure—Tehran-Beirut relations continue to be pursued and strengthened based on national interests and strategic principles.

Arman-e-Emrooz: A region on brink of explosion

Arman-e-Emrooz, in an article on the region's critical situation and potential war between Iran and Israel, wrote that according to most observers, a second war between Iran and Israel is inevitable. They argue it is only a matter of time. In recent days, due to the ongoing deadlock in Iran's relations with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the lack of political breakthroughs in Iran-U.S. relations, and certain media-driven narratives, the likelihood of war has once again increased. The ignition of the current frozen conditions may require smaller triggers, such as the resumption of uranium enrichment in Iran or developments regarding the uncertain status of enriched uranium stockpiles. The most likely development that could draw Iran back into conflict is an imminent war on Lebanon. The deadline set by the U.S. and Israel for the Lebanese government to disarm Hezbollah is nearing its end, and Israeli movements indicate readiness to return to war. The intensity and consequences of such an attack could provoke an Iranian response and expand the fronts of conflict. Tel Aviv, by adopting a new doctrine, is determined at all costs to prevent a return to the pre-October 7 era—the so-called "age of equations." This doctrine is designed to block the revival of the Axis of Resistance under the leadership of Iran. Clearly, under this strategy, both the weakening of Iran's military capabilities and the continuation of economic isolation remain central objectives. This is precisely the deadlock in which even a small spark could ignite a raging fire.

Iran taking new steps to boost security along borders

TEHRAN – Iran is implementing new security measures along its borders to defend against reported escalating threats in the east and the west.

The commander of the Ground Force of the Iranian Army (Artesh) said the country's frontiers are being monitored electronically using state-of-the-art cameras and sensors, while new bases and watchtowers are being constructed along the borders.

"Measures have also been adopted in cooperation with border guards and police to stop unauthorized individuals, contraband goods, weapons and drugs from entering the country, which play a key role in establishing lasting security in the region and in the country," Brigadier General Ali Jahanshahi explained in remarks to a reporter.

The commander also touched upon regular drills being held by the Army's ground forces to maintain their combat readiness. He said the country has learned valuable lessons from the 12-day Israeli military aggression against Iran. "After the recent war, good measures have been adopted to modernize weapons and equipment and to train



manpower."

Meanwhile, the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the Iranian Parliament held a meeting attended by representatives of the Police Force, the Border Guard Force, the General Staff of the Armed Forces and Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), among others. During the meeting held on Tuesday, the recently devised Comprehensive Border Protection Plan was reviewed and parts of it were approved, declared the Parliamentary Committee's Spokesman, Ebrahim Rezaei.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

In a UN letter, Iran, Russia and China hit back at West's exploitation of the deal it abandoned

TEHRAN – Iran, Russia, and China appeared to react to the West's ongoing attempts to leverage the already battered and now expired JCPOA as a pressure tool against Iran when their UN ambassadors, in a joint letter, reminded that all provisions of UNSC Resolution 2231—the resolution endorsing the JCPOA—were terminated after October 18, 2025, under Operative Paragraph 8 of that resolution.

The letter, sent to the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary-General on Tuesday, also reiterated the three countries' commitment to continued cooperation with UNSC member states.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, the People's Republic of China and the Russia Federation remain fully committed to continuing their constructive diplomatic partnership with all members of the council, and announce their readiness to support collective efforts to safeguard the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program," wrote the top three diplomats.

For nearly two decades, Iran's peaceful nuclear program has been met with relentless opposition from the West. Pressure came in many forms, endless negotiations that went nowhere, punishing sanctions and even

military aggression.

When the United States struck Iranian nuclear sites during the illegal U.S.-Israeli military aggression in June, the European trio, France, Germany and Britain, stepped in with their own strategy, activating the so-called snapback mechanism.

Before its expiry, JCPOA was rendered defunct by the West's shunning and by subsequent US-Israeli attacks on Iranian nuclear sites

"Snapback" was a mechanism under UN Security Council Resolution 2231, designed to automatically reinstate UN sanctions against Iran if it violated the terms of the JCPOA, a nuclear agreement signed by Iran, the U.S., UK, France, Germany, Russia, and China in 2015. Under its terms, Iran committed to limiting its nuclear program in return for sanctions relief. However, the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the deal and re-imposed sanctions in 2018. European signatories said

Iran must continue adhering to the JCPOA, despite their inability to compel Washington's return or mitigate the debilitating impact of its sanctions.

The E3 triggered the countdown for the automatic return of UN sanctions on Iran in August. While welcomed by Washington and Tel Aviv, the move failed to materialize in practice when Russia and China declared they would not recognize the snapback of UN sanctions. This stance was echoed by over 120 other countries, which voiced support for Iran during a Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) conference held in Uganda. The legal basis for re-imposing pre-JCPOA UN sanctions was further undermined after Resolution 2231 officially expired in October. Iran, Russia, and China noted the expiry in a separate letter to the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary-General.

In their recent joint letter, the ambassadors of the three countries also urged all relevant parties to remain committed to working out a "political solution that would allay the concerns of all parties through engagement and political dialog based on the principles of mutual respect and to avoid resorting to force or any other action that might escalate the current situation."

SCO anti-terror drill enters critical phase

Iranian commander says "nations' will stronger than terrorism"



From page 1 ▶ Brigadier General Vali Ma'dani Zadeh, the drill commander and Deputy of Operations for the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Ground Force, emphasized the drill's significance following recent regional conflicts. He stated it acts as a counter-narrative to Western, particularly American, geopolitical narratives on terrorism. "In the past 47 years, while Iran has been the biggest victim of terrorism, it has been labeled by some Western countries, including the U.S., as a supporter of terrorism," he stated.

Multiple former American officials have said in recent years

that Washington funded terrorist groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS for years. They recently introduced a man who used to be the second-in-command of Daesh and the head of an al-Qaeda branch during the terror group's growing insurgency in the 2010s as a man who can "rebuild" Syria and create a democratic country. Forces led by the former terrorist leader toppled Bashar al-Assad's government in December of 2024.

Regarding other reasons for the ongoing drill's significance, Ma'dani Zadeh noted the collective weight of the SCO. "SCO members represent a quarter of the world's landmass



and nearly half its population. Our cooperation can significantly increase security around the world."

In separate remarks to The Tehran Times, the operational commander of the exercise, Brigadier General Noshad Abdari, provided details on the drill's tactical execution. He is also the commander of the IRGC Ground Force's Imam Hassan Brigade, a special unit that focuses on combating terrorism.

"Terrorism knows no borders, but our will is higher than terrorism... Wherever the phenomenon of terrorism emerges, right there we will darken the days of the

terrorists," he explained, adding that the main live-fire phase of the exercise will involve complex joint maneuvers. Among these, two will be held with Belarus and Uzbekistan. "We will carry out two joint tasks with the teams from Belarus and Uzbekistan, which include hostage rescue operations and clearing border areas." The focus is on practical counter-terrorism and stabilization scenarios, the commander further stated.

The previous joint SCO drill was conducted in 2024 in China, which Iran attended as an observer. "Future drills will see our strong presence, like this year," General Abdari declared.

Pezeshkian says no degree of pressure can force Iran into submission

From page 1 ▶ "Today, there is a shared awareness across the government that solving national problems requires drawing on every available resource — especially public participation. We are trying to view problems as a gold mine," he said.

Highlighting the government's neighborhood-based mobilization initiative, Pezeshkian drew historical parallels with the Iran-Iraq war, recalling how widespread international support for Saddam Hussein failed because "the people stood by the revolution." He added that Israel and the United States made a similar miscalculation earlier this year when they believed that "a few days of bombing" could trigger unrest inside Iran. "Once again, the people stood with their nation and foiled their plots," he said.

His remarks came in the aftermath of the June 13, 2025 conflict, when Israel launched an unprovoked attack on Iranian territory, triggering a 12-day war that killed well over 1,000 Iranians, including military commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians. The United States escalated the confrontation by bombing three Iranian nuclear facilities, justifying the strikes with unsubstantiated claims that Iran was seeking



President Pezeshkian speaks at a Tehran ceremony on December 2, 2025.

nuclear weapons.

Iran retaliated with more than 22 waves of missile and drone strikes targeting Israeli military sites and infrastructure under Operation True Promise III. A halt in the fighting was announced on July 3 at the request of Israel and the United States. Iran declared the outcome a strategic victory, arguing it had successfully prevented the enemy from achieving its objectives.

The conflict also derailed diplomatic efforts aimed at crafting a new nuclear agreement to replace the 2015 JCPOA, which the U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned during his first term. In the months leading

up to the war, Iranian officials had signaled willingness to reassure Washington that Tehran was not pursuing nuclear weapons if U.S. sanctions were lifted, though they insisted that uranium enrichment would continue. Reports indicated Iran might have been prepared to offer greater concessions than those included in the original JCPOA — allowing Trump to claim a "better deal."

Despite these challenges, Pezeshkian emphasized that the government remains committed to working closely with the public. "Anyone who believes problems can be solved without the support and presence of the people is mistaken," he said. "If we rely on the people — regardless of gender, language, or ethnicity — no problem is unsolvable. We must not divide society into insiders and outsiders."

He added that the administration is working with public support to address long-standing structural imbalances, particularly those resulting from decades of uneven development. He noted that improving conditions for persons with disabilities remains a priority, while acknowledging that "the government alone cannot solve everything, but with the people's participation, we can overcome any obstacle."

Leader sits down with thousands of Iranian women from different walks of life

Iranian women’s advances demonstrate hijab is no barrier to progress

TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addressed thousands of women in Tehran on Wednesday, discussing their status and achievements.

In his speech, the Leader first cited the qualities of Fatima al-Zahra (SA), the beloved daughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), adding that Iranian women can take lessons from “such a sun”. He described the important female figure in Islam as a heavenly human being adorned with the highest virtues in every dimension. He outlined Islam’s view of the dignity and rights of women both within the home and in society, and he explained the duties and boundaries that men must observe in their conduct toward their wives and toward women in various contexts.

Ayatollah Khamenei then referred to the immeasurable virtues of Lady Fatimah Zahra (pbuh), including worship and devotion, sacrifice and selflessness toward the people, resilience in hardships and trials, courageous defense of the truth and of the oppressed, enlightening others and clarifying the truth, understanding and practicing political



responsibility, excellence in managing the household, supporting her husband, and raising children, as well as her presence in the major events of early Islamic history.

