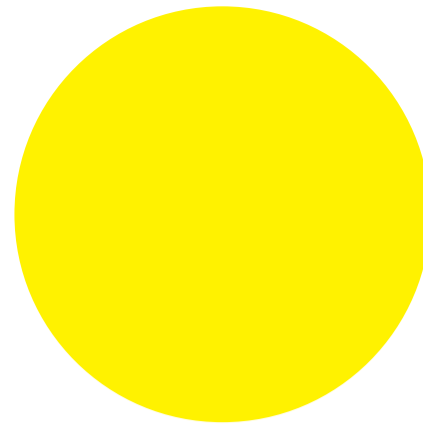


Iran, IAEA agree to cooperate based on last year agreement

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Nameplate capacity of power stations up by 9,000MW: Official

The electricity generation capacity of power plants in Iran has increased by about 9,000MW in less than three years, announced an official at the Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) on Tuesday.

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For first time, Iranian TV series 'Actor' goes global with French, German dubbing

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Iran exporting techno-engineering services in water, soil sectors to 19 countries



Iran is exporting technical, engineering and electro-mechanical services to 19 countries, including Iraq, Armenia and Uzbekistan, said the deputy minister of agriculture for water and soil affairs.

Safdar Niazi Shahraki also said that 50 percent of the projects of the ministry are related to water and soil, reported IRNA

Niazi Shahraki pointed to the smarting of the irrigation system and noted that intelligent irrigation systems should replace the current systems and the country should employ irrigation systems according to the world's most modern technologies.

Meanwhile, the chief executive of Iran's East Azerbaijan Regional Water Company said on Tuesday that the Qiz Qalasi Dam, the largest joint water project between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, will become operational in the coming days.

The construction operation of the dam, which is the most important project in the northwest of the country, has been completed and it will be inaugurated in the coming days in the presence of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his Azeri counterpart Ilham Aliyev, Yousef Ghaffarzadeh stated.

The project, which includes the development of the Khoda Afarin reservoir dam 196km downstream of the Aras River with a capacity of 1.6 billion cubic meters has been fully designed and implemented by expert Iranian engineers, he emphasized.

Nameplate capacity of power stations up by 9,000MW: Official

The electricity generation capacity of power plants in Iran has increased by about 9,000MW in less than three years, announced an official at the Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) on Tuesday.

Hadi Modaqeq, the director general of the macroplanning office of the TPPH pointed to the syn-

chronization of 46 newly-inaugurated thermal power plants with a total capacity of 6,584MW since August 2021, saying that all efforts were done to reduce shortages across the country and to have sustainable power grid, IRNA reported.

He also added that steam units with a total generation capacity of

2,380 megawatts have been connected to the nationwide electricity grid since August 2021.

Electricity generation capacity of thermal power plants in Iran currently stands at 75,584MW, the official announced noting that a sum of over 9,000MW will be added to the figure by August 2025.



Know-how to produce fire-safe polymers indigenized



The researchers of a new technology-based firm (NTBF) based in the Incubation Center of the Materials and Energy Research Center (MERC) have achieved the technology of making fire-safe polymers.

Mahmoud Shahriari, the managing director of the Barad Materials and Technology Innovators Company, stated that by achieving the know-how to produce fire-safe

polymers, the NTBF succeeded in designing as well as production of the parts needed by several industries, according to a report by merc.ac.ir.

The technology developer went on to say that the price of fire-safe polymers made by his firm is totally affordable as are offered to the markets with a third of the price of similar foreign-made parts.

Pointing to the advan-

tages of the said product, he noted that the indigenized product is resistant to degradation at high temperatures.

"The automatic glass, tile and ceramic production line machineries enjoy advanced technology as operate at high speed and temperature," Shahriari stated adding that fire-safe polymers by his NTBF meet the standards for the said machineries. Stating that this technology is used for various industries, he said "In addition to the glass and tile industries, the know-how is being further developed by our firm to be used in more industries operated at higher temperature, including parts related to heat treatment furnaces, heaters, cruci-

bles.

According to the report, several parts used in the glassware and tile industry have been indigenized with the noted technology.

As stated, fire-safe polymers are polymers that are resistant to degradation at high temperatures. There is also dire need for fire-resistant polymers in the construction of small, enclosed spaces such as skyscrapers, boats, and airplane cabins. In these tight spaces, ability to escape in the event of a fire is compromised, increasing fire risk. Fire-safe polymers also find application as adhesives in aerospace materials, insulation for electronics, and in materials such as canvas tenting.

Minister urges removal of export barriers between Tehran, Baghdad

Iran's minister of economic affairs and finance emphasized the removal of barriers in the way of exporting technical and engineering services between Tehran and Baghdad.

Speaking in a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Trade Atheer Daoud Salman Al-Ghariri in Tehran, Ehsan Khandouzi pointed to the progress of the trade and economic relations between the two countries and stressed the need to remove barriers in the field of export of the technical and engineering services, IRNA reported. He also called for developing financial and currency exchanges and accelerating the construction of road and railway projects

between the two sides.

Regarding the launch of the Iran-Iraq Joint Industrial Town, Khandouzi said that preliminary measures have been taken by the two countries for the project.

The minister referred to the development of a railway between the two countries and urged the Iraqi side to embark on delivering the land for accelerating the construction operation of this project.

