

The leader congratulates Iranians on their victory over Israel and U.S.

‘Iran’s Surrender’ — A Claim Far Too Big for US President to Utter

TEHRAN- In a video message published two days after fighting between Iran and Israel

halted, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei thanked God, the Armed Forces, and the Iranian people for humbling both the Zionist regime and the U.S. government during the 12-day war that began on June 13 with Israeli airstrikes on Iran's soil.

Below is the full text of his remarks:

First, I would like to honor the memory of the precious martyrs of recent events. The martyred commanders, the martyred scientists—who were truly invaluable to the Islamic Republic and served it—today, God willing, receive the reward for their outstanding services in the presence of the Almighty.

I find it necessary to congratulate the great nation of Iran—several congratulations are in order:

Ayatollah Khamenei says the U.S. has pressured Iran under various pretexts, but Iran will always strike back if attacked

First, congratulations on the victory over the Zionist regime. Despite all their clamor and claims, the Zionist regime was nearly brought to its knees and crushed under the blows of the Islamic Republic. The thought that such strikes could be delivered by the Islamic Republic never even crossed their minds—yet it happened. We thank God, who aided our armed forces, enabling them to penetrate their advanced

multi-layered defense and level many of their urban and military areas under the force of our missiles and the strong assault of our advanced weaponry. ► Page 3



NATO backing for US attack on Iran is astoundingly shameful

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN - The decision by NATO to explicitly endorse unilateral U.S. military strikes against Iran represents one of the defining betrayals of its founding spirit.

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte went ahead to even congratulate Donald Trump for what he called a “truly extraordinary” attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. Rutte supported the attack, despite it lacking UN endorsement and never being justified under the premise of an imminent threat.

The U.S. attacked nuclear facilities in Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan ten days after Israel made a surprise attack on Iran. ► Page 5

Grossi is now justifying potential attacks on Iran’s historical sites

TEHRAN – The modern world, crafted in the image of the West, has always had its enforcers – figures who, under the banner of international law, primarily served the interests of Western powers and their prized colonial venture, Israel.

The current Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is one of these people. He, however, is a league of his own. Rafael Grossi's disgracefulness, his sheer audacity, and his utter lack of genuine concern for the very laws he is entrusted to uphold surpass even the most egregious Western puppets who have come before him.

Driven by Grossi's politically motivated reports, the IAEA Board of Governors passed an anti-Iran resolution on June 12, alleging Iran's non-compliance with its nuclear obligations. ► Page 2

Israel requested end to hostilities after Iranian retaliation: FM Araghchi

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday that the Israeli regime was forced to end its 12-day war of aggression against Iran “out of desperation” and with no preconditions, following a wave of Iranian retaliatory strikes that inflicted severe damage across the occupied territories.

Speaking during a nationally televised interview, Araghchi addressed a wide array of developments surrounding the recent conflict, including the role of the United States and Europe, the status of nuclear negotiations, Iran's decision to suspend cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog, and his diplomatic engagements in Geneva and Istanbul amid the hostilities. ► Page 3

Iran’s response to Israel averted regional war: Pezeshkian

TEHRAN – In an address to the Eurasian Economic Forum, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian talked about the precarious situation that unfolded in the wake of Israeli aggression against Iran, noting that had Iran not effectively responded to the regime's attacks, the whole region would have been dragged into an all-out conflagration.

He emphasized that Iran's measured response, rooted in the right to self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, was critical in averting a wider, and potentially catastrophic, regional war. “Had it gone unanswered,” Pezeshkian asserted, the Israeli attacks “could have spilled into a widespread and uncontrollable war across the region.” ► Page 2

Muharram: a global scene, an Iranian narrative

TEHRAN — With the arrival of Muharram, the Iranian cultural calendar takes on a different color; rituals come to life, traditions are revived, and nations speak to each other in a common language called Ashura, extending beyond geographical boundaries.

Muharram is not only a religious ritual but also a medium through which Iran presents its humanitarian, spiritual, ethical, and justice-oriented face to the world in the form of arts, rituals, and popular participation, Miras Arya (CHTN) wrote.

Every year, Muharram ushers in a genuine manifestation of Shia culture. Countries like Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, India, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and even Shia communities in Europe and North America resonate with Iran through similar rituals. This cultural harmony has formed a direct diplomacy that has become one of the most important tools of Iran's soft power. ► Page 6

Iran’s DM visits China for SCO summit, bilateral talks

TEHRAN – Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh arrived in Qingdao, China, on Wednesday to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) defense ministers' meeting.

He was given a warm welcome by Chinese officials upon his arrival at the airport. The high-level SCO summit took place over two days on Wednesday and Thursday. It was chaired by Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun and featured top defense officials from across the region.

During his visit, Nasirzadeh also met with senior military officials from China to discuss bilateral developments. There is not much detail on the context of the talks, but he was expected to bring up the recent Iran-Israel war that lasted for 12 days. ► Page 2

Iranian Jewish community express support for Leader and Armed Forces

TEHRAN – Members of Iran's Jewish community gathered at the Abrisshami Synagogue in Tehran on Thursday evening to voice their support for Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The event was held in solidarity with Iran's recent military response to the Zionist regime, which was a firm and decisive retaliation for their unprovoked aggression starting on June 13.

Participants expressed unity with the nation's leadership and armed forces, underscoring the shared commitment of Iranian religious minorities to the country's sovereignty and national defense.

Standing with Iran: The diaspora’s unwavering protests

By Reza Namdari

MONTREAL – This past weekend, I had the honor of joining hundreds of people from the Global South and fellow Iranian-Canadians in demonstrations condemning the war on Iran and standing against the aggression of the Zionist regime.

Though a temporary pause in hostilities—halting the U.S. and child-killing regime's assault on our homeland—we must still reflect on what these twelve days revealed about Iranians abroad.

From the moment the attacks began, Iranian peace activists—who have long faced hostility from anti-Iran lobbies in Europe, Canada, and the U.S. for their opposition to war and sanctions—mobilized forcefully. ► Page 2

Ceremonies held across Iran for victims of Israel’s war

TEHRAN – Thousands of Iranians in the cities of Mashhad, Tabriz, Ardabil, Qom, Ahvaz, Gorgan, and Tehran attended funeral ceremonies of individuals martyred during Israel's 12-day war against Iran.

The funerals belonged to civilians, as well as members of the country's military, including the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Army (Artesh).

Around 60 high-ranking officials and their family members are also set to be honored during a massive funeral ceremony taking place in Tehran on Saturday. At least 627 Iranians were killed between June 13 and June 24 during Zionist attacks. The regime targeted residential buildings, military sites, local businesses, and nuclear facilities across Iran. Iran responded by firing relentless barrages of missiles at the occupied territories, destroying dozens of Israeli targets through the course of the war.

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Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminium Company



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

The shadow of war and peace over the Middle East

In a note, Shargh addressed the current situation in the Middle East and wrote: Following the unprecedented U.S. attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities, the world is facing a wave of contradictory analyses, narratives, and reactions. This operation not only changed the security equations in the Middle East but also marked the beginning of a new chapter in the battle of narratives in the global media. Meanwhile, media close to the Democrats, repeating their usual pattern, sacrificed political orientations for the existing reality. With the end of the twelve-day war and the declaration of a ceasefire, the Middle East has entered a new chapter. However, the scars of this event and the fear of a repeat of the conflict continue to cast a shadow over the region. Rebuilding Iran's nuclear facilities, at best, requires years and billions of dollars of investment, and this country will undoubtedly redefine its nuclear and regional policies. Finally, the massive U.S. attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities are a turning point in the geopolitical and security equations of the Middle East, an event that its effects will cast a shadow on developments in the region and the world for years to come.