He reminded the audience: “Praise be to God, Iranian women take guidance and inspiration from such a luminous figure, who according to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), is the leader of all women of the world across all ages, and they strive to advance in accordance with her objectives.”

The Leader described the status of women in Islam as exceedingly

high and noble, emphasizing that: “The expressions of the Quran regarding a woman’s identity and character are among the loftiest and most progressive.”

The Leader, referring to the verses of the Quran concerning “the equal role of women and men in the life and history of humanity and the equal potential of women and men to attain spiritual perfections and the highest ranks,” stated: “All of these truths stand in direct contradiction to the misunderstandings of those who claim to follow religion without

truly understanding it, as well as those who reject religion altogether.”

Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized, explaining the logic of the Quran regarding women’s rights in society: “In Islam, in social activities, business, political engagement, attaining most governmental positions, and other fields, women have equal rights with men, and in spiritual growth and in both personal and collective endeavors, the path for their progress remains open.”

Referring to the fact that the Western and capitalist culture stands completely rejected in the view of Islam, he added: “In Islam, to preserve the dignity of women and to restrain very strong and dangerous sexual urges, there are regulations regarding ‘interaction between men and women, the dress of men and women, women’s hijab, and encouragement of marriage’ that are fully in accordance with a woman’s nature and with the real interests and needs of society; whereas in Western culture, the restraint of endless and destructive sexual impulses is completely ignored.”

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

Warsaw distorting history, sowing discord between Iran and Russia

TEHRAN – For years, the Tehran Times has served as a communication channel for distinguished members of Tehran’s diplomatic corps. The two recent correspondences received in the past weeks are just the latest in many such exchanges the publication has facilitated.

Last month, the Polish Foreign Minister attended a presentation orchestrated by a U.S.-based Zionist group at the UK Parliament. Standing

next to a drone provided by the group, he claimed it was an Iranian drone sent to Russia for use in the Ukraine war, accusing Iran of undermining European security.

Subsequently, the Polish Chargé d’Affaires in Tehran, Marcin Wilczek, sent a correspondence to the Tehran Times. His letter addressed an earlier interview published by the daily, which quoted a renowned Russian-based professor who

argued following the foreign minister’s controversial remarks that Poland had forgotten history—specifically the period during World War II when Iran offered shelter to countless Polish people fleeing the horrors of war in Europe. Wilczek argued that Warsaw’s action at the UK Parliament was not aimed at Iran, but rather at Russia, which he claimed was “meddling” in Iran-Poland relations.

Now, the Russian Ambassador to Tehran, Alexey Dedov, has provided his own correspondence. He addresses what he characterizes as substantive inaccuracies within Wilczek’s piece, articulating the official position of the Russian Federation on matters of European security, historical narrative, and bilateral relations.

Below is the full text of the Russian diplomat’s statement.

From Page 1 ▶ Relations with Poland have always been complicated. At the beginning of the 17th century, the Polish king invaded Russia, weakened by the Time of Troubles. In addition to occupying the western regions, Polish—Lithuanian forces seized Moscow for two years. Only on 4 November 1612 the foreign invaders were expelled from the capital by the people’s volunteer corps.

In 1919, the Polish authorities again insidiously exploited our country’s internal difficulties, which was then engulfed in civil war, and seized its western parts, where they subsequently carried out a long-term policy aimed at erasing national identity and enforcing violent Polonization. As a result of military actions supported by European allies, Poland acquired the western territories of Belarus and Ukraine.

During the Soviet-Polish War, at least 157,000 Red Army soldiers were taken prisoner. More than 80,000 never returned from numerous Polish camps, where inhumane conditions prevailed. Prisoners were executed, tortured, starved, and denied medical treatment for widespread infectious diseases, condemning

them to inevitable death. In October 1919, a commission of the International Committee of the Red Cross, inspecting the Polish camp in Brest-Litovsk, stated: “The camp was a veritable necropolis.” The Polish ruling circles deliberately downplay the number of those who perished in order to conceal this bloody page in bilateral history.

On the eve of the Second World War, Great Britain and France made it clear to Germany that they would not impede its expansion eastward. Their intention was obvious: to push the Nazi regime in Berlin into military confrontation with the Soviet Union while keeping themselves on the sidelines.

When in October 1938 Germany occupied the Sudetenland, Poland became its accomplice and, in coordination with Hitler, annexed pan of Czechoslovak territory (the Tesin area of Silesia), for which it earned the nickname “the hyena of Europe”. Throughout the 1930s, senior officials of Nazi Germany frequently visited Poland, including Minister of Propaganda Goebbels and Reichsmarschall Göring (second most powerful person in the Nazi Party), who was later convicted



Citizens of the liberated Krakow greet Soviet Army soldiers

by the Nuremberg Tribunal as a war criminal. Poland’s Foreign Minister Beck met with Hitler on numerous occasions. Official representatives of the two countries maintained a regular confidential dialogue in which, in a spirit of partnership, they discussed the mutual expansion of their foreign policy influence. Among the topics raised was the “weakening and destruction of Russia.” Poland made many grave mistakes in the years preceding the Second World War and ultimately fell victim to Nazi aggression.

The USSR, on the contrary, made every effort to establish a full-fledged collective security system in Europe that might have prevented military conflict and its catastrophic consequences. Unfortunately, the Western powers were not interested in this, and the USSR was forced to normalize relations with Germany in order to gain time and strategic depth before the inevitable military confrontation with the Third Reich.

In September 1939, Germany attacked Poland and within two weeks crushed it, occupying a significant part of its territory. On 17 September, the Red Army crossed Poland’s eastern border

and within ten days liberated Western Ukraine and Western Belarus. The timely actions of the USSR spared though only temporarily — the population of the then Eastern Polish territories, including Jews, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, and Russians, from genocide. Many Polish citizens and refugees were immediately given the opportunity to emigrate. It is important to note that even London and Paris as Warsaw’s allies did not consider the USSR’s actions as an “aggression.”

Under Soviet—Polish agreements, a new Polish army under General Anders was formed on Soviet territory in 1941. Even during the most difficult period of 1941-1942, the USSR continued to supply the “Anders Army” with significant quantities of weapons and equipment. The Soviet authorities did not obstruct the subsequent transfer of this army to Iran at the request of General Anders himself. As for the difficult conditions under which Poles lived on Soviet territory during the Second World War, these were a harsh reality faced by all Soviet citizens due to the inhumanity and brutality of Nazi Germany and its collaborators.

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

Tehran derby 106: Esteghlal and Persepolis meet at full power

TEHRAN – As Esteghlal and Persepolis gear up for Friday’s Tehran derby, both giants arrive in a condition few could have predicted after their shaky starts. A month ago, optimism was scarce.

Today, form, confidence, and momentum have returned just in time for one of the most intense fixtures in Asian football.

Both sides sealed morale-boosting victories in Week 11 of the Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL), setting the stage for a high-voltage derby 106 at IRALCO Stadium in Arak. Persepolis edged past Shams Azar 2–1 in a demanding encounter in Qazvin, while Esteghlal secured a narrow yet valuable 1–0 win over Foolad.

For Persepolis, the season’s turning point arrived with a coaching change that reshaped the club’s trajectory. Under Vahid Hashemian, the Reds struggled to find rhythm, collecting five draws, one defeat, and just a single win in their first seven matches. Confidence dipped so sharply that many fans hoped the derby would be delayed. Even a victory against Zob Ahan wasn’t enough to save Hashemian’s job, and the club parted ways with him after week eight.

Osmar Loss Vieira, the Brazilian coach, who once led Persepolis to the league title, returned to bring new energy to a struggling team. With Vieira back on the touchline, Persepolis regained identity and intensity. A draw followed by two straight wins has lifted the team to second place on 18 points, only one behind Esteghlal, albeit with an extra match played. Suddenly, Persepolis fans aren’t worried about the derby anymore, they’re excited and counting the days to it.

Esteghlal’s revival has been no less dramatic. Ricardo Sá Pinto, who began the season with a strong win over reigning champions Tractor, soon found himself on the brink as four draws and one loss dragged Esteghlal into early-season crisis. Rumors of his departure grew louder with each passing week, until Week 7 changed everything. A gritty victory over Mes Rafsanjan reignited belief, launching a four-match winning streak that lifted the Blues back to the top of the table with 19 points.

Sá Pinto’s men may still show moments of inconsistency, but they have rediscovered the most important trait: the habit of winning. With foreign stars Munir El Haddadi and Yaser Asani delivering decisive moments, Esteghlal have regained both balance and bite.

With confidence restored and momentum on their side, Esteghlal and Persepolis enter Friday’s showdown in Arak not as wounded giants, but as two fully awakened contenders ready to ignite one of the fiercest rivalries in football once again.

Vahid Kazemi will be the center referee for the Tehran derby between Persepolis and Esteghlal.

He will be assisted by Ali Ahmadi and Bahman Abdollahi, with Hossein Zamani serving as the fourth official at the IRALCO Stadium in Arak on Friday.

Esteghlal lead the 2025/26 Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) standings, while Persepolis sit second.

There have been 105 meetings between the rivals, with Persepolis claiming 29 wins, Esteghlal 26, and 50 drawn matches.

Rahimi to carry Iran’s flag at Asian Youth Para Games 2025

TEHRAN – Zahra Rahimi is set to carry Iran’s flag at the opening ceremony of the

2025 Asian Youth Para Games.

The Games will kick off on Dec. 7 and will run until Dec. 14 in Dubai, the UAE.

Iran will send 125 athletes across eight sports.

Rahimi, a top Para Taekwondoin, made history at the 2024 Paris Paralympics by winning a silver medal. She became the first Iranian woman to medal in the sport and the youngest Paralympic medalist in Iran’s history, exemplifying skill, determination, and the next generation of Para athletic excellence.

Iran changes mind about not attending 2026 FIFA World Cup draw

TEHRAN – Iran’s football federation has reconsidered its stance on attending the 2026 FIFA World Cup draw and will send two representatives to the ceremony.

The federation had previously announced it would withdraw from the ceremony after two top officials were denied visas. Now, Iran is set to send Team Melli head coach Amir Ghalenoei and Omid Jamali, the head of the federation’s International Relations Department, to the United States.

The ceremony will be held in Washington, D.C. on Friday.