Khandouzi also pointed to the high capacities of Iranian technical and engineering companies and stated that the removal of trade barriers in this field can help increase cooperation between the two countries.

Annual trade of \$20b possible for Iran-KRG

President of Iraq's Kurdistan region Nechirvan Barzani was in Tehran Monday, heading a high-level delegation to bolster relations and explore opportunities for cooperation.

Nazim Dabbagh, representing the Kurdistan Regional Government in Tehran, emphasized the significance of the visit, noting Iran's view of Iraqi Kurds as a strategic ally, Press TV wrote.

Since the overthrow of the Baath regime in 2003, Iraq and the Kurdistan Region have become two important destinations for Iranian goods. Iran's trade volume with Iraq and the Kurdistan Region has stood at around 13 billion dollars in recent years, just over half of which is through around half a doz-

en land border crossings with areas under the control of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Iranian officials have repeatedly said that they want to increase the volume to 20 billion dollars in coming years.

According to the Iraqi Kurdistan's Importers and Exporters Union, Iran ranks as the second-largest trading partner of the Iraqi Kurdistan region, just behind Turkey. Their annual trade amounts to approximately \$6 billion. The Iraqi Kurdistan's market offers the best opportunity for the presence of Iran's capabilities in various fields.

Over the last two decades, it has seen the regional countries jockeying for position, but Iran's presence in the market has been minimal

despite the existence of common cultural and social capacities between the two sides. Various memorandums have been signed, especially by the provincial authorities in recent years, but the presence of Iranians in the regional market is not proportional to the capacities and talents at their disposal. For example, there is significant capacity in the medical sector in Iran's Kurdish-populated regions near the border, which can be used by patients and clients from Iraq, including the Iraqi Kurdistan. Currently, the presence of health tourists from the Iraqi Kurdistan in Iran's Kurdish regions is a familiar sight, but there is still room for much bigger numbers given the existing capacities and

linguistic and cultural similarities.

The Iraqi Kurdistan and Iran are connected through three official and internationally recognized border crossings: Parviz Khan in Garmiyah, Haji Omran in Erbil, and Bashmakh in Sulaymaniyah. Additionally, trade persists between the two regions through semi-official border points such as Shushme, Sayranban, Kele, and Pishtay Tawela.

Kermanshah in Iran alone has 371 km of land bordering the Kurdistan Region and Iraq, with six border crossings and border markets. Food industries and industrial products are one of the most important market needs of the Iraqi Kurds, for which there are significant



capacities in the Iranian Kurdistan.

Overall, Iraq has always had a significant place in Iran's international trade, where the export of engineering services to rebuild the country's infrastructure is more desirable than the export of goods. The Arab country, not the least the autonomous Kurdistan region, depends on oil for about 96% of its income. Years of occupation by US-led forces, the Daesh sedition and internal fight lingering from the time of former dic-

tator Saddam Hussein have destroyed Iraq's infrastructure. Hence, engineering services and infrastructure projects are not only more economical for investment than exporting goods, but also entail in better returns. However, strict and redundant laws and practices outside the usual commercial frameworks are a key hurdle, which require the two sides to facilitate the terms of trade exchanges.

They also need to perk up interaction between the pri-

private and public sectors, and facilitate business conditions and procedures.

For Iran, failure to benefit from available capacities will take away the best opportunity to export technical and engineering goods and services and allow Turkish companies to solidify their foothold in the region.

The fate of Iranians and Kurds is inextricably intertwined, where none has lived without the other, with their close kinship manifesting itself in every aspect of their life.

On Monday, President Barzani was on point when he cited former president of Iraq's Kurdistan Masoud Barzani famously saying that late Iranian general Qassem Soleimani was the first who came to the rescue of Kurds after they were attacked by Daesh terrorists in 2014.

Darak Beach, a coastal paradise of nature and culture

Nestled along the azure waters of the Gulf of Oman, the coastal city of Chabahar in southeastern Iran is home to a hidden gem, Darak Beach. This pristine stretch of shoreline offers a captivating blend of natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and a serene ambiance that beckons travelers seeking an escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Darak Beach, with its golden sands, crystal-clear waters, and rugged coastal landscapes, is a true oasis amidst the arid deserts and towering mountains that characterize much of Iran's southeastern region. Yet, this coastal haven is a testament to the incredible diversity and natural splendor that this ancient land has to offer, inviting visitors to discover a side of Iran that is both breathtaking and deeply rooted in its rich cultural tapestry, amazingiran.media wrote.

A harmonious fusion of nature and culture

What sets Darak Beach apart from other coastal destinations is its harmonious fusion of natural beauty and cultural richness. As you stroll along the shoreline, you'll be greeted by the gentle lapping of the Gulf of Oman's waves, while the rugged cliffs and rocky outcrops create a dramatic backdrop, adding to the area's scenic allure.

The beach itself is a pristine canvas, adorned with golden sands that stretch as far as the eye can see, inviting visitors to sink their toes into the warmth and let the gentle rhythm of the waves wash away their worries. Yet, just a stone's throw away, the vibrant culture of Chabahar and the Baluchestan comes alive, with its distinctive architecture, mouth-watering cuisine, and warm hospitality that embraces visitors with open arms.