Etemad: Strong Iran

In an analysis, Etemad discussed the failure of the Western plan and said: The West foolishly thought that the Iranian nuclear industry, which is the product of the Iranians' inherent knowledge, could be destroyed through a military attack, but the West faced defeat in its last option against Iran. The West wanted to try its last chance to topple Iran before officially accepting Iranian power again. In other words, as their last chance, the West decided that before any deal with Iran, to mobilize all their capabilities, including a military might, to overthrow the Iran's ruling system and prevent it from becoming a nuclear power, because according to all their internal and external information and evidence, only a military attack could have "finished Iran". But strangely and surprisingly, everything turned out the other way around. Contemporary history and historical experience have demonstrated that the West's political class consistently acts against the East. The West has repeatedly behaved deceitfully, employing comprehensive pressure to

eliminate competitors in the East.

Kayhan: The failure of the American project

In a commentary, Kayhan analyzed the United States' failed project against Iran: The United States and its allies have repeatedly tested the maximum pressure strategy against Iran, from crippling economic sanctions to the assassination of nuclear scientists and cyber-attacks. But these policies have not only ended in failure, but also led to the strengthening of self-sufficiency, increased tolerance, and the development of Iran's deterrent capabilities. Also, contrary to the expectations of the invaders, the attack on Iran did not cause internal unrest or public riots. On the contrary, many segments of the society, regardless of their political or ideological affiliations, viewed foreign aggression as a threat to national sovereignty. The result was the formation of unity and solidarity against the common enemy. In addition to military attacks, by highlighting the son of the deposed king of the Pahlavi regime, the Western and Israeli propaganda machines tried to nominate him as an option for the post-Islamic Republic. But the Iranians rebuffed the project.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Golden economic opportunity in shadow of peace

In an article, Arman-e-Emrooz examined the prospect of financial markets in Iran and the Middle East. It quoted economist Morteza Afghah as saying: Financial markets in Iran and the Middle East were severely affected following the announcement of a ceasefire between Iran and Israel. The prospect of global and regional markets created a continuous and fragile political-economic ceasefire, with a tangible impact on markets. The "political ceasefire" provided a temporary opportunity to reduce tension and the relative revival of markets. The current political ceasefire can be a starting point for relative stability in the oil market, foreign currency, gold, and capital market. But economic, structural, and governance reforms, along with lifting sanctions and establishing constructive relationships with the world, are preconditions to overcome the crisis. Without these reforms, no ceasefire will last, and the country will be far from the path of economic development.

Standing with Iran: The diaspora's unwavering protests



From page 1 ► They condemned the aggression while demanding neutrality from their governments. Despite immense pressure that could have silenced any movement, activists from all walks of life organized protests across the globe. Meanwhile, Iranians in Europe worked to establish independent groups, amplifying their voices in political spheres.

Though anti-Iran lobbies had spent years trying to fracture the diaspora, Iranian communities—armed with alliances among anti-war advocates and global justice movements—stunned their enemies with massive, unified demonstrations. From London, Paris, and Berlin to Montreal, Toronto, and Sydney, thousands took to the streets, transcending political and cultural differences.

Iranian flags, a symbol of defiance, waved proudly as chants of "Hands Off Iran!" and "Iran, Iran!" echoed worldwide.

Many organizers were second-generation immigrants, raised abroad yet deeply connected to their homeland. While Iran's defenders needed no external support, the diaspora's outcry sent a clear message: no matter where we live or our differences, we stand unshaken on the issue of Iran.

Alongside global freedom fighters, we demand not only an end to war but also solidarity with the Global South—until occupation and genocide in Palestine are eradicated. Our bond with Iran is unbreakable. Our resolve is unwavering.

Grossi is now justifying potential attacks on Iran's historical sites

Iran's former FM says the IAEA chief is a 'disgrace' to the UN agency

From page 1 ► Within a day, Israel launched a series of aggressive actions on Iranian soil, targeting high-ranking military figures, nuclear scientists, civilians, and the country's nuclear sites. Less than ten days after the initial Israeli attacks, American B-2 bombers struck Iranian nuclear facilities once more. Both regimes cited Iran's "non-compliant" actions as justification for their strikes.

Despite the clear illegality of these attacks under international law, Grossi offered no condemnation. In an interview released after the strikes, he even admitted that the UN nuclear watchdog possessed no evidence of Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon. Yet, the damage was done. Grossi had already provided the pretext for Israeli and U.S.



attacks, knowing full well that his baseless reports would serve this purpose.

Now, the former Argentinian diplomat is laying the groundwork for attacks on Iran's cultural heritage. He's leveling accusations that Iran has relocated enriched uranium to "ancient

sites near Esfahan, even while admitting in separate interviews that he has no concrete knowledge of the uranium's whereabouts. Grossi, once again, is fully aware of the implications of his actions. If his statements contribute to any attacks on Iran's heritage – acts that are

illegal under international law and previously employed only by terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and Daesh – the consequences for him must extend far beyond a mere travel ban to Iran.

In a post on X, Iran's former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif called for Grossi's replacement at the IAEA. This demand has been echoed in recent days, with critics warning that the UN agency risks becoming irrelevant under Grossi's leadership.

"Having abetted the slaughter of innocents through his fictitious IAEA report, Rafael Grossi is now conspiring to abet more war crimes through his reckless musing that Iran is hiding uranium at World Heritage Sites in Isfahan," Zarif wrote. "IAEA should rid itself of this disgrace."

Iran's response to Israel averted regional war: Pezeshkian



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian addressing the Eurasian Economic Forum via video link on Friday

From page 1 ► The President's focus centered on the war that began on June 13th, when Israel launched a full-scale assault on Iranian soil. The aggression targeted military and nuclear facilities, resulting in casualties among Iran's military leadership, scientific personnel, and civilians.

Israel launched the war against Iran after its relentless assaults in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria remained largely answered by Arab rulers in the region during the past 20 months.

The conflict with Iran was further exacerbated on June 22nd, when the United States

joined the fray, launching airstrikes against three Iranian nuclear sites. Pezeshkian described these actions as blatant violations of international law, the UN Charter, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). He underscored that "the military attacks by the U.S. and the Zionist regime on Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities, which were under full supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency, are a gross violation of all international rules."

Iran responded to the American airstrikes by launching missiles toward al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar, a significant U.S. military base in the region. For its response to Israel, Iran pounded various military, intelligence, and nuclear-related sites in the occupied territories.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Pezeshkian highlighted the fact

that the American and Israeli attacks occurred during ongoing, albeit indirect, discussions between Iran and the United States about Iran's peaceful nuclear program. He further emphasized that even facilities under IAEA supervision were targeted. He maintained that, in this situation, "the Israeli regime's brutal acts of aggression and illegal armed terrorist attacks" aimed to derail the existing negotiations.

Beyond the immediate conflict, Pezeshkian discussed the need to abandon appeasement towards the Zionist regime, given its systemic human rights violations, and emphasized the forum as an opportunity to condemn these acts of aggression. The President stated: "The aggression also inflicted an irreparable blow to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by a permanent member of the UN Security Council."

Iran's DM visits China for SCO summit, bilateral talks

From page 1 ► The Iranian military official also held separate meetings with counterparts from other participating countries. In a meeting with Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, the two sides strongly condemned Israeli attacks on Iranian soil, which began on June 13 and resulted in the martyrdom of at least 627 people, the majority being civilians,

including women and children.

In his address, the Pakistani defense minister also reaffirmed his country's steadfast commitment to the principles and objectives of the SCO, emphasizing the importance of collective security, coordinated counterterrorism efforts, and enhanced regional connectivity. In this regard, he urged

Mass ICE arrests target Iranian community amid rising Iranophobia in US

TEHRAN — In a sweeping escalation of anti-Iranian policies, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has detained 130 Iranian nationals across the United States in the past week alone, with 670 now held in detention centers.

The arrests, framed by the Trump administration as "counterterrorism measures," have ignited fierce condemnation from Iranians and human rights advocates, who condemn them as racist profiling rooted in Iranophobia.