The draw will divide the 48 qualified and play-off-bound teams into 12 groups of four, using FIFA’s latest men’s world rankings to allocate nations into four pots.

One team from each pot will be drawn into every group.

The three co-hosts — Canada, Mexico and the United States — are allocated to Pot 1. The nine top teams in the current FIFA rankings are also placed in Pot 1.

The next three pots were decided by the FIFA rankings, with the lowest-ranked qualified teams in Pot 4. The 12 groups for the World Cup will then be formed by one team from each pot.

Persepolis eye Igor Sergeev: report

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club have reportedly set their sight on signing Uzbek forward Igor Vladimirovich Sergeev.

The 32-year-old international forward currently plays at Pakhtakor.

The media reports suggest that Persepolis is going to sign the player in the January transfer window.

Persepolis parted ways with Turkish striker Serdar Dursun in the summer and failed to find a replacement for him.

The Reda are favorites to win Iran league in the current season.

Zandi takes gold at 2025 World U21 Taekwondo Championships

TEHRAN – Iran’s Abolfazl Zandi won a gold medal at the 2025 World U21 Taekwondo Championships on Wednesday.

Zandi beat Magomed Magomedov (AIN) 2–0 in the final match of the Men –58kg.

Additionally, Iran’s Amirmohammad Ashrafi took a bronze medal at the Men +87kg after losing to Kazakhstan’s Beibarys Kaban.

The 2025 World U21 Taekwondo Championships, the 1st edition of the World U21 Taekwondo Championships, are being held at the Moi International Sports Centre in Kasarani, Nairobi, Kenya from Dec. 3 to 6.



Soviet doctors and representatives of the Red Cross among the child prisoners of the death camp in the first hours after its liberation from Nazi executioners

Iranian industrialists discuss expanding economic relations with Spain

TEHRAN- In a recent meeting of the Industry and Mining Committee of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), private sector representatives hosted the head of the Spanish Embassy's Economic Office in Tehran.

During this meeting, the capacities and opportunities for commercial cooperation between companies of the two countries were reviewed.

During this session, in a dialogue between Iranian private sector representatives and Iñigo Gil Casares, both sides emphasized laying the groundwork for expanding economic relations between the two countries amid the reopening of the international environment for Iran. They also deemed greater interaction between the two countries' chambers of commerce essential for identifying trade opportunities and introducing reputable companies.

Hervik Yarianian, Chairman of the Tehran Chamber's Industry and Mining Committee, began the meeting by referring to the long-standing political and economic relations between Iran and Spain.

He mentioned the recent visit of an Iranian trade delegation to Catalonia and noted that during the negotiations, an agreement was reached to draft a cooperation memorandum between the Tehran Chamber and the Catalonia Chamber.

Hessameddin Hallaj, Deputy for International Affairs and Trade Development of the Tehran Chamber, referred to the interaction between the Tehran Chamber and the Spanish Embassy's economic section in recent years.

He noted that the outcome of these interactions, under current conditions, would accelerate the development of economic relations between the two countries in the absence of international tensions.

He emphasized that during the sanctions period, some European countries that were at the forefront of sanctions against Iran remained among Iran's trade partners, demonstrating that economic cooperation can continue even under tough sanctions.

The head of the Spanish Embassy's Economic Office in Tehran, referring to the closeness of the two countries in some areas, including the temperament of business owners, stated that with the signing of the JCPOA, Spain was among the first countries to rapidly initiate economic relations with Iran.

Iñigo Gil Casares emphasized that the Spanish Embassy's economic section in Tehran is committed to advancing economic relations between the two countries and their enterprises. However, he noted that there are several general obstacles to trade between the two countries, including the lack of di-



rect banking and monetary exchanges, which have diminished trade relations between Spanish companies and Iran.

He expressed hope that with the easing of political tensions and the lifting of sanctions, the environment for economic cooperation between the two countries would become secure and expanding.

The head of the Spanish Embassy's Economic Office also stated that companies and economic actors of the two countries can be kept up-to-date on cooperation through specialized webinars, online conferences, and direct visits by Iranian private sector representatives to Spain for dialogue with its economic sector.

Following this, members of the committee and representatives of companies and associations present at the meeting discussed potential areas of economic cooperation between Iranian companies and the Spanish market.

They also exchanged views on fostering interactions through the Tehran Chamber and the Spanish Embassy's economic section.

Back in September, Iran and Spain agreed to strengthen cooperation in combating money laundering, with Madrid set to host the next meeting between Iran and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Antonio Sánchez Benedito Gaspar, Spain's ambassador to Iran, met with Hadi Khani, deputy economy minister and head of Iran's Financial Intelligence Unit, to discuss the exchange of experience and expertise between the two countries.

Khani said Iran's actions against money laundering and related crimes go beyond international recommendations and standards.

He added that Tehran is determined to highlight its progress despite U.S. sanctions and regional risks.

Iran's top anti-money laundering council asked the Spanish envoy to help persuade Madrid and other European governments to support Iran in resolving its challenges with FATF.

The Spanish ambassador welcomed Iran's proposals, praised the FIU's efforts, and pledged to work toward boosting bilateral cooperation in anti-money laundering initiatives.

Tehran hosting 9th intl. fisheries industry exhibition

TEHRAN- Iran's 9th International Fisheries Industry Exhibition (IFEX 2025) is being held at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground.

The event commenced on Wednesday, December 3rd, and will run until December 6th.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the exhibition, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Qezeljeh stated that the main policy of the Ministry of Agriculture for developing a marine-based economy is to increase fisheries production from the current 1.4 million tons to 1.8 million tons in the Seventh National Development Plan.

In the first year of implementing these policies, significant measures have been taken, including a more than 30 percent growth in production in various areas such as sturgeon, distant waters, and shrimp.

Emphasizing that the country's fisheries production capacities are extensive and that it is possible to go beyond the plan, the minister announced the government's support for the development of this sector, especially the marine-based economy.

The minister of agriculture further pointed to the establishment of a fisheries work-

ing group with the aim of monitoring and planning in this area, which aims to provide infrastructure such as ports and other facilities, and explained: "Focusing on completing the value chain, including the production of hatchery eggs and developing the export and processing of marine products, are other priorities of this policy."

He considered strengthening and sustainable development of the sea-based economy and better utilization of marine resources as the government's main approach and said: "In the field of maritime diplomacy, we have specific plans that include holding negotiations, trips, and developing exchanges."

The minister also pointed to the formation of joint committees in the maritime domain with countries with capacity, especially African and neighboring countries, and said that the main goal of these negotiations is to strengthen maritime relations and cooperation.

The minister called for completing the export circle of fishery products and said: "To achieve this, the necessary protocols are being completed with the relevant countries, and the necessary support is being provided in these areas to achieve these goals."

Iran achieves remarkable growth in trade with D-8 members in 5 years

TEHRAN- The head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) emphasized that Iran's trade relations with D-8 member states have grown by over 150 percent in the past five years, reaching \$22 billion. However, while this figure indicates significant trade potential among the group's members, it still falls short of the desired level.

Making the remarks at D-8 Ministerial Meeting in Cairo, Mohammad-Ali Dehghan Dehnavi stated that the D-8 organization, with its rich resources, young population, and strategic location, possesses unparalleled potential to become an influential economic hub on the international stage.

He added: "Achieving this requires greater convergence, particularly through expanding intra-group trade within the framework of an effective preferential trade agreement."

Dehghan Dehnavi, who is also Iran's deputy minister of industry, mining and trade, further stressed: "Iran's trade relations with D-8 members have grown by over 150 percent in the past five years, reaching \$22 billion. Although this figure reflects significant trade potential among the group's members, it still falls short of the desired level. Therefore, we urge all member countries to make serious efforts to fully implement and operationalize the preferential trade agreement."

The official noted: "Iran has implemented the D-8 preferential trade agreement since 2016. However, due to reasons such as limited tariff concessions, outdated commodity lists, and cumbersome rules of origin procedures, traders have shown little enthusiasm for utilizing it."



The deputy minister further stated: "We propose expanding the coverage of commodity concessions to include major trade items and facilitating the implementation procedures of the agreement."

He added: "An enhanced preferential trade agreement can serve as a valuable foundation for achieving deeper economic integration."

Dehghan Dehnavi welcomed the formation of an expert working group to review tools for developing the preferential trade agreement and emphasized: "This working group, with the assistance of all members and support from relevant international organizations, should conduct comprehensive technical assessments and provide recommendations that guarantee the interests of all members. We expect tangible results from this review to be presented at the next ministerial meeting."

The head of the Iran's Trade Promotion Organization clarified: "Beyond tariff liberalization, it is essential to seriously pursue cooperation in other key areas, including customs cooperation and facilitation, logistics, transportation and transit, settlement

mechanisms in national currencies, and private sector interaction through cooperation among member countries' chambers of commerce."

He noted: "Despite facing unilateral and unjust sanctions, Iran remains committed to constructive cooperation within the D-8 framework. We hope member countries consider our special circumstances and ensure that external restrictive measures do not hinder regional cooperation and economic integration."

In conclusion, Dehghan Dehnavi expressed gratitude to the government of Egypt and the D-8 Secretariat, hoping that this gathering would be a significant step toward realizing broader economic cooperation within the D-8 family.

D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation is an organization for economic cooperation among the following countries: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. Azerbaijan joined the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation in 2025.

The establishment of D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation was announced officially through the Istanbul Declaration

of Summit of Heads of State/ Government on June 15, 1997.

The objectives of D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation are to improve member states' position in the global economy, diversify and create new opportunities in trade relations, enhance participation in decision-making at international level, and improve standards of living.

D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation is a global arrangement rather than a regional one, as the composition of its members reflects. D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation is a forum with no adverse impact on bilateral and multi-lateral commitments of the member countries, emanating from their membership to other international or regional organizations.

The idea of cooperation among major Muslim developing countries was mooted by Necmettin Erbakan, the then Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, during a Seminar on "Cooperation in Development" which was held in Istanbul in October 1996. The group envisioned cooperation among countries stretching from South East Asia to Africa. Representatives from Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria and Pakistan attended the Seminar. This conference was the first step towards the establishment of D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation and it was only after a series of preparatory meetings that D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation was set up officially and began its activities with the Istanbul Declaration issued at the end of the summit of Heads of State and Government held in Istanbul on June 15, 1997.