A haven for marine life

Darak Beach is more than just a stunning coastal destination; it is a thriving ecosystem that harbors a remarkable diversity of marine life. The Gulf of Oman, which laps the shores of Darak Beach, is home to a vast array of species, including colorful coral reefs, schools of vibrant tropical fish, and even the occasional dolphin or whale sighting.

Along the shoreline and in the nearby coastal areas, a wealth of birdlife flourishes, creating a true paradise for avid birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts. From majestic raptors soaring overhead to migratory shorebirds foraging along the water's edge, Darak Beach offers a front-row seat to the wonders of nature in all its glory.

Eco-tourism and sustainable practices

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on promoting eco-tourism and sustainable practices in the region, ensuring that the natural treasures of Darak Beach are

preserved for generations to come. Local communities and environmental organizations have joined forces to implement responsible tourism initiatives, educating visitors on the importance of minimizing their ecological footprint and respecting the delicate balance of the local ecosystems.

Visitors can embark on guided snorkeling or diving excursions, participate in beach cleanup activities, and learn about the rich biodiversity that thrives in this coastal paradise. By embracing sustainable practices, Darak Beach not only preserves its natural beauty but also fosters a deeper appreciation and understanding of the importance of environmental conservation.

Traditions and hospitality

No visit to Darak Beach would be complete without immersing oneself in the rich cultural tapestry of Chabahar and the surrounding area. This area, nestled along the coast of the Gulf of Oman, has been a crossroads of civilizations for centuries, with its unique traditions and customs reflecting the diverse influences that have shaped its history.

From the distinctive architecture of the region, with its intricately designed wind towers and mud-brick structures, to the mouth-watering cuisine that celebrates the bounty of the sea and the desert, Chabahar and Baluchestan offer a cultural experience like no other. Visitors can explore ancient fishing villages, attend local festivals, and witness the incredible hospitality of the local communities, who take great pride in sharing their heritage with guests from around the world.

Outdoor adventures and recreational activities

Darak Beach is not just a destination for relaxation and cultural immersion; it also offers a wealth of outdoor adventures and recreational activities for those seeking an adrenaline-fueled experience.

Visitors can embark on hiking and trekking expeditions through the rugged coastal landscapes and nearby mountain ranges, discovering hidden coves, ancient ruins, and breathtaking vistas along the way.

For water enthusiasts, the Gulf of Oman provides ample opportunities for activities such as swimming, snorkeling, diving, and stand-up paddleboarding (SUP), allowing visitors to explore crystal-clear waters and bask in the tranquility of this coastal paradise. Adventure seekers can also indulge in thrilling activities like rock climbing, mountain biking, and even desert safaris, offering a unique perspective on the diverse landscapes that surround Darak Beach.

Sustainability and community-driven tourism

As the popularity of Darak Beach continues

to grow, there is a concerted effort to strike a delicate balance between promoting tourism and preserving the area's natural and cultural heritage. Local communities and authorities have recognized the importance of sustainable tourism practices, ensuring that the influx of visitors does not come at the cost of environmental degradation or the erosion of local traditions.

Through a community-driven approach, initiatives have been implemented to minimize the ecological impact of tourism activities, such as promoting eco-friendly accommodations, implementing waste management programs, and regulating visitor numbers to prevent overcrowding and strain on local resources.

Empowering local communities

Moreover, there is a strong emphasis on empowering local communities and ensuring that they are active participants in the tourism industry. By providing training and support for local guides, artisans, and small business owners, Darak Beach is not only preserving its cultural heritage but also creating sustainable economic opportunities for the region's residents.

Visitors can immerse themselves in authentic cultural experiences, such as staying in traditional guesthouses, participating in local handicraft workshops, or attending cooking classes that showcase the region's culinary traditions. By supporting these community-driven initiatives, travelers not only gain a deeper appreciation for the local culture but also contribute to the preservation of a way of life that has been passed down for generations.

Darak Beach in Chabahar is a true gem, a place where nature's majesty and cultural richness intertwine in a breathtaking symphony of beauty and tradition. From its pristine shores and crystal-clear waters to the rugged coastal landscapes and nearby mountain ranges that frame this coastal paradise, Darak Beach offers a truly unique and unforgettable experience.

As visitors immerse themselves in the natural wonders and cultural heritage of this region, they are reminded of the importance of preserving and protecting these precious resources for future generations. Through sustainable tourism practices and community-driven initiatives, Darak Beach serves as a model for how to strike a delicate balance between promoting tourism and safeguarding the delicate ecosystems and cultural traditions that make this destination so special. Whether you're seeking a tranquil escape, an adventure-filled getaway, or a deeper immersion into Iran's rich cultural tapestry, Darak Beach in Chabahar beckons, inviting you to discover a hidden gem that will leave an indelible mark on your heart and soul.



Netanyahu's Rafah assault begs the question

Where is the red line?



PERSPECTIVE

At a particularly heated session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee on December 11, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu lectured his fellow MPs: "Some of you don't understand what it is to win a war. A war is won with arms and international credit." In the same meeting, he spoke of his plan to use the war to gain Israeli control over the so-called "Philadelphi

Corridor", the 14km strip of land in the Gazan city of Rafah that constitutes Palestine's international border with Egypt. Naturally, such a plan would be unachievable without an invasion of Rafah, which has in recent months become the main sanctuary

— if a city on the brink of famine could be called that — for more than a million displaced Palestinians. On Monday morning, Mr. Netanyahu's long-telegraphed battle for Rafah seemed to have begun, with the Israeli military warning 100,000

Palestinians there to leave as it was preparing to act "with extreme force". They were asked to make their way to Al-Mawasi, a makeshift camp that charities have warned is woefully inadequate to accommodate such an influx.