The crackdown has unfolded with disturbing brutality. In Los Angeles, ICE agents stormed the homes of Iranian migrants, including a couple from Pastor Ara Torosian's Farsi-speaking church.

According to a Reuters report, Torosian witnessed federal officers pin a woman to the ground during her arrest, triggering a violent panic attack. "She's sick! Call 911!" he shouted, later asking, "Why are you guys doing this?" despite ICE's claim of "national security" justifications.

Simultaneously, ICE Director Todd Lyons confirmed the agency's "targeted enforcement" against nationals from "high-risk countries—including Iran" in an interview with NewsNation, openly prioritizing ethnicity in operations.

Fabricated threats and the 'sleeping cell' myth

Trump Administration officials and anti-Iran propagandists have attempted to stoke fear by alleging detainees had links to

"Hezbollah or the IRGC"—rhetoric that could presage a false-flag operation.

This suspicion is bolstered by an exclusive Tehran Times exposé revealing Tel Aviv's plot to stage an explosion on U.S. soil and pin it on Tehran, a scheme thwarted only by a timely Iranian intelligence intervention.

The ICE director has confirmed the agency's 'targeted enforcement,' which includes nationals from Iran

The timing of this exposé and the Trump administration's anti-Iranian persecution is especially damning, coming on the heels of the Israeli regime's war on Iran—launched June 13 and escalated on June 21 with the US-backed "Operation Midnight Hammer"—in which Washington provided diplomatic cover, real-time intelligence, and logistical support, and joined in the bombardment of Iran's civilian nuclear infrastructure via B-2 Spirit stealth bombers armed with 30,000-pound GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrators and Tomahawk cruise missiles fired from Ohio-class submarines.

Despite these baseless allegations fueling anti-Iranian sentiment, ICE's own June 24 press release detailing 11 arrests cited minor offenses like visa overstays or decades-old drug convictions, not terrorism.

One case involved forging an official seal; another, a firearm charge. Only one individual

was noted as having served in Iran's military,

which is a universal, compulsory duty for all able-bodied Iranian men.

Weaponizing deportation

A Supreme Court ruling this week greenlit deportations to third countries without due process, enabling ICE to bypass international anti-torture laws.

This policy has already inflicted suffering: In February, 12 Iranians—including children—were shackled and flown to Panama on a U.S. military plane.

"Women and children kept passing out, but U.S. forces did not uncuff them," one deportee said during an interview with American media. Stranded without legal aid or funds, they remain trapped under U.S. surveillance.

In a statement in February, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei condemned such practices as "humiliating" and vowed to "exhaust all measures" to protect citizens, directing diplomatic missions to assist deportees.

This legal assault on due process comes in the shadow of Trump's latest travel ban barring Iranian nationals alongside 18 other countries—a policy Tehran condemned as driven by a "supremacist and racist mentality" that singles out Muslims and Iranians for collective suspicion.

It lays bare a xenophobic Iranophobia permeating U.S. policy— from White House decrees to ICE's detention centers—amplifying state-sanctioned prejudice under the guise of national security.

‘Iran’s surrender’ — A claim far too big for U.S. president to utter

TEHRAN- In a video message published two days after fighting between Iran and Israel halted, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei thanked God, the Armed Forces, and the Iranian people for humbling both the Zionist regime and the U.S. government during the 12-day war that began on June 13 with Israeli airstrikes on Iran’s soil.

Below is the full text of his remarks:

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I find it necessary to congratulate the great nation of Iran—several congratulations are in order:

First, congratulations on the victory over the Zionist regime. Despite all their clamor and claims, the Zionist regime was nearly brought to its knees and crushed under the blows of the Islamic Republic. The thought that such strikes could be delivered by the Islamic Republic never even crossed their minds—yet it happened. We thank God, who aided our armed forces, enabling them to penetrate their advanced multi-layered defense and level many of their urban and military areas under the force of our missiles and the strong assault of our advanced weaponry. This is one of the greatest divine blessings. It demonstrates that the Zionist regime must know that aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran comes at a cost—a heavy cost for them. And, praise God, this happened. The credit belongs to our armed forces and our dear people, who raised, trained, and supported these forces, strength-



ening their hands to carry out such a great task.

Second, congratulations on the victory of our beloved Iran over the American regime. The American regime entered the war—direct warfare—because they felt that if they did not intervene, the Zionist regime would be completely annihilated. They entered the war to save it, yet they gained nothing from this war. They attacked our nuclear facilities—which, of course, warrants independent legal pursuit in an international court—but they failed to achieve anything significant. The U.S. president exaggerated in describing what had happened, revealing that he needed this exaggeration. Anyone listening to those words understood that beneath their surface lay another truth. They could not accomplish anything; they failed to achieve their goal. They exaggerate to conceal and suppress the truth. Here, too, the Islamic Republic emerged victorious and, in response, delivered a hard slap to America’s face. We struck one of America’s most important bases in the region, Al-Udeid, inflicting damage. Those who had exaggerated in the previous incident now tried to downplay this one, claiming nothing had happened, when, in fact, something major had occurred. The fact that the Islamic Republic can access and act against key

American centers in the region whenever it deems necessary is no small event—it is a significant one. And in the future, this can be repeated. Should any aggression occur, the cost for the enemy—for the aggressor—will undoubtedly be high.

Third, congratulations on the extraordinary unity and solidarity of the Iranian nation. Praise God, a nation of around 90 million people stood together as one, shoulder to shoulder, without any differences in their demands or expressed goals. They stood firm, chanted, spoke out, and supported the actions of the armed forces—and this will continue. The Iranian nation demonstrated its magnanimity, its outstanding and distinguished character in this matter. It showed that, when necessary, this nation will speak with one voice—and, praise God, this happened.

A fundamental point I wish to emphasize is this: The U.S. president, in one of his statements, said, “Iran must surrender.” Surrender. It is no longer about enrichment, nor about the nuclear industry—it is about Iran’s surrender. Of course, such words are far too big for the mouth of the U.S. president. Iran, with its grandeur, its history, its culture, its unbreakable national resolve—the very notion of surrender for such a country is a joke to those who

know the Iranian people. But his statement revealed a truth: From the very beginning of the Revolution, the Americans have been in conflict with Islamic Iran, grappling with it. Each time, they have a new excuse—sometimes human rights, sometimes defending democracy, sometimes women’s rights, sometimes enrichment, sometimes the nuclear issue itself, sometimes missile development. They bring various pretexts, but the core of the matter is one thing and one thing only: Iran’s surrender. Previous [U.S. officials] did not say this outright because it is unacceptable—no rational logic accepts telling a nation, “Come and surrender.” So, they hid it under other labels. This man exposed it; he revealed that truth, making it clear that the Americans will accept nothing less than Iran’s surrender. This is a crucial point. The Iranian people must know: this is the nature of the confrontation with America. This is the great insult the Americans have directed at the Iranian nation, and such a thing will never happen. It will never happen.

The Iranian nation is a great nation. Iran is a strong and vast country. Iran possesses an ancient civilization. Our cultural and civilizational wealth is hundreds of times greater than that of America and its like. To expect Iran to surrender to another country is among the most absurd falsehoods—one that will surely be mocked by the wise and the knowledgeable. The Iranian nation is honorable and will remain so. It is victorious and will remain victorious, by God’s grace. We hope the Almighty God will always preserve this nation under His blessings with dignity and honor. May He elevate the status of the great Imam [Khomeini] and may Imam Mahdi be pleased with this nation. And may his support be the backing of this nation.

Iran downed 17 advanced Israeli drones in its western skies



The Israeli regime’s Heron TP Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

TEHRAN – The Iranian Army (Artesh) downed 17 Israeli drones—including advanced Heron and Hermes models—over western Iran during the 12-day war with the regime, Brigadier General Soleiman Taheri, commander of the Army’s Ground Forces in the Western Regional Headquarters, announced Tuesday.