WATEX 2025, an opportunity to introduce new technology, attract investment

TEHRAN- The 21st Iran International Water and Wastewater Exhibition (WATEX 2025) commenced on Wednesday, December 3rd, at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground and will host water industry professionals for four days.

This exhibition, held with the aim of showcasing the latest achievements in the water industry, is recognized as the largest gathering of those active in the water industry. This includes industrialists, knowledge-based companies, startups, consultants, contractors, and senior managers, to facilitate taking new steps towards the development of Iran's water industry.

In this edition of the exhibition, participants are active in the fields of metal pipes and fittings, consulting, industrial valves, pumps and rotating machinery, contracting, industrial water treatment, dams and hydroelectric power plants, irrigation and drainage, water transmission lines, polymer pipes and fittings, chemicals, paints and coatings, domestic water treatment, domestic fixtures, leak de-

tection, measurement systems and meters, and other related fields. This provides the opportunity to hold meetings between related businesses, introduce new technologies, and attract investment.

This year's exhibition has gained double the importance compared to previous editions due to the increased need for water productivity and consumption optimization stemming from a six-year drought.

The exhibition will be held with the goal of monitoring the latest trends, familiarizing with innovative solutions, and fostering synergy on the path to improving water governance and increasing productivity at the national level. It will host 150 domestic companies and 4 foreign companies from Germany, China, and Italy.

Making water economy attractive for investors

Speaking at the exhibition's opening ceremony, Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi emphasized that the water economy must be made attractive to investors to pave the way for

their entry into this industry. He stated: "To achieve this, important technological measures need to be taken to make the environment attractive for investors."

The energy minister assessed water production and consumption as very important under the country's current conditions and added: "Despite the little rainfall that occurred, good storage took place, and it is hoped that the continuation of rainfall in the coming weeks will improve the situation."

Aliabadi welcomed those who have ideas for increasing precipitation and emphasized water recycling for optimal consumption, adding: "We welcome and support the ideas of all those who can help the economy."

Referring to the recent inauguration of 445 megawatts of renewable power plants, he gave the promise that more projects will be inaugurated by the end of the month of Azar (December 21st).

The energy minister said: "Iran has now rightly become a major workshop in the development of water and electricity projects."

Export from West Azarbaijan province up 57% in 8 months on year

TEHRAN The value of export from West Azarbaijan province, located in northwestern Iran, increased by 57 percent during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-November 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, an official with the province's customs department announced.

West Azarbaijan province, is a strategically and economically significant region. Its economy is characterized by a diverse mix of agriculture, industry, mining, and trade, heavily influenced by its border geography.

Khaled Jangjou, an official with the province's customs department, reported a significant surge in trade exchanges, stating that

in the mentioned eight months, more than 2.9 million tons of goods worth approximately \$2 billion have been exported from the province. Imports, focused on essential goods and industrial raw materials, have also exceeded \$731 million.

He said: "Based on registered statistics, we have witnessed dynamic growth in the field of foreign trade during this period."

Jangjou stated that during this period, over 2,984,000 tons of goods worth about \$2 billion were exported from the customs offices of the province, marking a 57-percent increase in value and a 42-percent increase in weight compared to the same period last year.

He added: "Steel ingots, copper

cathodes, plastic products, copper ingots, and reinforced bars were among the most important export items of the province."

The official continued: "Additionally, 1,818,000 tons of declared export goods from other customs offices across the country were cleared and exported through the borders of the province."

Regarding the import situation, he said: "Over the past eight months, more than 259,000 tons of goods worth \$731 million, including essential goods, industrial raw materials, machinery, and capital goods, have entered the country through the customs offices of the province."

Jangu listed the borders of Bazargan and Piranshahr as the

most important trade routes of the province, saying: "The Bazargan border accounts for 37 percent and the Piranshahr border for 13 percent of the total exports and imports of the province."

According to him, Urmia Customs also holds the first rank among the internal customs offices of the province with a 25-percent share.

The official further emphasized the development of electronic systems and the facilitation of customs processes, stating: "Our goal is to increase the speed of goods movement, expand non-oil exports, and strengthen the position of West Azarbaijan as one of the important hubs of foreign trade in the country."

Trump’s Venezuela policy could turn world into jungle, professor warns

“The international safeguards are crumbling”

By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN – An American professor of international affairs warns that the world is sliding into a “veritable jungle” as U.S. President Donald Trump openly threatens to strike deep inside Venezuela, alleging the Latin American nation is engaged in narco-trafficking.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Professor Hossein Askari says Trump’s “threats against Venezuela are based on lies and hypocrisy” that are primarily intended to deflect attention from his troubles at home, notably the Epstein case.

The US has been building up a force of warships, fighter jets, bombers, marines, drones and spy planes in the Caribbean Sea. It is the largest deployment there for decades. According to the BBC, long-range bomber planes, B-52s, have carried out “bomber attack demonstrations” off the coast of Venezuela. The US says it has killed dozens of people in strikes on small vessels from Venezuela which it claims carry “narcotics” and “narco-terrorists”, without providing evidence or details about those on board.

Askari, the former instructor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), firmly believes that the Trump administration’s behavior toward Venezuela is “absolutely” reckless, lamenting that “the US has been threatening the rule of law at the international level.”

This is the text of the interview:

Statements by American officials openly indicate that the Pentagon’s attack on Venezuela is imminent under the allegation that Maduro’s government is an accomplice in the drugs trafficked into the United States. Isn’t the Trump administration pushing the fragile world order toward more anarchism, especially as Maduro’s involvement in drug trafficking has not been proven?

These threats against Maduro and Venezuela are a farce. As you indicate, there is no proof of narco-trafficking. Moreover, US data shows that over 90 percent of the



drugs coming into the US come from the Pacific, not the Atlantic. Also, Trump just pardoned the former president of Honduras Juan Orlando Hernandez, who was tried and convicted for drug trafficking and given a life sentence. Hernandez was even an accomplice of the notorious “El Chapo.” Yet, he was pardoned! This pardon was lunacy and it undermines any reference to trafficking on the part of others. The threats against Venezuela are based on lies and hypocrisy.

“The threats against Maduro and Venezuela are a farce”

So far, the U.S. has gone to the extreme by targeting Venezuelan boats in the Caribbean and telling Maduro to leave the country. Do these behaviors and statements show that Trump wants to revive the Monroe Doctrine in South America?

As you know, the Monroe Doctrine warned Europeans to stay out of the affairs of Latin America while the US pledged to stay out of European affairs. Today, the world is very different. The US wants to have preferred access to the globe, not just to Latin America, as it warns others not to interfere with its interests. This is much more global than the Monroe Doctrine, but it will not last or succeed. Sadly, America is making more and more enemies.

In general, don’t you see these

behaviors as reckless and dangerous?

Absolutely. The US has been threatening the rule of law at the international level. This is just the latest episode. Take a look at its behavior at the UNSC. It has vetoed ceasefires in Gaza. It has sanctioned international judges who rule against its allies and their leaders, namely Netanyahu at the ICC. It takes punishing policies against South Africa for referring Israel to the ICJ. It goes on and on. The international system, adopted after WWII, is on life support. On top of all this, President Trump is treating immigrants as scum and calls them “garbage” to be thrown out of the US. America is losing the world, a world that admired its policies after WWII. I am very pessimistic.

What sense do these ultimatums to Venezuela send to the world?

The international safeguards are crumbling. You cannot rely on the United Nations or on the West to defend the weak and victims. The world will become a veritable jungle unless something is done soon to redirect the ship.

Some argue that Trump’s political, economic and military pressure on Venezuela is intended to gain control over Venezuela’s oil riches given the U.S. president’s great love for oil and his disdain of renewable energy. What is your opinion?

Oil is a part of it but not the whole story. Trump has problems at home. He is caught up in

the Epstein affair. His tariff policies are unpopular. His promise to make everything more affordable for Americans has failed as more people are living from paycheck to paycheck. Even his full-throated support for Isreal is becoming more and more unpopular as Americans suffer while America donates money to Isreal, a country with a per capita income comparable to that of France. So all of this is a diversion from his own problems at home. But if he can boast about gaining access to Venezuela’s oil, he might argue that the US has become richer and could become more popular. It is a long shot. Also remember that although Venezuela has the largest oil deposits in the world, its crude is a very heavy oil with high sulfur content and thus much more expensive to extract and refine.

Is Trump sending a message to leftist governments in the American continent by sending the world’s largest aircraft carrier, the USS Gerald. R. Ford in the waters off Venezuela?

“The international system, adopted after WWII, is on life support”

Yes, Trump always threatens in order to get an adversary’s submission. It has worked in the US, so he is going international with the same. And he is even threatening to bomb countries, as he did to Iran.”

If as Trump and some Republicans claim the U.S. wants to bring democracy to Venezuela, there are despotic rulers in the world that Trump has friendly ties with. If this claim is true how can these controversies be reconciled?

You must be kidding. Trump is not interested in democracy. He is destroying it in the US and he would much rather deal with a friendly foreign dictator who would do his bidding than try to negotiate with a “messy” democratic parliament and government.



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Straight Truth

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5

The empire’s orphan strikes back

A tragedy forged in CIA’s narco-empire has been weaponized for a technocratic police state

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – Amid a bitter clash over Trump’s attempt to federalize the National Guard, Rahmanullah Lakanwal allegedly opened fire outside a D.C. recruitment center on November 26, killing one soldier and critically wounding another.

Trump ordered 500 more Guard troops into the capital — with the Pentagon confirming on December 2 that they are armed with live weapons.

Attorney General Pam Bondi wasted no time: the tragedy proved the Guard must now flood “every city we possibly can.” She made the statement just as hundreds of billions flow to AI border towers, biometric checkpoints, genetic-tracking databases, and drone-killing systems.

Fear of “radical Islam” and “illegals” has been used as the perfect lubricant for a technocratic surveillance state that many Americans will soon applaud as “security.”

The shooter was no random “jihadi.” At 15, he was recruited into CIA Zero Unit 03—the Kandahar Strike Force—commanded by Ahmed Wali Karzai, the Agency’s highest-paid asset and Afghanistan’s heroin kingpin.

Rahmanullah Lakanwal spent a decade as a sicario for the largest narco-cartel in history, one that the CIA created, armed, and protected.