Israel has more than enough arms to make good on its invasion threats, even if its international credit runs dry. The unanimity with which the international community has condemned Mr. Netanyahu's designs on Rafah is remarkable. The US, the UK, and the EU have all agreed the devastation would be intolerable, particularly in the absence of a credible humanitarian plan to protect the huge number of civilians trapped there. In February, British Foreign Secretary David Cameron implored Israel to think carefully about potential violations of international law: "It is impossible to see how you can fight a war among these people [in Rafah]. There's nowhere for them to go." On March 9, US President Joe Biden told the American broadcaster MSNBC in a televised interview that an invasion of Rafah "is a red line." And yet, Mr. Netanyahu's constant inching in that direction has been tolerated. Three days after Mr. Biden's comment, the US National Security Adviser, Jake Sullivan, flatly denied it was ever made. These mixed messages have let down Gaza's civilians, undermined both Israeli and Palestinian long-term security, and emboldened Mr. Netanyahu's worst impulses.

Those impulses include the pursuit of a "total victory", in the Prime Minister's words, in Rafah where there is none. Threatening the city may have made sense in earlier weeks of the conflict, as a negotiating tactic to pressure Hamas into concessions. Thus far, however, none have come — and in any case, Mr. Netanyahu said last week his assault on Rafah would take place "with or without a deal". Meanwhile, the military aims — destroying Hamas and realising Israeli ambitions for the Philadelphi Corridor — are not compelling. Even if Hamas's command structure were crippled or destroyed, the scale of inevitable casualties will only strengthen the argument for militancy in the minds of young Palestinians. Hamas, or other groups like it, will resurge — if not now, then later. And if Mr. Netanyahu is made to feel he has unlimited credit in Washington and London, he should be under no such illusion in Cairo. Egyptian officials have already warned the displacement of large numbers of Palestinians into the Sinai and Israeli military occupation of the border could undermine the Egyptian-Israeli peace that has held for nearly half a century. Whatever Israel's short-term gains in Gaza, the collapse of the Camp David Accords would present a loss that out-

weighs them all. In the immediate term, the well-being of Gaza's civilians must be the highest priority. The US and UK said they expected Israel to present a credible plan for these civilians before any invasion. The fact the invasion appears to have begun should render this demand more — not less — relevant. They should use their permanent seats in the UN Security Council to demand an immediate halt to the invasion, at least until such a plan is presented and independently vetted. The international community must also back calls for Israeli officials to be prosecuted for any war crimes that may arise from proceeding in the absence of such a plan. Finally, Palestinian civilians must not become a bargaining chip. Ever since the start of the war, Egyptian officials have been rightly vexed by the idea that any displacement of Palestinians into the Sinai could become permanent — adding yet another long-term Palestinian refugee community to the region. The Israeli right-wing often speaks as though it would like nothing more. But that idea cannot and should not be even contemplated. Palestinians must remain in their homeland.

The article first appeared on The National.

Israeli bombs drop on Rafah as Gazans flee their homes



By Connor Echols
Reporter

PERSPECTIVE

Israel has begun launching air strikes in Rafah ahead of a likely invasion of the city, where more than 1.5 million Gazans have taken shelter in camps near the border with Egypt. The air strikes came just hours after the Israeli cabinet told Palestinians to flee the city, a demand that aid groups fear will worsen the already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, where famine has begun to take hold. The European Union's foreign policy chief called the evacuation order "unacceptable".

The apparent decision to invade Rafah comes as cease-fire talks broke down over the weekend. Israel says the logjam came after an alleged Hamas attack on Israeli soldiers at the Kerem Shalom crossing, while Hamas blamed the breakdown on Israel's decision to start evacuations of Rafah. The possibility of an Israeli assault in Rafah puts US President Joe Biden in a precarious position. The White House has already found itself at odds with many Democrats due to Biden's refusal to break with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his deadly campaign in Gaza. A bloody escalation of the war would further divide his party and ratchet up the pressure to do something to stop Israel's campaign.

Biden may have already internalized that message. On Friday, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that absent a credible plan to protect civilians, "we can't support a major military operation going into Rafah because the damage it would do is beyond what's acceptable."

But the Biden administration has consistently balked at opportunities to hold Israel accountable for alleged war crimes and human rights abuses. Just last week, the White House walked back a threat to restrict weapons transfers to certain Israeli units due to "gross violations of human rights".

A new chance to restrict arms sales could come Wednesday of this week when the Biden administration will issue a mandatory report to Congress evaluating Israel's assurances that it won't use American weapons in ways that violate US and international laws. An independent analysis from legal experts and former State Department officials found numerous attacks that should have already triggered a cutoff in US support. And nearly 90 House Democrats signed a letter last week, calling on the administration to suspend certain weapons transfers to Israel.

A key question is whether a Rafah invasion will further restrict the delivery of US humanitarian aid. Experts say Israel has already violated US law stipulating that Washington will not give weapons to countries that block American aid transfers, and a Rafah invasion would likely lead to further violations.