Among the downed UAVs was

a sophisticated Heron reconnaissance and combat drone, valued at approximately \$40 million, shot down by Iran’s indigenously developed Majid air defense system.

Ground Force Air Defense units detected and eliminated all 17 drones as they attempted to infiltrate Iranian airspace.

The Heron—capable of 30-hour

endurance, a 9 km ceiling, and speeds of 150–180 km/h—was successfully engaged by Majid in western Iran, underscoring Iran’s ability to counter high-value, low-signature threats.

Most of the other drones were Hermes-class UAVs, including the Hermes 900 (priced at \$25–30 million each), which can fly at 70 mph up to 30,000 ft and carry electro-optical systems, synthetic aperture radar, and precision weapons such as the Mikholit glide bomb.

“All were neutralized using entirely indigenous equipment and weapons engineered by Iranian specialists,” Taheri added.

In a separate incident, Iranian forces shot down three more Hermes 900 drones—one over Markazi Province (likely via Arman or S-300PMU-2 systems) and two near the Iraq border. Each

loss, at \$25–40 million per unit, delivers a significant financial and operational blow to Israel’s cross-border espionage and pre-emptive-strike capabilities.

The war between Iran and Israel broke out on June 13, after the regime launched airstrikes on Iranian soil, targeting residential buildings, military sites, and nuclear facilities. Iran pounded Israeli cities for the next 12 days in response. The fighting came to a halt on June 24 following a proposal from the United States, which also joined Israel’s war of aggression against Iran by attacking three of the country’s nuclear sites.

A key concern for the Israeli regime throughout the war with Iran has been financial loss, driven by both the downing of its military hardware over Iran and the damage caused by Iranian missiles within the occupied territories.

Iran learn fate in AFC Futsal Asian Cup qualifiers

TEHRAN – The 31 teams aiming to appear in the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 learnt their opponents following the Qualifiers draw at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Thursday.

The teams were divided into seven groups of four and one group of three with the Qualifiers to be played on September 20–24, 2025.

The eight group winners and the seven best-ranked runners-up from the Qualifiers will join hosts Indonesia at the 18th edition of the Finals, which is scheduled to commence next January.

Hosts Kuwait will face Australia, Mongolia and India in Group A while top seeds Thailand will have to contend with Korea Republic, Bahrain and Brunei Darussalam in Group B.

Four-time winners Japan are the top seeds in Group C with hosts Tajikistan, Macau and Cambodia their challengers while Group D will have Iraq, hosts Saudi Arabia, Chinese Taipei and Pakistan battling for the automatic spot.

Group E will see Vietnam, Lebanon, hosts China PR and Hong Kong, China facing off while Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan (hosts), Timor-Leste and Palestine are the Group F cast.

Defending champions and 13-time winners Iran, Malaysia (hosts), United Arab Emirates and Bangladesh were drawn in Group G with Afghanistan, Myanmar (hosts) and Maldives the three sides hoping to qualify from Group H.

The AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 will be contested on January 27–February 7.

Draw Result

Group A: Kuwait (hosts), Australia, Mongolia, India

Group B: Thailand (hosts), Korea Republic, Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam

Group C: Japan, Tajikistan (hosts), Macau, Cambodia

Group D: Iraq, Saudi Arabia (hosts), Chinese Taipei, Pakistan

Group E: Vietnam, Lebanon, China PR (hosts), Hong Kong, China

Group F: Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan (hosts), Timor-Leste, Palestine

Group G: Iran, Malaysia (hosts), UAE, Bangladesh

Group H: Afghanistan, Myanmar (hosts), Maldives

Beiranvand nominated for best goalkeeper in Asia

TEHRAN – Alireza Beiranvand, goalkeeper of Iran’s national football team, has been nominated for the best goalkeeper award in Asia.

Beiranvand has been recognized for his outstanding performance in the Asia qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The Iranian custodian will have to compete against Jalal Hassan (Iraq), Mateo Ryan (Australia), Maarten Paes (Indonesia), and Utkir Yusupov (Uzbekistan).

Iraq’s minister of sports extends condolences to People of Iran

TEHRAN – Following recent Israeli attacks that resulted in the martyrdom of several athletes from Iran, Iraq’s Minister of Youth and Sports, Ahmad Al-Mubaraq, issued an official message expressing condolences to the Iranian nation.

Al-Mubaraq reaffirmed Iraq’s solidarity with the families of the athletes and with Iranian Minister of Sports, Ahmad Donyamali.

The statement from the Iraqi Ministry of Youth and Sports reads:

“With deepest sorrow and regret, we extend our condolences to the people of Iran and to Mr. Ahmad Donyamali, Iran’s Minister of Youth

and Sports, for the martyrdom of a number of distinguished athletes in the wake of the aggressive actions by the Israel.”

“We pray to Allah Almighty for mercy and forgiveness for the martyrs, swift recovery for the wounded, and dignity and pride for Muslims and the Islamic world.”

Skocic has not terminated his contract, says Tractor

TEHRAN – Iranian football club Tractor have confirmed that Dragan Skocic will continue as the head coach of the team.

Amid reports following recent Israeli attacks, some media outlets suggested that the Croatian coach had terminated his contract with Tractor.

However, Tractor stated, “Following reports regarding the potential departure of some foreign members of the team, we deny these claims. The start date for the team’s training sessions will be announced soon.”

2025-26 Iran football league to begin in late August

TEHRAN – The 2025–26 Iran Professional League (IPL) is scheduled to kick off in late August.

The league was originally set to start on August 6, but the opening has been postponed due to recent Israeli airstrikes.

The Iran Football League Organization will announce the exact date of the season opener on Saturday.

Tractor are the defending champions.

Inter Milan offer Mehdi Taremi to Manchester United

TEHRAN – During discussions between Manchester United and Inter Milan, the Red Devils were offered the chance to sign Mehdi Taremi.

United In Focus understands how Taremi was thrown into the mix by intermediaries acting on behalf of Inter Milan, with the Italian side keen to sell the Iran international.

Manchester United’s response was to politely decline the chance to sign Taremi, a striker the club has no intention of signing.

The club’s stance on Rasmus Hojlund remains unaltered, United wants a full sale this summer, uninterested in swap proposals.

Iran-Russia futsal friendly may be postponed

TEHRAN – Maxim Mitrofanov, General Secretary of the Russian Football Union, announced that the futsal matches between Iran and Russia, scheduled for October 16 and October 18, may be postponed.

Mitrofanov, speaking in the context of the Iran-Israel conflict, responded to questions about whether recent events could cause a delay, saying: “Anything is possible. Currently, our colleagues in Iran are experiencing communication issues, and we are unable to establish contact with them.”

“We are planning to hold matches with the Iranian national futsal team and hope everything goes smoothly—communication is restored, and the situation there, including transportation, stabilizes. Since we initially planned to host this match in Russia, we remain hopeful that the game will be played as scheduled. Otherwise, we will postpone it to another time,” he added.

Israel requested end to hostilities after Iranian retaliation: FM Araghchi

From Page 1 ▶ Araghchi revealed that it was the Zionist regime that first reached out to request a halt to Iranian operations in exchange for ceasing its own attacks. However, Iran rejected any form of negotiated ceasefire or reciprocal arrangement.

“Iran never entered into any talks regarding a ceasefire,” he clarified. “A ceasefire implies mutual agreement and negotiation. What occurred was a unilateral cessation of aggression by the enemy once it realized the cost of continuing the war.”

He warned that any future violation by the Zionist regime would be met with a decisive response. “Our military command is fully prepared to retaliate,” he said.

Araghchi reiterated that Iran had not engaged

in any form of negotiation with Israel or its allies to end the war, calling the Israeli aggression “completely unprovoked and unlawful.”