When Kabul fell, Washington airlifted him and roughly ten thousand other hired killers to the United States on priority visas. Asylum was granted while Trump was in office, yet DHS Secretary Noem now frames it as

“unvetted under Biden”—a partisan spin that amounts to revisionism.

Resettled in Washington state, he received no serious psychiatric care and no real path forward. Isolation and the ghosts of night raids did the rest.

Similar to Jamal Wali in Virginia and Muhammad Syed in Albuquerque—both former Afghan commandos who snapped and killed—Lakanwal’s collapse was scripted by the policy that made him.

A former asset, legally armed, drives cross-country undetected and strikes the exact institution whose expanded domestic role was being contested in court. CIA Director Ratcliffe’s instant “all ties ended in 2021” line reads like a pre-scripted limited hangout.

History, from MK-ULTRA to the redeployment of Cuban exiles in domestic and Latin American terror, suggests these assets are seldom truly discarded, a pattern that invites even darker theories.

The United States turned a child into a cartel assassin, profited from his warlord’s opium empire, and imported him when the game ended.

Whether Rahmanullah Lakanwal was left to rot until he exploded, quietly steered, or something in between, the outcome serves the same agenda: a dead Guardsman becomes the emotional battering ram for military patrols in American cities and a permanent digital cage sold as protection from the very monsters the empire bred.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Global rebuke of Israeli occupation

From page 1 ► It called for the timely convening of an international peace conference in Moscow, as originally envisioned by Security Council resolution 1850 passed in 2008.

Member States stressed that only a genuinely inclusive process can deliver a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace.

At the heart of the resolution was the Assembly’s insistence that the regime meet its international law obligations.

States demanded an end to the regime’s unlawful presence in occupied Palestinian territories, a complete halt to illegal settlement construction, and the evacuation of all settlers. Delegations emphasized that such settlements are a primary driver of instability and a clear breach of international humanitarian law.

The Assembly also rejected any attempt by the Zionist regime to alter Gaza’s demographic or territorial status. It reaffirmed the principle that Gaza must be reconnected with the West Bank.

Member States further reiterated the need for withdrawal from all Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, the realization of the Palestinian people’s inalienable rights, particularly the right to self-determination. The resolution also called for just resolution for Palestinian refugees scattered across the region and have a right to return home enshrined under international law.

The second resolution, “The Syrian Golan,” again highlighted the global consen-

sus against territorial acquisition by force. It passed with 123 votes in favor, just 7 against: the United States, the Israeli occupation regime, and a handful of Pacific island states. The vote once more illustrated how isolated the regime and its closest backers remain on questions of occupation and international legality.

The resolution declared the regime’s 1981 attempt to impose its laws and administrative control over the occupied Syrian Golan null and void, calling for its immediate rescission.

Member States pressed the regime to resume negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and to honor previous commitments made in earlier rounds of talks. The Assembly reiterated its demand for full withdrawal from the Golan, occupied since 1967.

Taken together, the two votes showcased the depth of international opposition to the Israeli regime’s continued defiance of international law.

While Washington and a small circle of allies stood firmly in opposition, the overwhelming majority of the world signaled that the current trajectory is untenable, and that durable peace requires an end to occupation, respect for international law, and genuine political negotiation.

This is something the Zionist regime has failed to uphold for decades but especially the current coalition that seeks to expand a “Greater Israel” project at the expense of regional insecurity.

The mirage of peace: Gaza under fire

From page 1 ► The United States bears responsibility as well. Washington continues to supply weapons and provide political cover at the United Nations. By shielding Israel from accountability, the U.S. ensures that violations carry no consequences. This is not neutrality—it is direct complicity in ongoing aggression.

For Gaza, this is a familiar story. Ceasefires are declared but rarely respected. Each time, civilians pay the price: families displaced, children growing up in war zones, hospitals collapsing under endless casualties. The silence of the international community reinforces the sense of abandonment, leaving Palestinians to face the violence alone.

Every casualty figure conceals a human tragedy. Behind each number lies a stolen future: a mother buried, a child silenced, a neighbor erased. These are not statistics to

be tallied—they are lives deliberately extinguished under bombs and blockade.

The October 10 ceasefire was broken almost instantly. From the first day, Gaza remained under fire, proving the agreement was never honored. It became yet another example of how international promises dissolve when confronted with Israeli aggression and American protection.

This pattern is systemic. Israel acts knowing Washington will shield it diplomatically and arm it militarily. Ceasefires are declared, violated, and forgotten, while Palestinians continue to bleed under the illusion of peace.

Until the world confronts this impunity, demands accountability, and ends the protection that enables Israel’s actions, Gaza will remain under siege. Ceasefires will remain hollow words, and Palestinians will continue to suffer under promises never meant to be kept.

Naqoura talks: Trojan Horse of economic and political normalization

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT—The Lebanese government’s decision to appoint former ambassador Simon Karam, a civilian with openly political positions, to lead the Lebanese delegation in the so-called Military Technical Committee meetings in Naqoura is not a procedural adjustment. Rather, it is a political landmine.

What was designed as a narrow, officer-to-officer framework under the November 27, 2014 cessation of hostilities is being quietly repackaged into a civilian-led negotiating track. U.S. envoy Morgan Ortagus, an Israeli lover, is chairing the committee.

Translation: a technical ceasefire mechanism is being weaponized to advance normalization under Israeli and American pressure.

For decades, Naqoura meant one thing: field arrangements, maps, coordinates, and UNIFIL (the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) oversight.

Naqoura is a coastal town at the southernmost edge of Lebanon, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea and sitting directly on the UN-drawn “Blue Line” with occupied Palestine.

Since 1978, it has hosted the headquarters of UNIFIL, making it the central venue for ceasefire talks, border disputes, and technical military meetings between Lebanese officers and the Israeli enemy under international supervision.

In Lebanese political language, Naqoura is more than a place. It is a pressure point where wars pause, maps are redrawn, and every word at the negotiating table carries strategic weight.

Today, naming a non-military figure at the head of the delegation signals a profound shift. It hands the Israeli enemy precisely what it has sought for years—an overt political gateway disguised as a “security meeting.”

Once the table turns civilian, the agenda shifts to politics: gas fields, joint investments, “econom-

ic cooperation,” and what Netanyahu unabashedly brands as “economic peace.”

The danger is not hypothetical; it is on record. Israeli Channel 14 political correspondent Tamir Morag reported that U.S. envoy Morgan Ortagus urged Israeli officials to strike the funeral procession of Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah at Beirut’s Sports City, asserting that Resistance leaders would be in attendance.

The Israeli enemy ultimately did not execute the plan, but kept warplanes circling over the capital throughout the ceremony, a grotesque reminder of the contempt both Washington and Tel Aviv have for Lebanese lives.

This is the same mindset now posing as a mediator at Naqoura. Let that sink in. The party proposing to “organize negotiations” is the same party that floated the idea of bombing a million civilians in one strike. It is diplomatic theatre at its most cynical.

Even the Israeli enemy is no longer hiding behind euphemisms. The office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issued a statement that dispensed with diplomatic camouflage altogether: “Sending a representative of Netanyahu to meet with Lebanese officials is an initial attempt to lay the foundation for relations and economic cooperation with Lebanon.”

This is not ceasefire language; this is annex language. It is normalization before demarcation, and diplomacy before de-occupation.

Israel is essentially announcing that Naqoura is no longer about the “Blue Line” but about breaking Lebanon’s political firewall.

Selecting Simon Karma, an openly anti-Resistance Maronite political scholar who has repeatedly dismissed Hezbollah as a “danger to Lebanese society”, is no coincidence.

Naqoura negotiations is the perfect civilian foil for an Israeli agenda that thrives on “dialogue” code words and “cooperation” schemes. Once a



civilian sits across the table, Israel will push: joint maritime projects, gas partnerships, international lending packages, and “economic reconstruction.”

Netanyahu has been advertising “economic normalization” for years. Now Lebanon is handing him a doorway. All of this points to a blunt political equation: convert military pressure into political concessions. Washington and Tel Aviv are no longer mediating between two parties; they are co-writing the agenda.

The Israeli occupation entity is telegraphing two choices to Lebanon, loudly and clearly: Take the “economic peace” deal or brace for an escalation any night of the week.

Naqoura is no longer a map room; it is a battlefield for Lebanon’s strategic identity. Will Lebanon surrender its sovereignty by allowing economic normalization to creep in through a ceasefire committee? Or will it demand negotiations under strict military parameters with no political bartering?

Let us dispense with illusions: these developments are not “confidence-building measures.” They are a slow-motion attempt to detach Lebanon from the axis of Resistance and absorb it into an Israeli-American economic project.

And the question that hangs over the entire charade remains brutally simple: How can anyone call this a “negotiation” when one of the so-called mediators was, just days ago, recommending the bombing of a funeral attended by a million people?

Tehran exhibit to showcase ceremonial vehicles used in Qajar to Pahlavi eras

TEHRAN--The exhibition 'Ceremonial Vehicles of Iran; A Narrative from Qajar to Pahlavi eras' will open at Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex's Automobile Museum of Iran (also known as the Historical Car Museum of Iran) on December 7.

According to Miras Aria (CHTN), the exhibition, which uses the historical images and documents from the archive of Borzou Sepasi, a historian and researcher in the field of automobiles, examines the evolution of ceremonial vehicles in the Iranian court from the Qajar era to the end of the Pahlavi era, will be held until January 6, 2026.

A specialized session on the topic of 'Iranian ceremonial vehicles from Qajar to

Pahlavi eras' will be held at Niavaran Complex' Conference Hall on December 10 with a speech by Sepasi on the sidelines of this exhibition.

This session is open to all interested parties and is planned with the aim of explaining the role of ceremonial vehicles in the contemporary history of Iran and familiarizing the interested parties with the behind-the-scenes developments in this field.

Those interested can visit this exhibition for a month and meet in the complex's conference hall on December 10 from 11:00 to 13:00 to participate in the specialized session.

Kharanaq historical fortress restored

TEHRAN – A restoration work on the historic Kharanaq fortress in Ardakan county, central Iran, has been completed, provincial authorities said on Tuesday.

The project focused on structural reinforcement and conservation of the centuries-old adobe complex, CHTN reported.

Local officials said the contracted project concentrated on preventive measures to halt further erosion. Work included restoring the fortress watchtower, applying mud-plaster coatings and repairing roof drains to improve the site's physical stability and protection.