Smoke rises following an Israeli strike on the densely-populated Rafah, the southern Gaza Strip, on May 6, 2024.
HATEM KHALED/REUTERS

There is also significant doubt surrounding Israeli assurances that its operation will minimize harm to civilians. Those who are now fleeing Rafah will reportedly have to evacuate to nearby Khan Younis and Al-Mawasi, neither of which has the capacity to

receive incoming displaced people or provide them with much-needed aid. It's unclear how many Gazans will be able to escape before the full-scale assault begins. Israel's previous actions suggest that its tolerance for killing civilians is higher than that of the Biden

administration. The question remains: Is the Biden administration finally ready to publicly break with Israel?

The article first appeared on *Responsible Statecraft*.

'Where can we go?' say Rafah residents as Israel demands evacuation

AFP – Israel's army said it was instructing Palestinian families in eastern Rafah to flee in preparation for an expected ground assault on the city near Gaza's border with Egypt.

But as many displaced people packed up their things to move yet again, authorities in Hamas-run Gaza said Israeli air strikes were already targeting specific areas ordered evacuated in eastern Rafah.

Residents of Rafah said they emerged after a terrifying night of numerous air strikes on Rafah to find fliers falling from the sky telling them to "evacuate immediately".

"The army is working with intensive power against the terrorist forces near you," read a flier circulated in eastern Rafah.

"For your safety, the IDF (Israeli military) tells you to evacuate immediately towards the expanded humanitarian zone of Al-Mawasi," it said, with a map indicating the location to the north of Rafah. An Israeli military spokesman said the plan was initially for "around 100,000

people" to move. About 1.2 million people are currently sheltering in Rafah, according to the World Health Organisation, most having fled there during the seven-month war between Israel and Hamas Palestinian fighters.

'Very scared'

Rafah resident Ammar Mohammad Abu Assem told AFP that people had also been receiving calls "telling us to evacuate".

He slammed the calls as "foolish talk" after Gaza authorities said strikes on Rafah overnight and Monday morning killed at least 26 people.

"After they bomb, they tell us to evacuate?" he said.

Eyewitnesses described high levels of anxiety and confusion as people began moving from the eastern areas of Rafah, moving their belongings by foot and in overflowing trucks, cars, and donkey-drawn carts.

"We are very scared and afraid because it's not easy to move from one place to

another, from displacement to displacement," said Hanah Saleh, 40, who had already been displaced from Tal Al-Zaatar in northern Gaza to Rafah.

"We do not know where to go," Um Ahmed Fasef told AFP, adding that "this is the third time I have been displaced" since the war began.

Amid pouring rain, some of those sheltering in Rafah said they had begun packing up their things from the densely packed tents and preparing to leave even before Israel's directive arrived. "Whatever happens, my tent is ready," a resident told AFP.

'Where can we go?'

Israel's army has said the area where people are being asked to go had been equipped with field hospitals, tents, and a waterline, while additional food and medical supplies had been stored there.

But aid groups and displaced Gazans warned that the area was already overcrowded, leaving little room for new arrivals.

Osama Al-Kahlout, of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Gaza, told AFP that the areas designated for evacuation currently shelter some 250,000 people, many of whom have already been displaced from other areas in the Gaza Strip.

Abdul Rahman Abu Jazar, 36, said he and 12 family members were in the designated evacuation area.

Jazar and his family did not know what to do, he said, because the "humanitarian zone" they were told to head for "does not have enough room for us to make tents because they are (already) full of displaced people".

"Where can we go? We do not know." The Israeli military spokesman told reporters that the evacuation "is part of our plans to dismantle Hamas ... we had a violent reminder of their presence and their operational abilities in Rafah yesterday".

On Sunday, four Israeli soldiers were killed and others wounded, the army said, when a barrage of rockets was fired from an area adjacent to Rafah to-

wards the Kerem Shalom border crossing between Israel and Gaza.

'No credible humanitarian plan'

International aid organisations have voiced alarm at the expected invasion of Rafah.

"From the humanitarian perspective, no credible humanitarian plan for an attack on Rafah exists," said Bushra Khalidi, advocacy director for Oxfam in the Palestinian territories.

Gaza's bloodiest-ever war broke out following Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack on Israel which resulted in the deaths of more than 1,170 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

Fighters also seized some 250 captives, with Israel estimating that 128 of them remain in Gaza, including 35 whom the military says are dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive, aimed at destroying Hamas, has killed at least 34,735 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.



Raisi honors Iranian international medalists



Sports Desk

A ceremony to honor the Iranian medalists at the international events – attended by President Ebrahim Raisi and Sports Minister Kioumars Hashemi – was held in Tehran on Tuesday. More than 1500 athletes were among the guests in the capital's International Conference Center, praised for their achievements in different world and Asian championships over the past 12 months as well as the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. Addressing the attendees, the Iranian president said the in-

frastructure for the professional sports need to be developed all over the country, so that the athletes will have no concerns "but to succeed at the International competitions." Meanwhile, Hashemi said that the Iranians walked away with 1005 medals across 79 sports in the previous Persian calendar year, which came to an end on March 21. "For all the problems facing these male and female athletes in their preparations, they put in all their efforts to make a whole nation proud by their achievements," added the Iranian minister.