“We do not accept the concept of a ceasefire when it implies negotiation or compromise,” he said. “There was no negotiation. The aggressor was forced to stop after our response altered the balance.”

He added that Iran harbors serious doubts about Israel’s willingness to adhere to its own declared halt in aggression, citing the regime’s past behavior in Gaza and Lebanon, where ceasefires were routinely violated.

“But Iran is not Lebanon,” he warned. “Any breach of the current calm will be met with an immediate and powerful response.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaks during a televised interview in Tehran on June 26, 2025.

IMF forecasts modest growth for Iran's economy in 2025



TEHRAN — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected that Iran's economy will reach a gross domestic product of \$1.746 trillion in 2025 based on purchasing power parity, an increase of \$51 billion compared to the previous year. However, the Fund expects the country's GDP per capita, also based on PPP, to decline slightly from \$17,222 in 2024 to \$17,103 this year.

The IMF estimates Iran's GDP at current prices will fall from \$401 billion in 2024 to \$341 billion in 2025, marking a \$60 billion decrease. It also forecasts a significant slowdown in real economic growth, with a rate of just 0.3 percent this year, down from 3.4 percent in 2024.

According to the report, inflation is expect-

ed to rise from 32.6 percent in 2024 to 43.3 percent in 2025. The volume of exports of goods and services, which expanded by 4.6 percent last year, is projected to shrink by 5 percent. Imports, which grew by 10.6 percent in 2024, are forecast to contract by 9.6 percent this year.

Despite these trends, Iran is expected to maintain a positive current account balance of \$3 billion in 2025. This reflects a decline of \$7.9 billion from the \$10.9 billion surplus recorded in 2024 but indicates the country will continue to generate more income from abroad than it spends.

The IMF also anticipates a rise in the unemployment rate, from 7.7 percent in 2024 to 9.5 percent in 2025. Government revenues are expected to decline slightly from 10.6 percent of GDP to 9.5 percent, while expenditures are projected to increase marginally from 14.7 percent to 14.9 percent of GDP. As a result, gross government debt is forecast to rise from 36.8 percent of GDP to 39.9 percent this year.

Total investment is projected to remain stable at 39 percent of GDP, unchanged from the previous year.

Iran launches 4th gas sweetening train at South Pars phase 14 amid regional tensions

TEHRAN — Iran has successfully launched the fourth gas sweetening train at Phase 14 of the South Pars Gas Field, completing the reception of sour gas from offshore platforms despite heightened regional tensions, the managing director of Petropars said.

Hamidreza Saghafi praised the uninterrupted flow of sour gas and the start of sweetening operations as a significant technical milestone, achieved under challenging conditions.

He called it a testament to the capabilities of Iranian oil industry specialists operating amid ongoing geopolitical threats.

"This success is a clear symbol of the resilience and expertise of our colleagues in the

oil sector," Saghafi said, expressing gratitude for the continuous support of the Oil Ministry, which he said played a crucial role in overcoming obstacles during the commissioning process.

He also acknowledged the efforts of Petropars personnel and particularly the POMC team, who led the commissioning with what he described as exceptional dedication and responsibility.

Saghafi concluded by emphasizing the broader message of the achievement: "The oil industry, powered by committed human capital and a spirit of national determination, remains unstoppable on the path to development."

Hydropower output reaches 207,000 GWh as sector prepares for summer demand

TEHRAN — Iran's cumulative electricity generation from hydropower plants developed by the Iran Water and Power Resources Development Company has reached 207,000 gigawatt-hours as of late May, the company announced.

Hydropower plants currently account for about 14 percent of the country's total power generation capacity, while thermal power plants dominate with over 85 percent.

The remaining share is supplied by renewable sources such as solar and wind.

Iran's hydropower capacity stands at approximately 12,000 megawatts, of which 9,000 megawatts have been developed and are operated by the state-run company.

Hydropower plants serve multiple roles beyond electricity generation, including surface water management, flood prevention, frequency regulation, and grid balancing, ac-

cording to the company.

Their design allows for runoff to be stored in reservoirs during the spring and released in a regulated manner over the summer, supporting agricultural, industrial, and municipal needs.

During the peak electricity demand season in summer—when high temperatures reduce the efficiency of thermal plants—hydropower facilities provide a reliable source of electricity to stabilize the national grid.

The company also noted that annual maintenance and servicing of roughly 80 percent of its hydropower capacity has been completed. All units are expected to be fully operational ahead of the summer peak demand period.

Typically, hydropower dams collect spring rainfall to maximize electricity production during the summer, when national power consumption surges.

spent, on average, 39.4 percent more for the same basket of goods and services compared with the previous year. The figure is 0.7 percentage points higher than the previous month.

Monthly inflation, measuring the change from the previous month, stood at 3.3 percent in Khordad. Prices in the "food, beverages, and tobacco" category rose 4.9 percent, while prices in the "non-food goods and services" group increased 2.5 percent.

The annual inflation rate varied across income groups, ranging from 34.0 percent for the second level group to 34.8 percent for the ninth. The inflation gap between the highest and lowest groups shrank to 0.8 percentage points, down from 1.1 percentage points in the previous month.

'Foreign currency reserves, trade remain strong despite conflict'

TEHRAN—Iran's energy reserves and trade are favorable, the head of Iran-Turkey Joint Chamber of Commerce said, adding, "Contrary to the enemies' perceptions, this war did not create any problems for the country's production and trade."

"The aggressive war by the Zionist regime has only strengthened national unity among the public, business community and the government," Mehrdad Saadat was quoted as saying by Tasnim news agency.

"Contrary to the expectations of our enemies, the war has not created any problems for production or trade."

Saadat said the conflict has inspired a wave of solidarity and resilience, with the private sector and manufacturers stepping up efforts to meet domestic demand and prevent financial instability.

"In recent days, everyone—



from the public to officials—has played a role in safeguarding the country's territorial integrity.

Many producers have added extra shifts to keep supply chains running and avoid unemployment or inflationary pressure," he said.

The chamber head praised the business community's response, comparing it to the experience gained during Iran's eight-year war with Iraq.

"Our entrepreneurs remember the wartime economy and are applying those lessons now."

He added that joint chambers of commerce, including the one with Turkey, have continued operations to ensure no disruption to trade or production. Saadat also highlighted Turkey's condemnation of Israel's attack on Iran and said Ankara has stood by Tehran during the crisis.

Exports to China rise by 9% in May despite overall trade decline

TEHRAN — China's customs data show that Iranian exports to China reached \$266 million in May 2025, marking a nine percent increase compared to the same month last year, despite an overall decline in bilateral trade during the first five months of the year.

Total trade between the two countries from January through May stood at \$3.676 billion. China exported \$3.22 billion worth of goods to Iran in this period, down 21 percent from a year earlier, while its imports from Iran amounted to \$1.456 billion, showing an 18 percent decrease.

In May alone, bilateral trade grew by three percent year-on-year to \$873 million. Chinese exports to Iran reached \$607 million, up one percent from May 2024, while imports from Iran rose by nine percent, climbing from \$245 million to \$266 million.

As previously announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of non-oil trade between Iran and China stood at \$4.631 billion during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21).

Foroud Asgari said that China was Iran's top non-oil export destination in the mentioned two-month period, importing \$2.425 billion of goods from Iran.

Exporting commodities valued at \$2.206 billion to Iran, China was Iran's second source of non-oil import in the said two months, the IRICA head added.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, the value of non-oil trade between Iran and China stood at \$34.1 billion in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, 2025.

He said that importing non-oil goods worth \$14.8 billion from Iran, China was the first destination of Iranian products in the past year.

He also announced that by exporting non-oil products valued at \$19.3 billion to Iran, China was the second source of import for Iran in that year.

On May 4, Iran-China Business Development Forum convened at the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), with the participation of China's ambassador to Iran, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the chair of the Iran-China Parliamentary Friendship Group, and senior officials from the Tehran Chamber.