Kharanaq fortress is named after the nearby village located in a remote valley about 70 km north of Yazd. Some parts of Kharanaq date back about 4,000 years, while many of its deteriorated adobe struc-



tures that attract visitors are estimated to be around 1,000 years old, according to local sources.

The abandoned settlement contains a network of alleys, tunnels and rooms, as well as structures such as a small mosque, a shaking minaret and an old caravanserai that once served traders and pilgrims.

'Forest to Desert' project, an opportunity for tourism development in Shahroud

TEHRAN--The 'Forest to Desert' project is an exceptional opportunity for tourism development in Shahroud county, Semnan province, said Shahroud Governor Mohammad-Hassan Asafari.

In a meeting with Head of Semnan Cultural Heritage Department, Asafari referred to the unique tourism capacities of Shahroud. "The 'Forest to Desert' tourism project in Shahroud is a very exceptional opportunity. Professional tour management and coherent planning should be carried out for it," ISNA reported.

He explained that from Reza Abad Desert with its unique sand dunes, off-road capabilities, camel riding and desert trekking, Chah Jam route and Tagh forest, Shahroud-Torud route and its sand dunes and pristine landscapes, the Hyrcanian World Heritage Site in Abr region, the Mojen waterfall and the Qaleh Bala tourist village, each represents a full-fledged opportunity in the field of tourism, handicrafts and cultural heritage in Shahroud county, which should be turned into an advantage with special attention.

Pointing to the diversity of tourism events in Shahroud, he said that every week, a tourism festival is held in the villages of Shahroud county, from the Felt Festival to Golden Raven Festival and local rituals, and this diversity reflects the cultural richness and high potential of the region.

He considered cultural heritage to be the original identity of the local people, adding: "There are monuments in Shahroud that are nationally and even internationally recognized, such as Bayazid Bastami Collection, and it is our duty to protect this cultural heritage."

Asafari added that there are great and unique capacities in the field of cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts in every part of Semnan province and Shahroud has a significant share.

Shahroud governor emphasized that Shahroud governor's office and administrative bodies of the county are moving towards the restoration of historical monuments, the development of tourism, strengthening of infrastructure, and the prosperity of handicrafts with full interaction.

Also, Head of Semnan Cultural Heritage,

Tourism and Handicrafts Department Jalal Tajik appreciated the special attention of Shahroud Governor and said that the Governor has a concerned and supportive approach in the field of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts.

He announced the inscription of Qaleh Bala tourist village in UNESCO World Heritage list as one of the most important priorities of the department.

Meanwhile, Semnan Governor Mehdi Samimian announced holding a special Yalda Night program, a handicraft exhibition, the acceleration in restoration of Shah Abbasi Caravanserai, and holding the millennium festival of the minaret of the Jameh Mosque of Semnan.

He emphasized the need to strengthen the administrative staff of Semnan and stated that in order to realize the programs currently being implemented, increasing the capacity of human resources in related areas should be prioritized so that the administrative and supportive processes can proceed more quickly.

Samimian continued that the handicrafts and souvenirs exhibition will be held in the Semnan county from December 8 to 16 and is considered a good opportunity to introduce Semnan's artistic and cultural capacities.

Also, Mohammad Bahrami, member of the board of trustees of Imamzadeh Yahya (AS) shrine in Semnan said that religious tourism is one of the most active and frequently visited types of tourism in Iran, and Semnan province should benefit the most from the annual passage of more than 20 million pilgrims and travelers along Semnan-Mashhad route.

He said that Imamzadeh Yahya (AS) shrine has one of the valuable religious tourism capacities in the province and can become one of the important destinations for pilgrims along Mashhad route.

Referring to Semnan's position in the country's pilgrimage route, he added that Semnan province is located on the route between the shrine of Imam Reza (AS) and the shrine of Hazrat Masoumeh (SA), and this position has created a special advantage for the development of religious tourism.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

UN Tourism chief offers full support for Iran's plan to develop intl. investment guide

TEHRAN – The UN Tourism chief has praised Iran's recent institutional reforms and investment initiatives, saying the agency is ready to help prepare an international guide for tourism investment in the Islamic Republic.

Zurab Pololikashvili, secretary-general of the UN body, conveyed the message in an official letter to the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Seyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, the ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

In the letter, Pololikashvili expressed appreciation for what he described as Iran's "transformative approaches" and "strategic initiatives" in recent months. He thanked Iran for submitting a comprehensive report on structural reforms, investment incentives and new policy actions, the ministry said.

Moreover, Pololikashvili congratulated Iran on the first anniversary of the formation of its 14th government and said he was pleased to see continued efforts to strengthen tourism as a key part of the country's economic development.

The UN Tourism chief also highlighted what he called sig-



nificant institutional reforms, including the establishment of an investment and economic affairs center and a center for international affairs and public diplomacy within the ministry. He said these steps would strengthen institutional capacity and contribute to more effective sector management.

In addition, Pololikashvili welcomed Iran's investment incentives package for tourism, its tax exemptions for tourism facilities and its customs duty waivers. He said these mea-

sures could help improve competitiveness, boost investor confidence and support sustainable growth.

Responding to a request for technical support, Pololikashvili said UN Tourism was fully prepared to compile a "doing business and investment guide" for tourism in the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said publication of such an international benchmark would support the ministry's investment strategy.

He added that UN Tourism's internal program was being re-

viewed so the Iranian initiative could be placed among the organization's work priorities. A draft cooperation agreement outlining the project's technical scope, timeline and budget requirements would be shared with Iran soon, Pololikashvili said.

In closing, the secretary-general expressed hope for expanded bilateral engagement and said UN Tourism looked forward to strengthening cooperation with Tehran and contributing to the promotion of the country's tourism investment opportunities worldwide, according to the ministry.

According to data compiled by the ministry, Iran generated about \$7.4 billion from foreign tourism in the past Iranian calendar year (ended in March 2025), while it hosted more than 7 million international visitors.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 29 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Isfahan's Vank Cathedral draws 500,000 visitors annually, Armenian council member says



TEHRAN – About 500,000 people visit Vank Cathedral in the Armenian district of [New] Jolfa in Isfahan each year, a member of the Armenian Caliphate Council of Isfahan said on Wednesday.

Narbeh Zharden Davoud told IRNA the figures show strong tourist interest in the cultural and religious attractions of the historic Jolfa neighborhood. He said Bethlehem Church and the Armenian Music Museum rank next after Vank Cathedral among the area's most visited sites.

Davoud said authorities and local stakeholders aim to promote Jolfa as a complete tourism destination within Isfahan. He said efforts include introducing visitors to re-

ligious sites such as Vank and Bethlehem churches as well as the district's historical centers, guesthouses and handicraft workshops.

He referred to a "Jolfa Walk" program launched several years ago. The walking route covers churches, museums, accommodation centres and handicraft venues. Davoud said daily tours have been offered since last year and present the cultural, social and culinary features of the district.

He said the objective is to encourage tourists to stay at least one full day in Jolfa to experience its attractions and services.

Davoud said private-sector investment in the district is increasing. He said two hotels have been established over the past three years and new hotel and guesthouse projects are underway.

An 80-room hotel is under construction and expected to be completed within two years, he said. Another hotel is being developed under the supervision of the Armenian caliphate council. Some facilities will operate as boutique hotels, and restored Armenian historical houses will be converted into spe-

cial accommodation units, he added.

According to sources, Armenian families were relocated to Iran in 1614 by the order of Safavid ruler Shah Abbas I and settled south of the Zayandeh-Rud River. The size of the Jolfa quarter expanded during the reign of Shah Abbas II, who was the seventh Shah of Safavid Iran, ruling from 1642 to 1666.

Once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy, Isfahan remains one of Iran's most prominent tourist destinations. It is renowned for its breathtaking Islamic architecture, including stunning mosques, palaces, and bazaars. Visitors can explore Persian gardens and walk along the city's tree-lined boulevards, soaking in the beauty and history at every turn. The city's architectural marvels, such as Naghsh-e Jahan Square—one of the largest squares in the world—make it a jewel of town planning.

Isfahan is known as "Nesf-e-Jahan," or "half the world," symbolizing its historic significance. The Zayandeh-Rood River, often called the city's "life-giving river," adds to the city's natural beauty, enhancing its allure for tourists.

Rural, nomadic tourism development planned in Mahdishahr

TEHRAN--The development of rural and nomadic tourism is one of the important goals of Mahdishahr county in Semnan province, said Governor of Mahdishahr Ali Khodadad.

In a meeting with Head of Semnan Cultural Heritage Department, Khodadad referred to the cultural and biological capacities of Sangsar tribe and said that nomadic tourism is one of the unique attractions of Sangsar tribe nomad tourism due to their language, calendar, clothing, lifestyle, and self-colored carpets, and has attracted many enthusiasts, especially in recent years, ISNA reported.

Emphasizing that tourism is the first development priority of the county, he added that along with the industrial and agricultural sectors, people's need for clean air and water resources has caused tourism to have a more special place in the county's development plans.

Referring to the capacity of religious tourism in this city, he stated that the traditional type of

mourning, religious rituals, and the existence of Hosseinieh Azam (great Hosseinieh) are among the most important religious attractions of Mahdishahr, which hosts that enthusiasts all year round.

Khodadad added that the proximity of Mahdishahr city to the provincial capital, the significant temperature difference with Semnan city, and the favorable climate of this region have made it an accessible and popular destination for tourists.

Referring to the diversity of natural and historical attractions in this city, Mahdishahr governor said that Shahmirzad with attractions such as the largest walnut orchard in the world, Kaman-e Rostam and Shir Qaleh, the city of Mahdishahr with the historical background, culture, and language of the Sangsar tribe, and the city of Darjazin, with its gardens and natural landscapes, has creat-

ed a unique collection of tourism potential in this city.

He stated that rural tourism is also booming in this city, and the creation of ecotourism resorts by

the people and the strengthening of tourism infrastructure by the government have played an important role in the prosperity of this sector.

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Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 20,000 tons DIRECT REDUCED IRON (DRI), with the option to increase the contract quantity by up to 25% on basis of FAS at the Buyer's warehouse in Bandar Abbas, IRAN according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjSCO.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section.

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Tehran, Khartoum explore avenues to boost scientific ties

TEHRAN – The head of the Organization of Student Affairs, Saeed Habiba, and Sudan's Ambassador to Tehran, Abdulaziz Hassan Saleh Taha, have explored ways to enhance scientific collaborations between the two countries.