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (2nd R) and Sports Minister Kioumars Hashemi (3rd R) are pictured in a ceremony to honor Iranian medalists at international sporting events in Tehran, Iran on May 7, 2024.
● president.ir

Persian Gulf Pro League roundup:

Foreigners on fire as Blues retain edge on top



Esteghlal striker Gustavo Blanco celebrates his stoppage-time winner in a 2-1 victory over Zob Ahan in the Persian Gulf Pro League at the Azadi Stadium, Tehran, Iran, on May 6, 2024.
● PAYAM SANI/IRNA

Sports Desk

Argentine striker Gustavo Blanco banged in a 94th-minute winner as Esteghlal pulled off a second-half fightback to beat Zob Ahan 2-1 at home and stay on top of the Persian Gulf Pro League table.

On a day that the Tehran archrivals had their foreign players to thank for their victories, Uzbek winger Oston Urunov found the net twice to help 10-man Persepolis walk away with a 2-1 win at Nassaji Mazandaran earlier on Monday. It took Urunov six minutes to bag his first goal when the host's Brazilian keeper Luan Polli made a mess of saving his low drive from the edge of the box.

The Tehran Reds looked in control throughout the first half but a second booking for midfielder Soroush Rafiei five minutes after the break turned the game on its head.

Things went from bad to worse for the visitors on the hour mark as international keeper Alireza Beiranvand could only watch Amirmohammad Houshmand's sizzling strike find the bottom corner. The champions still showed character

to restore their lead, courtesy of Urunov keeping composure in a one-on-one situation with Polli to put it away for his fourth goal in the Iranian top flight since joining Persepolis in February.

Trailing the top by a single point before the game, Persepolis held out Nassaji's push for a second goal to seal the maximum points and remain in the hunt for a seventh league crown in eight years.

Nassaji, meanwhile, was dealt a massive blow in the survival battle though the northern Iranian club was lucky to remain outside the relegation zone on goal difference after Foolad Khuzestan fell to a 2-0 home defeat against Tractor later in the day.

Blues on course

Persepolis's victory meant that Esteghlal kicked off the game at Tehran's Azadi Stadium second in the table and Majid Aliyari's delicate finish for the visiting side – the league's best team on the road prior to Monday's fixtures – six minutes into the game was the worst start Blues boss Javad Nekounam could have hoped for.

Esteghlal fans had to wait until the 64th minute for a much-needed equal-

izer, when Uzbek midfielder Jaloliddin Masharipov dummied past a Zob defender before firing into the roof of the net.

Esteghlal strikers Arman Ramezani and Payman Babaei were introduced late in a desperate quest for a winner though Zob looked more likely to score on the counter.

With the two sides looking destined for a repeat of the scoreline in the reverse fixture last November, Blanco came to the rescue for Nekounam's side as he was first to a loose ball in the box before smashing it into top corner deep into stoppage time – sending the Blues bench and home crowd into a frenzy.

The result saw Esteghlal restore the one-point cushion on top of the table with four games to spare, as one of the tightest races for the Iranian league trophy in recent years is set to go down the wire. Next for Esteghlal is another home game against Foolad, with Persepolis playing away to Masoud Shojaei's in-form Havadar.

Elsewhere on Monday, Esteghlal Khuzestan salvaged a massive 1-1 draw at Sepahan to move above Nassaji and Foolad into safety zone on goal difference.

Javad Aqaiepour equalized for the visitors with a sublime overhead kick midway through the second half to cancel out Shahriar Moghanlou's opener right before the break – a 15th goal of the campaign for the Sepahan striker who is clear on top of the league's leading marksmen chart.

Rock-bottom club San'at Naft closed the gap on Nassaji and Foolad to three points with a 1-0 triumph over Mes Rafsanjan in Abadan, while Mohammad Omri converted from the spot late in the game to save Malavan a point in a 1-1 home draw against Havadar.

Iralco defeated Paykan 1-0 in Tehran, with Shams Azar and Golgozar sharing the points in a goalless game on Sunday.

Iran's Esmaeili wins Asian youth boxing gold

Sports Desk

Iranian Amir Esmaeili finished his campaign at the ASBC Asian U22 & Youth Boxing Championships on a high note, bagging a precious gold medal in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Representing the country in the men's youth contests, Esmaeili came out on top against Uzbekistan's Shahzod Polvonov by unanimous decision (5:0) for the ultimate prize of the super heavyweight (+92kg) class.

This was a third medal for the Iranian youth team in Astana – after a couple of bronzes for Amir-Reza Soltani (54kg) and Amir-Reza Malek-Khatibi (86kg) – which saw the country finish fifth in the medals table. Kazakhstan bagged a remarkable 12 medals – including five golds – to stand atop the table, with Uzbekistan, India, and China in the following spots.

The Iranian men's under-22 squad, meanwhile, managed to claim three bronze medals – courtesy of Mohammad Mahshari (75kg), Ali Seyyed-Sadri (86kg), and Reza Khalilzadeh (+92kg).

More than 390 boxers from 24 countries fought for medals across 25 weight categories.