A large number of business leaders from both countries attended the event, where state, legislative, and private-sector strategies for deepening bilateral trade ties were outlined, the TCCIMA portal reported.

Opening the event, TCCIMA Head Mahmoud Najafi Arab welcomed Chinese delegates who traveled to Iran for the Iran Expo. He expressed gratitude for the Chinese ambassador's continued efforts to expand economic ties between the two nations.

Najafi Arab said Iran and China share thousands of years of cultural and commercial relations, which have entered a new phase in recent decades, marked by growing partnerships across multiple sectors. He said the two countries could serve as a model for sustainable cooperation based on mutual respect in today's increasingly interdependent world.

He also highlighted recent visits of Iranian private sector delegations to various Chinese provinces and exhibitions, emphasizing the



need to identify investment opportunities and facilitate financial exchanges. The Chamber, with over 140 years of history, is prepared to host expert meetings, present economic opportunities, support joint ventures, and activate professional networks between Iranian and Chinese businesses, he said.

China's Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu, thanked Iranian participants and the Tehran Chamber for organizing the event. He expressed hope that the forum would help strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Referencing the recent meeting between the two presidents at the BRICS summit in Russia, Cong said China is fully committed to enhancing cooperation across all sectors in ways that benefit both peoples.

Also speaking at the forum, Ruhollah Nejabat, chair of the Iran-China Parliamentary Friendship Group, said Iran's non-oil exports to China surpassed \$14.8 billion last year, making China the largest destination for Iranian goods and accounting for about one-quarter of Iran's total non-oil exports. Imports from China reached approximately \$19.3 billion, or 27 percent of Iran's total imports, making China Iran's second-largest import partner after the United Arab Emirates.

These figures, he said, demonstrate the resilience and strategic importance of Iran-China trade, even amid global economic slowdown, with both countries supplying a significant portion of each other's needs.

Nejabat noted that Iran's Seventh National Development Plan emphasizes industrial modernization and attracting foreign capital and technology. He said Iran aims to upgrade its industries—from automotive and textiles to pharmaceuticals and medical equipment—and that this will be achieved more quickly with partners like China, now a global industrial superpower.

He added that technology transfer and joint investment are two strategic priorities for Iran. Chinese firms, he said, could take advantage of Iran's market size and skilled labor to establish production lines and access broader regional markets.

Conversely, Iran could supply intermediary goods and industrial components needed by Chinese industries. Nejabat said Iran will offer special incentives for foreign industrial investment and provide a secure legal environment for Chinese companies. Infrastructure development—including rail networks, highways, and ports—is also a priority, and many of these projects will require Chinese expertise and participation.

He also pointed to Iran's largely untapped mining sector, including vast reserves of iron, copper, aluminum, and rare earth elements, as an area ripe for development and export growth.

Speaking at the forum, Mohammad Ali Deh-

Saadat noted that since the beginning of the conflict, Iran's currency has only depreciated by about 10 percent, a level he described as manageable. He credited increased production and exports with helping stabilize the foreign exchange market.

"Boosting production and exports brings in foreign currency, giving the Central Bank greater flexibility to manage the market," he said.

He also emphasized that Iranian producers are turning wartime threats into opportunities. "They are using this moment to accelerate the wheels of production."

Saadat concluded by saying Iran's foreign currency reserves are healthy and expected to grow further thanks to rising oil prices and export revenues.

This, he said, will help the Central Bank control currency volatility more effectively.

ghan Dehnavi, head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), outlined four key strategies for expanding trade with China. The first is technology transfer. He said Chinese companies have made major investments in research and development, much of which has not yet been fully commercialized. Iran, as a long-time partner, seeks deeper collaboration in these cutting-edge sectors.

The second strategy, he said, is increasing trade in high value-added goods. Currently, much of the bilateral trade consists of raw or semi-processed materials. The average value of Iran's exports stands at less than \$400 per ton. "We want to change that," he said, calling on Chinese importers to prioritize Iranian products with higher added value. He welcomed the Chinese ambassador's praise for the competitiveness of Iranian nanotechnology and biotechnology products.

The third strategy is joint production through co-investment. Dehnavi said Iran offers a secure investment climate, with legal guarantees allowing foreign investors to repatriate both capital and profits. "There are many documented cases of investors successfully exiting after profitable ventures," he said.

Iran offers highly competitive costs, a wide range of investment opportunities, and strong security for foreign capital, he added, expressing hope for increased joint ventures with Chinese firms.

The fourth strategy is mutual market access. Dehnavi said Iran produces many goods that are well-suited for the Chinese market and that joint production could also help both countries expand into third-country markets. "This kind of cooperation can make our trade ties deeper and more sustainable," he said.

Fereydoun Vardinejad, secretary general of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, said China had stood by Iran during both stable and turbulent times, and that the two peoples share a strong emotional bond.

However, he warned that a lack of information exchange and mutual understanding of economic capacities had led to a wide gap between political relations and economic realities. "Our ties are excellent in potential but need significant work in practice," he said.

Vardinejad called for a "win-win partnership" and proposed several actions: holding specialized business meetings, promoting bilateral trade missions, introducing market opportunities, ensuring trade balance, and supporting private-sector cooperation in areas like creative industries, digital economy, nanotechnology, and biotechnology.

"These steps," he said, "can build deeper and mutually beneficial ties between Iran and China."

Meanwhile, Hossein Eyvazlou, a member of the executive board of Iran's National Development Fund (NDF), has announced plans for collaboration with China in the field of foreign investment in Iran.

Speaking at a press conference on January 4, Eyvazlou highlighted the importance of attracting foreign capital to boost Iran's economic projects, emphasizing the role of strategic partnerships with countries like China.

Details on the scope and nature of the cooperation were not disclosed, but it is expected to focus on key sectors that align with Iran's long-term development goals.

Questioning identity of Shebaa Farms is free service to Israel!

By Sondoss Al Asaad

SOUTH LEBANON — Druze leader Walid Jumblatt's statement regarding the non-Lebanese nature of the Shebaa Farms has sparked widespread condemnation in Lebanon, with some believing that this questioning serves only the Israeli enemy.

Jumblatt, the former leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, had said that "the Shebaa Farms are Syrian land occupied by Israel."

Calling on Hezbollah to disarm as "Israel and the West have won and a new page has been opened in the Middle East," he stressed that weapons should be "exclusively in the hands of the Lebanese state."

While the Israeli occupation army continues its policy of carpet-bombing villages bordering occupied Palestine by taking advantage of the silence of the Lebanese government and the so-called international community, Ynet revealed that this systematic destruction guarantees "the



establishment of a settlement on Mount Doug [the Hebrew name for the Shebaa Farms]."

According to the Hebrew website, this colonial settlement would be called "Iron Swords."

Ynet underscored that if "the army and government wanted to return the northern settlers, ensure the restoration of security, and eliminate the threat, they should open

Mount Dov to them so they could explore the stunning natural trails."

On August 31, 1920, French High Commissioner General Henri Gouraud issued Order No. 318 establishing the state of Greater Lebanon, which included the entire Hasbaya District (the Shebaa Farms had historically been part of the district).

When the French drew their maps, they adopted a military demarcation

method that followed the succession of mountain lines (vertex) and peaks as international borders rather than district borders.

Thus, the Lebanese town of Shebaa was established within the borders of Greater Lebanon, while its own indigenous farms were placed within the Syrian borders.

Then, the residents were aware of what had happened. Several attempts were made by the Committee (tasked with correcting the borders). It produced several modified maps whereby the area of the Shebaa Farms continued to shrink until the defeat of the French occupation.

In 1946, Lebanon and Syria reached a real estate solution that established the borders of the Shebaa Farms. Lebanon agreed to its minimum rights, but the borders were not amended through the UN.