During a meeting held on Tuesday in Tehran, Saleh Taha highlighted cultural commonalities and historical relations between the two nations, adding that Sudan looks forward to expanding ties with Iran.

Referring to Iran's role in Sudan's scientific and technological development, the official expressed hope that more Sudanese students would get the chance to study in Iran. "These students are cultural and scientific ambassadors of Iran in Sudan," he added.

Sudan's Deputy Ambassador to Iran, Khalid Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, for his part, said Sudanese students are satisfied with the educational situation, services, and their lives in Iran.

The official went on to say that Sudan is proud of the students' progress, particularly in the medical field, and that they would like more students to be admitted to Iranian universities.

For his part, Habiba under-



lined the high rankings of the Iranian universities in the world, and expounded on the country's achievements in different fields, mainly biotechnology, electronics, and modern technologies.

The official also announced the country's readiness for the enhancement of scientific cooperation through admitting self-funded Sudanese students, granting scholarships, and providing sabbatical leaves to them.

Currently, there are 23 Sudanese students majoring in 12 universities in Iran; 22 percent of whom are women.

Promoting scientific co-op

In October 2024, the head of

Iran's National Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (NIGEB), Javad Mohammadi, met with Taha to discuss ways for expanding scientific relations.

Paying a visit to NIGEB, Saleh Taha called Iran's progress in the biotechnology and genetics fields amazing. "Iran's Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology can be a perfect scientific model for establishing universities as well as institutes in Sudan," the official highlighted.

Sudan is seeking to enhance cooperation [with Iran] in treating illnesses such as cancer and infectious diseases, as well as exchanging professors and students. The country is willing to

learn from your valuable experiences in the international scientific field, Saleh Taha further noted.

Mohammadi, for his part, said in line with the Islamic Republic of Iran's policy to boost international cooperation in the field of scientific diplomacy, the institute welcomes scientific cooperation and interaction with other countries, particularly Islamic nations.

The NIGEB is affiliated with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), he highlighted.

During pandemics and outbreaks of various diseases in African countries, the research institute can collaborate with Sudan and other African countries to develop tools for the detection of the diseases and ways to control them, the official noted.

He also proposed conducting joint scientific projects, professors and students exchange in genetics and biotechnology science are other potential ways for boosting cooperation, Mohammadi added.

Moscow to host Iran-Russia joint ICT working group

TEHRAN – The fifth meeting of the Iran-Russia joint working group in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector will be held in Moscow from December 6 to 7.

Considering the high capacities of the two countries in science and innovation, Iran and Russia can establish a collaborative digital ecosystem for the future digital world, ISNA quoted Kazem Jalali, Iran's ambassador to Russia, as saying.

Cooperation in the ICT sector within the framework of a joint working group meeting is an essential, smart response to the security and technological requirements of the contemporary world, he wrote in a post on X.

It will also lay the groundwork for fostering technological cooperation, securing the presence of qualified Iranian companies in Russian markets to supply equipment and provide technological services, as well as developing e-commerce, digitalizing the urban environment, and promoting relations in cybersecurity, the official further noted.

Cooperation with Iran in emerging technologies

In May, Russian Presidential Aide Andrei Fursenko emphasized the significance of promoting partnerships and collaborations with Iran in emerging technologies.

It is a fact that focusing on already established technologies will not be beneficial for the two countries. So, it is essential to put on the agenda the technologies that have not (fully) developed yet, which is a much more difficult task, IRNA quoted Fursenko as saying.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with the head of the Organization for the Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology, Hossein Roozbeh, and the head of Pardis Technology Park, Mehdi Safarinia, while attending Iran-Russia diplomacy meeting on Friday on the sidelines of the International Innovation and Technology Exhibition (INOTEX 2025), which was held from April 29 to May 2, in Tehran.

"Although working on new technologies is risky, we should not fail to prioritize them, because there is no other way to be the first in the world," the Russian official added.

For his part, Safarinia said Iran is committed to promoting international scientific cooperation, highlighting that Russia is among the top countries with which Iran is willing to expand ties.

The official went on to say that Russian companies can have offices in Pardis Technology Park. The establishment of Russian universities' branches in the country was the second point mentioned by Safarinia. "We have already reached agreements with St. Petersburg University and Moscow State University. We are following up on the issue in cooperation with the University of Science and Technology.

This will be the first foreign university to have a branch in Iran. Both Iranian and regional students will be able to study at this university, spending part of their studies in Iran and the rest in Russia," Safarinia further noted.

The official also announced readiness to further enhance collaborations in research



Kazem Jalali, Iran's ambassador to Russia

and education, as well as market opportunities, as members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS.

During the Iran-Russia diplomacy meeting, the two countries also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to establish two joint tech zones.

The MOU was signed between the National Association of Advanced Industries and Knowledge-Based Companies of the Industry and Mining Sector, represented by Mohammad Mehdi Naibi, and the Russian President of the Technological Sovereignty Export Association, Andrey Bezrukov.

The expansion of new technologies and joint research in the fields of nanotechnology, biotechnology, health, ICT, artificial intelligence, as well as the use of renewable energies, oil, and gas, are among the main focuses of the signed MOU.

The MOU highlights production and market development, including co-branding and marketing, market research, product development, and the development of distribution channels.

SOCIETY

DECEMBER 4, 2025

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

Over 1.6 million people donate blood in 8 months

TEHRAN – A total of 1,621,911 Iranians donated blood in the first eight months of the current Iranian year, which started on March 21, according to an official with the Blood Transfusion Organization.

The highest blood donation growth was recorded in the provinces of Zanjan (around 12 percent), Sistan-Baluchestan (over nine percent), and Fars (more than seven percent), Mehr news agency quoted Babak Yektaparast as saying.

Tehran province accounted for 17 percent of the total blood donation in the same period. Fars and Isfahan provinces donated, respectively, more than seven percent and almost six percent of the total blood donation in eight months.

Women's share of blood donation in the country is around five percent, he noted.

The official went on to say that over the past eight months, the continuous blood donation growth rate in the country has been 55 percent.

WHO lauds IBTO's achievements

In January, the World Health Organization representative, Jaffar Hussain, admired the Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization's (IBTO) leadership in blood safety and transfusion services, and highlighted their remarkable achievement of a 100 percent voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation system, a testament to the principles of universal health coverage in action.

He also thanked the blood donors, whose selflessness serves as an inspiration to all.

Admiring the IBTO's efforts and expertise in providing services to patients with rare blood types, the official underscored Iran's capacity to serve as a model for other nations in the realm of blood transfusion and rare blood management.

Addressing National Rare Blood Day on January 22, the official praised the country's steadfast commitment to equitable healthcare access, ensuring that no one is left behind, regardless of their blood type.



The official commended the country's unwavering dedication to tackling the unique challenges surrounding rare blood, emphasizing the critical importance of collaboration, innovation, and unwavering determination in this global endeavor, the WHO website announced in a press release on January 27.

He lauded the Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization's (IBTO) leadership in blood safety and transfusion services, highlighting their remarkable achievement of a 100 percent voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation system, a testament to the principles of universal health coverage in action. He also thanked the blood donors, whose selflessness serves as an inspiration to all.

Blood donation rises by 1.5% yr/yr

Some 2.36 million Iranians donated blood over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2024-March 2025), representing a 1.5 percent increase compared to the previous year.

Tehran and Fars, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Mazandaran, and Khuzestan provinces made the largest contributions, IRIB reported.

Over the past (Iranian) year, some four million blood units, including blood products, were transferred to medical centers, IRIB quoted Haji-Beigi, as saying.

Men made up 95 percent of blood donors, while women's contribution amounted to five percent. Women in Lorestan province, North Khorasan, and Sistan-Baluchestan had the highest share, he added.

Highlighting the need for negative blood types, the official said 90 percent of donors had positive blood.

Knowledge-based companies attending Afghan Health Exhibition

TEHRAN – Forty Iranian knowledge-based firms are participating in the Afghan Health Exhibition, being held from December 2 to 4, in Kabul.

The three-day event provides a valuable platform for knowledge-based companies to showcase their latest products and achievements in the healthcare sector. They also seek to establish a permanent presence in Afghanistan's market, ISNA reported.

Head of Food and Drug Administration, Mehdi Pirsalehi, is going to pay a visit to the Iranian pavilions in the exhibition to support them.

On the sidelines of the exhibition, Pirsalehi will hold a meeting with Afghan health officials to discuss fostering cooperation in the health and pharmaceutical sectors.

Self-sufficiency in medicine, medical equipment

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

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

On January 13, the head of Iran's Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters said that medical equipment worth around \$20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually.

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



Head of Food and Drug Administration, Mehdi Pirsalehi (L), speaks with an Afghan official.

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

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

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

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

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

‘Organ donation rate grows 60-fold in 18 years’

Organ donation rate has increased by 60 times over the past 18 years, though the growth is not considerable compared to the global scale, head of the transplantation and treatment of diseases department at the Ministry of Health has announced.

Some countries including China have grown 122-fold in terms of organ donation over the past 10 years, ISNA quoted Mehdi Shadnough as saying on Monday.

Although, Iran ranks 26 in organ donation in the world, it can claim better ranks given some plans being implemented in this regard, he highlighted, adding, we will achieve better results certainly by the next year (March 2019-March 2020), as many barriers have been removed last year.

رشد اهدای عضو در ۱۸ سال گذشته ، ۶۰ برابر شده است

رئیس مرکز مدیریت پیوند و درمان بیماری‌ها وزارت بهداشت گفت: روند رشد اهدای عضو در ۱۸ سال گذشته در ایران ۶۰ برابر شده است البته در مقیاس جهانی شاخص قابل قبولی نیست.

به گزارش ایسنا دکتر مهدی شادنوش اظهار کرد: کشوری مانند چین طی ۱۰ سال در زمینه اهدای عضو رشد ۱۲۲ برابری داشته است.

وی خاطرنشان کرد: رتبه اهدای عضو ایران در رنکینگ جهانی ۲۶ است اما می تواند وضعیت بهتر داشته باشد و البته با توجه به فعالیت‌هایی که آغاز شده نتایج بهتری در انتظار خواهد بود و در سال ۹۸ نیز جهش خوبی را شاهد خواهیم بود چراکه چالش‌های موجود در سال ۹۷ رفع شده است.