Iran, IAEA agree to cooperate based on last year agreement

International Desk

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) agreed to resume their cooperation based on a last year agreement in order to resolve their differences. Director General of the IAEA paid a two-day visit to Iran on Monday and Tuesday and held talks with several Iranian officials, including the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Mohammad Eslami. In a joint press conference with the IAEA chief, Eslami hailed his "constructive" talks with Grossi and described last year's joint statement as a roadmap for cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. He also emphasized that Iran will continue its interaction with the IAEA

in three areas, saying, the first one is related to the past issues, with a focus on solving the issue of two locations. "The second one is about the current situation and following up expectations and shortcomings within the framework of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Safeguards Agreement... The responsibility for third one lies on Grossi and he should take steps for the future." Back in March 2023 and during a visit by the IAEA chief to Tehran, Iran and the IAEA agreed to take steps aimed at facilitating enhanced cooperation and expediting the resolution of outstanding safeguards issues. According to a statement, both sides recognized that such positive engagements between Iran and the IAEA can pave the way for wider



Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Mohammad Eslami (R) shakes hands with Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency Rafael Grossi before a press conference in Isfahan, Iran, on May 7, 2024.
● RASOUL SHAJAEI/IRNA

agreements among state parties. Both sides agreed that bi-

lateral interactions will be carried out in a spirit of collaboration, and in

full conformity with the competencies of the IAEA and the rights and obliga-

tions of Iran based on the comprehensive safeguards agreement.

Hezbollah drone attack kills Israeli soldiers

International Desk

Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement said on Monday it carried out a drone attack on an Israeli military position near the northern Israeli town of Metula. The Israeli military later confirmed two soldiers were killed in the attack. Hezbollah also said it had sent dozens of rockets towards military targets deep inside the occupied territories. The Israeli Army said it attempted, but failed, to intercept the explosive drone that ultimately struck and killed the soldiers. Another soldier was lightly hurt in the attack, the military added. Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging fire since early October, shortly after the occupying regime launched its war on Gaza. The movement has vowed to keep up its retaliatory operations as long as the Tel Aviv regime continues its onslaught on Gaza.

Israeli tanks enter Rafah, seize key border crossing

International Desk

Israeli tanks seized control of Gaza's vital Rafah border crossing on Tuesday as Israel brushed off urgent warnings from close allies and moved into the southern city even as cease-fire negotiations with Hamas remained on a knife's edge. Hamas issued a statement calling Israel's move a "dangerous escalation" which threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of displaced civilians in Rafah and facilities protected by international law. The UN also warned of a potential collapse of the flow of aid to Palestinians from the closure of Rafah and the other main crossing into Gaza, Kerem Sha-



lom, at a time when officials say the northern part of the enclave is already experiencing "full-blown famine." The incursion comes after Israel said it would continue its military operation in Rafah even after Hamas said it had accepted a Gaza cease-fire proposal put forward by Qatari and Egyptian mediators. Israel insisted the

deal did not meet its core demands. The high-stakes diplomatic moves and military brinkmanship left a glimmer of hope alive — if only barely — for a deal to bring at least a pause in the war, which as it marked its 7-month point Tuesday, has killed more than 34,700 Palestinians and has devastated the Gaza Strip.

IRGC chief: Anti-Israel operations expose regime's vulnerability

International Desk

The chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) said Hamas' Operation Al-Aqsa Storm and Iran's Operation True Promise against Israel exposed the vulnerability of the Israeli regime. Major General Hossein Salami made the remarks in a ceremony in the capital Tehran in commemoration of the IRGC advisors assassinated in an Israeli attack against the Iranian consulate in Syria on April 1. He described the large-scale and surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm launched by Palestinian resistance groups on October 7 as proof of the com-

plete failure of the Israeli intelligence service. Salami highlighted that the extensive missile and drone strikes that the IRGC launched in the early hours of April 14 on the Israeli-occupied territories, dubbed Operation True Promise, dealt a severe blow to Israel and showed the incapability of the anti-missile systems that the United States, Britain, France and even some Arab states have deployed in the West Asia region. Operation True Promise inflicted damage on Israeli military bases across the occupied lands. The retaliatory strikes came after the Israeli attack on April 1 against the Iranian consulate in Da-

mascus, which killed seven members of the IRGC, including two senior commanders. The IRGC chief commander further noted that enemies are nearing their end, stressing that Operation Al-Aqsa Storm pushed Israel to the verge of "brain death," exposed its vulnerability and demonstrated the fact that the Tel Aviv regime is so shaky. "The most abhorrent regimes on earth are Israel and the US which supports it. Through US military and political support and on the West artificial respiration, it (Israel) has been able to extend its existence which is coming to an end," Salami pointed out.

First Announcement

N.I.S.O.C
NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0140004

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
1	CASING 5 IN" API GRAE L-80 SEAMLESS "VAM FJL" THREAD RANGE 3, 18 PPF	1,400LE
2	CASING 5 IN" API GRAE P-110, PSL: 2 SEAMLESS "VAM FLUSH JOINT" THREAD RANGE 3, 18 PPF	1,600LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 105,106/79 EURO or 45,000,000,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab.

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

NOTE: Based on enactment notified by Nisoc's Tender committee, foreign companies must submit a Bid Bond Guarantee amounting to aforementioned (paragraph 2)Euro amount. Otherwise, their quotations will not be considered.