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

NATO backing for US attack on Iran is astoundingly shameful Is NATO seeking to protect members or endorse illegal invasions

From page 1 ► This dangerous trajectory of the alliance toward promoting offensive warfare contravenes Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which prescribes a defense pact for its members. By giving legitimacy to this act of aggression, NATO has compromised its own moral standing, opened the doors to egregious double standards in Middle East policy, and stirred worldwide clamors that could emasculate the alliance as an authority for collective security.

Contradiction with NATO's founding mission

The primary reason for NATO is the collective security of members as enshrined in the Washington Treaty. It is legitimized upon the principle that should an attack is waged on a member, then force may be imposed in response. Force is not to be used in anticipation or punishment against non-members. Various U.S. strikes in Iran, including those on the three nuclear sites mentioned above, were undertaken without any overt attack on a NATO member or any authorization of the Security Council under the UN Charter.

In celebrating these strikes, the leadership of NATO appears to have abandoned the very reason for which it was created, opening the question: Has NATO become a tool of the unilateral ambitions of the U.S. and its close allies instead of a protector of collective security?

Silence and complicity in face of international law

The UN Security Council never authorized the U.S. strikes on the nuclear facilities in Iran. While Secretary General Rutte insisted that the actions did not violate international law, UN Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres and other international figures have condemned the strikes as a perilous escalation and contrary to the prohibition on using force as enshrined in the UN Charter. NATO's failure to condemn the attack not only risks legitimizing violations of international norms but also undermines its own credibility as a force for peace.

Double standards: Israel, Iran, and the question of security

NATO has a tough policy toward Iran. NATO repeatedly insists that "Iran must never develop a nuclear weapon". Contrary to this claim, the U.S. intelligence community and Trump's spy chief

Tulsi Gabbard concluded that Iran is not seeking to build nuclear weapons. Moreover, as a signatory to the NPT, Iran's nuclear activities are subject to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This is while NATO is engaged in a close relationship with Israel through cooperation in intelligence, technology, and military exercises. However, Israel has openly refused to acknowledge its nuclear weapons or join the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

This selective application of security concerns fuels accusations of double standards. Critics also point out that NATO's unwavering support for Israel's "right to self-defense" is not extended to Iran, and that the alliance has been conspicuously silent on Israel's nuclear ambiguity and its record of violating international law.

Israel is widely believed to have about 100 nuclear warheads and refuses to accept a Middle East without nuclear weapons. Its heritage minister also suggested using nuclear arms against Gazans following



the Oct. 7 attack.

Instrumentalization of NATO for U.S. domestic politics

The timing and tone of Rutte's congratulatory notes convey an impression that NATO leadership is much more interested in conspicuously courting Washington than upholding NATO principles. This politicization undermines NATO's independence and risks transforming the alliance into a vehicle for the ambitions of whichever U.S. administration is in power.

Ignoring global public opinion

NATO has officially endorsed the U.S. attacks, yet substantial public opposition exists to the strikes, especially in Europe, let alone in non-NATO countries. Many thousands protested in The Hague against both the U.S. attack and NATO's military posture, calling for de-escalation and diplomacy instead of war. Polls indicate that NATO is still supported among older Europeans, but skepticism rises — especially among youth who question NATO's significance and whether they want to align themselves with American foreign policy. By ignoring these voices, NATO not only risks alienating the very public it claims to

be protecting but complicating the gulf between Western governments and their citizens.

The costs for Europe

Military escalation in the Middle East has huge potential costs for Europe. Regardless of the ongoing Western brinkmanship, any open military conflict with Iran could disrupt energy supplies, cause new waves of refugees, and generate new radicalization, and terrorism in Europe. Wolfgang Ischinger, a German diplomat, has already mulled the impact of the wars in the Middle East on Europe citing that many European countries are somewhere between mild resentment and "a very deep sense of anger" over past Middle Eastern wars, which have created strained asylum systems, general political polarization, and security concerns.

In addition, as Europe grapples with the consequences of past and current Middle Eastern conflicts, they are becoming more reliant on the U.S. for military support, but this goes far beyond just helping with defense. By allowing NATO to support U.S. military operations, they may be ushering in a new era of instability that will be most prevalent in their respective capitals.

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

US has not wiped out Iran's nuclear program because Iranians have the 'know-how': academic

TEHRAN - Former Iranian ambassador to Germany Seyed Mousavian, who was also part of Iran's nuclear diplomacy team with the UN in the 2000s, says U.S. strikes on major Iranian nuclear sites are only a small victory, ABC News reported.

Mousavian told 7.30 that while physical Iranian assets could have been destroyed as part of the US's so-called Operation Midnight Hammer, the nuclear "know-how" of Iranian scientists has not been.

After the initial Israeli strikes, the warring nations exchanged missile attacks before the

U.S. president claimed the U.S. attacks caused the destruction of nuclear sites at Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan.

"Monumental Damage was done to all Nuclear sites in Iran, as shown by satellite images. Obliteration is an accurate term!" Trump had written on Truth Social. Mousavian, an academic at Princeton University, questioned those claims and offered a warning.

"I don't know the extent of the damages, nobody knows," Mousavian told 7.30.

"There is a dispute in the U.S. ... but even if it is completely destroyed as President Trump has

claimed repeatedly, even if it has been severely damaged, what was the objective? To destroy the facilities, building and utilities?"

"But you cannot destroy the know-how.

"The know-how is there, how can you kill the know-how? Iranians, they have the technology and they can reconstruct anything.

"Whether that will take one month or five months or six months, it doesn't matter.

"They will not be able to destroy Iranian nuclear capability because Iranians, they have the knowledge."

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

Settler violence flows with impunity

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - The Israeli-backed settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank continues as part of efforts to Judaize the territory.

In the south of al-Khalil (Hebron)

city, a Palestinian woman was injured during a settler attack on homes in Masafer Yatta.

Activists told the Palestinian news agency WAFA that Rabeeha al-Nawajeh was severely beaten by settlers during the assault in the village of Susiya.

Settlers threw rocks at doors and windows, causing injuries and property damage. The Palestinian neighborhood has become one of a growing number of flashpoint areas targeted by illegal settler violence.

On Friday, settlers stormed

the al-Buraq Wall area, west of the al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem), performing Talmudic prayers to mark the beginning of the Hebrew month of Tammuz.

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

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Israeli soldiers admit to deliberately killing aid seekers



Israeli troops have admitted to deliberately shooting and killing unarmed Palestinians waiting for aid in the Gaza Strip, following direct orders from their superiors, MEE reported.

According to soldiers and officers who spoke to Haaretz, commanders instructed them to open fire on people seeking food at aid distribution points despite knowing they posed no threat.

One soldier described the distribution centres as a "killing field".

"Where I was stationed, between one and five people were killed every day," the soldier told Haaretz.

"They're treated like a hostile force, no crowd-control measures, no tear gas. Just live fire with everything imaginable: heavy machine guns, grenade launchers, mortars."

Israel blocked all aid and goods from entering the Gaza Strip for nearly three months beginning in March, pushing the two million residents of the besieged enclave into a severe hunger crisis.

1 killed and 11 wounded in intense Israeli strikes on south Lebanon

Israel's air force carried out intense airstrikes on mountains overlooking a southern Lebanon city Friday in an attack that the Israeli military said targeted underground assets of the Hezbollah movement, ABC News reported.

Shortly afterward, another strike hit an apartment building in the nearby city of Nabatieh, killing one woman, wounding 11 and knocking out the building's top floor, according to Lebanon's state news agency.

It was not immediately clear if that strike targeted anyone in the building.

Since the 14-month Israel-Hezbollah war ended with a U.S.-brokered ceasefire in November, Israel has carried out almost daily airstrikes on southern Lebanon. Friday's strikes were more intense than usual.

"We are steadfast no matter how much you bomb us with your fighter jets and drones," Hassan Ghandour, a Shiite cleric from Nabatieh, told The Associated Press at the scene of the strike outside the building.