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DECEMBER 4, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

What actions are most excellent? To gladden the heart of human beings, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful, and to remove the sufferings of the injured.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:55 Evening: 17:11 Dawn: 5:30 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:59 (tomorrow)

Kafka's "Letter to His Father" appears in Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN- A Persian translation of Czech writer Franz Kafka's book "Letter to His Father" has recently been published by Kharazmi Publications in Tehran.

Faramarz Behzad the translators of the book first released in 1919.

Franz Kafka penned a poignant and confrontational letter to his father, Hermann, which has since become known as "Letter to His Father" (German: "Brief an den Vater"). This seminal work offers a profound insight into the complex and often tumultuous relationship between the two men.

As documented by Kafka's biographer, Max Brod, the letter was given to Kafka's mother with the instruction that she deliver it to his father. However, this assignment was never fulfilled, and the original manuscript, comprising 45 typewritten pages with extensive handwritten corrections, remained unpublished.

The letter was first translated into English by Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins and published by Schocken Books in 1954 as part of the collection "Dearest Father: Stories and Other Writings". A bilingual edition followed in 1966. More recently, a new translation by Hannah and Richard Sieburth has been published, offering readers a fresh and nuanced understanding of this pivotal work.

Franz Kafka (1883 -1924) was a prominent Czech-born writer who authored in the German language. Born into a middle-class

Jewish family in Prague, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Kafka is regarded as a major figure in 20th-century literature.

His works blend elements of realism and the fantastical, often depicting isolated protagonists confronting bizarre, surreal situations and oppressive bureaucratic systems. The term "Kafkaesque" has entered common usage to describe such disorienting and oppressive scenarios.

His most famous works include the novella "The Metamorphosis" (1915) and the novels "The Trial" (1924) and "The Castle" (1926). Kafka's influence extends across various disciplines, impacting artists, philosophers, filmmakers, and cultural theorists.

Despite his literary success, Kafka trained as a lawyer and worked in legal and insurance jobs, which created internal conflict given his true passion for writing.

During his lifetime, only a few works were published, including "Contemplation" (1912) and "A Country Doctor" (1919). He maintained a strained relationship with his father, to whom he wrote numerous letters.

Kafka died at age 40 from tuberculosis, relatively unknown at the time. Besides his novels and stories, he is also celebrated for his aphorisms and fables, often combining dark themes with moments of humor, and his writings are sometimes seen as prophetic of future totalitarian regimes.

Cartoon of Day



The World Under Pressure

Cartoonist: José Alberto Rodríguez Avila from Cuba

Mehr Media Group shines in Moscow, named as international Expert of the Year 2025

TEHRAN- In a distinguished ceremony held in Moscow on Tuesday, the Mehr Media Group has been recognized among the top three international winners at the 14th edition of the Expert of the Year 2025 awards.

This accolade underscores Mehr's influential role in fostering media cooperation between Iran and BRICS member countries.

The award event, which gathered media experts, industry leaders, economic officials, and prominent figures from 12 countries including Iran, India, and Brazil, celebrated outstanding projects across 16 categories. The Expert of the Year Award honors specialists introducing innovative ideas and groundbreaking initiatives in economics, media, public management, culture, industry, and social activities—often operating behind the scenes but significantly impacting national development and international collaboration.

Supported by TV BRICS, the prestigious award has evolved from a national recognition into a prominent global platform, featuring participants from



active engagement in enhancing media diplomacy, analytical content production, and truthful representation of Iran-Russia relations earned it a place among the top international contenders. The jury commended the group's efforts in broadening the narrative of Tehran-Moscow cooperation and highlighting the cultural and economic ties between the two nations.



around the world. The event's final statement is published in six languages, emphasizing its international scope and inclusivity. It has become a vital venue for showcasing professional excellence and fostering partnerships across borders.

This year, Mehr Media Group's

Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati, the CEO of Mehr Media Group (which consists of Mehr News Agency and English-language daily Tehran Times), expressed his satisfaction via a video message, emphasizing that the award reflects Iran's effective media efforts to portray a realistic image

of Tehran-Moscow relations. He highlighted the group's role since 2023 as a media partner of TV BRICS, actively working to depict Iran's rich cultural and historical bonds with Russia.

Rahmati also noted the strategic importance of media in countering Western narratives and stressed the significance of collaborative efforts supported by TV BRICS to deliver accurate portrayals of participating nations' capacities and partnerships. "Our participation aligns with our social responsibility and our commitment to strengthening international understanding," he added.

In the International Projects category, one of the notable winners was Masoud Ahmadvand, Iran's cultural attaché in Russia, who was awarded for his project "Patterns of Friendship," an exhibition that showcased Iran's cultural heritage through artworks by Russian artists. This project received high praise from the jury for its role in fostering cultural diplomacy.

"First of all, I would like to thank the Expert Award team for their decision, as well as our wonderful colleagues from TV BRICS, who actively cooperate with the Embassy of Iran and the Cultural Representation," said Ahmadvand accepting his award.

"For us, receiving this award is of great value, and we are proud to have received it from a professional team. This will become an additional motivation for us to organize the second phase of the festival on an even larger scale and to put more effort into strengthening cultural ties between Iran and Russia," he noted.

International laureates also featured Sonu Saini of Jawaharlal Nehru University, for bridging Russian and Indian cultural exchanges through translation projects; Nigerian documentary filmmaker Amazing-Grace Ajayi, recognized for promoting intercultural dialogue via cinema; and Amjad Othman, regional media advisor, for advancing objective regional coverage.

The Expert of the Year Award, established in 2012, aims to recognize individuals and projects that introduce innovative solutions across various sectors. Since 2024, TV BRICS has partnered as the official media supporter, further amplifying the award's global reach.

As Iran continues to strengthen its media presence and international collaborations, Mehr Media Group's achievement in Moscow affirms its vital role in shaping the narrative of Iran's cultural and diplomatic engagement on the global stage.

43rd Fajr International Film Festival concludes in Shiraz

TEHRAN-The 43rd Fajr International Film Festival (FIFF) concluded on Tuesday night, with an awards ceremony held at the Honar Shahr Aftab Cineplex in Shiraz, Fars Province.

According to the festival website, the closing night brought together senior officials, including the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyed Abbas Salehi, the Head of the Iranian Cinema Organization Raed Faridzadeh, and the Governor of Fars Province Hossein Ali Amiri, along with filmmakers, industry professionals, and media representatives.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, the Culture Minister welcomed Pakistan's Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, high-ranking cinema delegations from 15 countries, ambassadors residing in Iran, and distinguished guests from across Iran and around the world, and said: "The Fajr International Film Festival is an opportunity to reflect on an art that, for years, has taught us to see differently, an art that gives us the courage to imagine and frames narratives with meaning."

Salehi referred to current global issues and said: "Our nation has shared the suffering of the oppressed people of Palestine and Gaza, and just a few months ago experienced the difficult days of war. In the 12-day war initiated by the child-killing Zionist regime, the brave sons of this land sacrificed their lives in defense of Iran's security and dignity."

Referring to the role of cinema in such circumstances, he added: "In times like these, art cannot remain silent, and cinema can be the narrator of this resistance. It can preserve these wounds and these acts of bravery so that the collective memory of Iran and the world remain bright and enduring."

"The Fajr International Film Festival shows how cinema can shorten distances and enable dialogue between nations. The presence of filmmakers and guests from various countries demonstrates that today's world,

more than ever, needs honest, humane, and thoughtful narratives," he added.

"In this setting, as a member of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I must stress that we believe that despite differences of opinion, our shared values should serve as the starting point for international cooperation and joint cinematic productions. Shared experiences, whether in creating works or in research and development, open new gateways for exchanging knowledge, technology, and artistic vision. Iranian cinema is ready to take longer and more confident steps on this path," he emphasized.

During the ceremony, Reza Mirkarimi, acclaimed Iranian director and screenwriter and former secretary of the Fajr International Film Festival, was honored for his contributions to cinema.

This year's festival presented awards across four competitive sections, International Competition, Eastern Vista (Films from Asia), Future Frame (First and Second Films), and Broken Olive Branch.

In the International Competition section, the Crystal Simorgh for Best Film was awarded to "Lesson Learned" directed by Balint Szimler from Hungary and "River Returns" directed by Masakazu Kaneko from Japan received the Crystal Simorgh for the Special Jury Award.

The Crystal Simorgh awards for Best Director and Best Script were awarded to Martin Pavol Repka for the film "March to May" from the Czech Republic, and Elena Kiseleva and Andrey Konchalovskiy for the film "Look at Me" from Russia, respectively.

The Crystal Simorgh for Best Artistic Contribution was presented to Ahmed Malek, the young actor of the film "My Father's Scent," a co-production of Egypt, Norway, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and France, directed by Mohamed Siam.

In the Eastern Vista section, the Crystal Simorgh for Best Film was awarded to "Where the White Cranes Dance" directed by Michael Lukachevsky from Russia.

The Crystal Simorgh for the Special Jury Award was presented to "The Settlement" directed by Mohamed Rashad from Egypt, Qatar, Germany, France, and Saudi Arabia.

The Crystal Simorgh for Artistic Contribution went to Behnoush Sadeghi, director of "Calm Man" from Iran, for her achievement in successfully orchestrating the interaction of the film's creative elements, from acting to cinematography to set and costume design.

"In the Belly of a Tiger" directed by Jatla Siddhartha from India received a Special Mention in this section.

In the Future Frame section, the Crystal Simorgh for Best Film was jointly awarded to "Round 13" directed by Mohamed Ali Nahdi from Tunisia and "Two Faces of Autumn" by Ronak Taher from Iran, Australia, and Canada.

The Crystal Simorgh for the Special Jury Award is awarded to "Riverstone" by Lalith Rathnayake from Sri Lanka.

In the Broken Olive Branch section, the jury presented the Crystal Simorgh for Best Film to "All That's Left of You" directed by Cherien Dabis, a co-production of Germany, Cyprus, Palestine, Jordan, Greece, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

The Special Jury Award went to "From Ground Zero" by Rashid Masharawi, a co-production of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, France, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, and Denmark, for its powerful and convincing depiction of the lived reality and suffering endured over the past two years, seen through the lenses of 22 artists from Gaza.

"Valley of Exile" by Anna Fahr from Canada and Lebanon received a Special Mention in this section for its notable visionary style.