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS
www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://lets.mporg.ir> 1711352

First Announcement

N.I.S.O.C
NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0140001

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	CASING, API GRADE C-110, SEAMLESS "VAM", "N.VAM" THREAD, RANGE 3(MAX LEN:40.5 FT) AS PER API 5CT/ISO11960 / MARKING: COLD DIE STAMPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT 7 IN. 35 PPF	3000 LE
02	COUPLING, CASING, API GRADE C-110, SEAMLESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT & NACE MR0175 PHOSFATED COATING COUPLING SIZE, WEIGHT & THREAD AS SPECIFIED 7IN 35 PPF, N.VAM	150 NO

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 131,340/04 EURO or 57,492,000,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab.

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS
www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://lets.mporg.ir> 1711353

For first time, Iranian TV series 'Actor' goes global with French, German dubbing

Arts & Culture Desk

The French-German network "Arte" has bought the Iranian TV series 'Actor' for broadcasting in Europe and dubbed it. 'Actor,' directed by Nima Javidi, is set to be the first Iranian TV series to be widely broadcast in Europe with French and German dubbing by the Arte platform and channel, marking a milestone in the history of Iranian television series, IRNA wrote. The first season of this series

will premiere on May 9 on the Arte TV channel and platform. According to Arte's website, the broadcast of this series, starring Navid Mohammadzadeh and Ahmad Mehranfar, is scheduled for prime time viewing during the week. Arte is one of the most famous French-German television networks in Europe, known as the European cultural network. 'Actor' has previously won a major award at the Series Mania Festival in France, establishing

itself as one of the most prestigious TV events globally and continuing its journey by winning the Best Screenplay award at the Seoul International Drama Awards in South Korea. 'Actor' has so far received an honorable mention from Seriencamp Festival in Germany earlier this year in June and the grand prize of Series Mania Festival in France in March as well as the Best Screenplay award at the Seoul International Drama Awards in South Korea.



Iran's 'Loteria' wins in US festival, nominated at Belgian event



The Iranian film 'Loteria,' directed by Ali Atshani, won the Best Screenplay Award at the 14th New York International Filmmaker Festival and was nominated for Best Film at the Belgian Art Color Digital Cinema (ACDCIFF). 'Loteria' based on a true story written by Ali Atshani

and Mahmoudreza Sani, has received over 10 awards for best film and best directing at various international festivals since its release in Mexico in late 2021, Mehr News Agency reported. The ACDCIFF will be held from May 3 to January 2. Based on a true story, the

film is about the time when due to the travel ban imposed on Iran in 2017, immigrants were forced to cross the border illegally into the U.S. The cast includes Borzou Arjmand, Amir Hossein Mousavi, Hamed Tavasoli, and Hooman Sepantamehr among others.


Pulitzer Prizes honor Gaza war coverage



The New York Times won a Pulitzer in international reporting for its "wide-ranging and revelatory coverage of Hamas's attack in southern Israel on 7 Oct," as well as reporting on "the Israeli military's sweeping, deadly response." Reuters meanwhile won the award for breaking news photography for its "raw and urgent" coverage of the 7 October attack and Israeli response, while a special citation recognized "journalists and media workers covering the war in Gaza."

"This war has also claimed the lives of poets and writers," the committee said. "As the Pulitzer Prizes honor categories of journalism, arts and letters, we mark the loss of invaluable records of the human experience." The awards, given out at Columbia University, come as the New York college has faced backlash after it called in police to clear out pro-Palestinian protesters. The police largely blocked media from the scene and threatened student journalists covering the events with arrest. Two of Co-

lumbia's student newspaper editors outlined in an article over the weekend the university's "suppression" of its reporting, including arrest threats from police and demands from the university to hand over videos and photos. Other awards honored US journalists' reporting on migrant child labor, racial disparities in the legal system and gun violence. Author Jayne Anne Phillips won the fiction prize for her novel "Night Watch," about a mother and daughter during and after the US Civil War, while the nonfiction prize went to Nathan Thrall's "A Day in the Life of Abed Salama: Anatomy of a Jerusalem Tragedy." The committee praised the "finely reported and intimate account of life under Israeli occupation of the West Bank, told through the portrait of a Palestinian father whose five-year-old son dies in a fiery school bus crash when Israeli and Palestinian rescue teams are delayed by security regulations."

 **Mohammad Ali Rajabi**
Cartoonist



Iranian official ensures continuous supply of medicines for thalassemia patients

Social Desk

The head of the Food and Drug Administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran has announced the continuous supply of medications for special and difficult-to-treat patients, emphasizing the improvement in the provision of drugs for thalassemia patients through local production. Heidar Mohammadi highlighted the collaboration with thalassemia associations and blood specialists in improving drug provision for these patients, mentioning

that all thalassemia drugs in the country are domestically produced, IRNA wrote. He also addressed the increase in imported medications for thalassemia patients in 2023 compared to 2022, expressing hope for continued support from the Central Bank of Iran and currency reserves to meet the needs of these patients this year. Mohammadi emphasized that there are no restrictions on supplying drugs for special patients, mentioning challenges posed by international sanctions hinder-



ing some foreign companies from selling medicines to Iran. He assured that efforts are being made to ensure access to both locally produced

and imported medications for those sensitive to domestic drugs, reflecting the organization's commitment to meeting the needs of patients.