Lebanon's president and prime minister condemned the Israeli strikes on south Lebanon, saying they violated the ceasefire deal.

The airstrikes on the mountains overlooking Nabatieh came in two waves, and bunker buster bombs were used, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported. NNA said four people were lightly wounded in the airstrikes outside the city.

Pope Leo decries 'shameful' disregard for international law

Pope Leo XIV has lamented what he described as the rise of blunt power over the rules of international law as conflicts rage around the world and global institutions continue to fail to end abuses and war crimes, Al Jazeera reported.

"It is disheartening to see today that the strength of international law and humanitarian law no longer seems binding, replaced by the presumed right to overpower others," the pontiff said in a social media post on Thursday.

"This is unworthy and shameful for humanity and for the leaders of nations."

Leo did not elaborate on his remarks, but his statement comes amid growing calls for ending

the Israeli assault on Gaza, which leading rights advocates and United Nations experts have described as a genocide.

Court rejects Netanyahu's request to delay criminal trial

The occupied Quds District Court rejected on 27 June Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's request for a two-week delay of his criminal trial.

According to Ynet, Israeli judge Rivka Friedman-Feldman said in a statement that the request, which was previously put forward by Netanyahu's lawyer, "does not present a detailed basis or reason that might justify canceling evidentiary hearings."

Earlier on Friday, the Israeli State Attorney's office opposed the request and said the "general reasons detailed in the request cannot justify canceling two weeks of hearings, particularly in the run up to the recess."

The State Attorney's office added that it has already adjusted the schedule to accommodate the Israeli premier, including by allowing him to testify twice a week rather than three times a week.

"The prosecution, therefore, opposes the request," it said.

Spanish PM accuses EU of 'double standards'



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has accused the EU of double standards, noting that the bloc imposed sweeping sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine conflict but has failed to take similar action against Israel for its war in Gaza.

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Sanchez said he will propose suspending the EU's trade agreement with Israel, in which Article 2 designates human rights as an "essential element" of the pact.

He noted that UN reports are sounding the alarm over the "catastrophic situation" in Gaza, where more than 56,000 Palestinians have been killed since October 2023.

"It makes absolutely no sense that we've imposed 18 rounds of sanctions on Russia for its aggression against Ukraine, while the EU, in a double standard, has been unable to suspend the association agreement with Israel, even as it flagrantly violates Article 2 on human rights," Sanchez said.

The Israeli Embassy in Madrid condemned Sanchez's remarks as "morally indefensible" and accused him of "launching an anti-Israel crusade."

European retailers drop Israeli goods in solidarity with Gaza

Italian supermarket chain Coop Alleanza 3.0 has announced it will stop selling Israeli products — including tahini, peanuts and SodaStream — in solidarity with Gaza, as the retail boycott of Israeli goods gathers momentum, TRT Global reported.

"We cannot remain indifferent to the ongoing violence in Gaza," the company said in a statement on June 25.

The chain will also start selling Gaza Cola to help rebuild a hospital in the besieged enclave.

The move comes just a day after British food retailer the Co-op Group said it would stop sourcing products from 17 countries, including Israel, citing "internationally recognised" human rights abuses

Tehran urban tourism forum postponed amid regional tensions



TEHRAN – An international forum on urban tourism, originally set to take place in Tehran on June 24–25, has been officially postponed due to escalating regional tensions following Israeli attacks on Iran earlier this month.

The event, which would have marked UN Tourism’s first-ever forum dedicated exclusively to urban tourism, was scheduled to be held in the Abbasabad Cultural and Tourism Zone, a key development hub affiliated with the Tehran Municipality. Preparations for the forum had been underway for over a year, involving efforts across diplomatic, scientific, and technical levels to position Tehran as a host city.

According to a statement issued by Iran’s Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the

forum was intended to project a modern image of Tehran and offer an opportunity to promote the values of Iranian-Islamic civilization on a global stage. The Ministry emphasized the significance of the event in shaping international perceptions of Iran’s capital and fostering dialogue on urban tourism.

In its statement, the Ministry strongly condemned the attacks, referring to them as a “malicious invasion” and a disruption of a “lofty national effort.” It accused Israel and its allies of attempting to undermine Iran’s image and peaceful initiatives on the global stage.

Iranian officials expressed optimism that the forum will be held at a later date under improved conditions. “We will continue our efforts with greater resolve,” the Ministry said, pledging to reschedule the event with enhanced planning and international cooperation.

“We believe that holding this event can showcase a more modern and constructive image of metropolis Tehran, the beautiful and lovely capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and send a new message aligned with the ideals of our Islamic-Iranian civilization to the world,” part of the statement reads.

No new date for the forum has been announced, and UN Tourism has yet to release an official statement regarding the postponement.

NGOs urge UNESCO to act against Israeli attacks threatening Iran’s cultural heritage

TEHRAN – A coalition of 51 Iranian non-governmental organizations dedicated to cultural heritage and tourism has sent a formal letter to UNESCO’s Director-General Audrey Azoulay, condemning Israeli airstrikes on Iran and warning of their severe threat to the country’s invaluable cultural and historical sites.

The letter, signed by prominent organizations including the Association of Traditional Arts Veterans of Fars, the Iranian History and Heritage Association, the Kazeroon Cultural Heritage Supporters Association, the Association of Conservation and Restoration Specialists, the Iranian Collectors Association, the Iranian Architectural Masters Association, and the Iranian Tourism Education Institutes Association, appeals to the UN cultural body in its capacity as the global guardian of tangible, intangible, and natural heritage.

Citing international legal frameworks such as the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1972 World Heritage Convention, and the 2017 UN Security Council Resolution 2347, the letter stresses that any military actions damaging historical monuments, cultural sites, or

natural heritage areas constitute blatant violations of the aggressor state’s obligations and of human rights.

The NGOs highlight that Iran, as the cradle of some of the world’s most luminous civilizations, hosts numerous priceless heritage sites, many registered as UNESCO World Heritage. Since June 13, 2025, Israeli forces have launched repeated and widespread air raids targeting Iranian cities rich with centuries- and millennia-old historical buildings and artifacts. The letter specifically references bombings near the UNESCO-registered Bisotun archaeological site in western Iran as a source of grave concern.

In light of these developments, the Iranian civil society organizations urge UNESCO to condemn these irresponsible attacks publicly and to issue official warnings to the Israeli regime.

They further call on UNESCO to employ binding international enforcement mechanisms, including referring the issue to the UN Security Council should such actions recur, and to deploy monitoring committees and expert teams to Iran immediately. The goal is to prevent the repetition of cultural tragedies seen in other conflict zones.

World Archaeological Congress bars Israeli scholar from attending conference

TEHRAN – In a significant move upholding international law and ethical archaeological practice, the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) has excluded a scholar affiliated with Israel’s Ariel University from its upcoming 10th congress (WAC-10).

The decision, finalized by the WAC Council on June 21, cites Ariel University’s location within the illegal Israeli settlement of Ariel in the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank) as the primary reason. The Council stated that participation by the institution or its affiliates is “incompatible with WAC’s foundational principles and with international legal norms.”

The WAC Council detailed its reasoning, emphasizing:

Illegality of Settlements: Israeli settlements, including Ariel, are illegal under international law, affirmed by Article 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion (2004), and UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016).

Illegality of Ariel University: By virtue of being situated within an illegal settlement, Ariel University itself is deemed an illegal institution under international law.

Violations in Archaeological Practice: Archaeological excavations conducted in occupied territories contravene international legal standards protecting cultural heritage, specifically The Hague Regulations (1907), the 1954 Hague Convention, and its 1999 Second Protocol. Such

activities risk destroying or concealing cultural, historical, and scientific evidence.

Principle of Non-Recognition: Allowing participation by scholars affiliated with Ariel University would breach the fundamental international legal principle of non-recognition of unlawful situations arising from occupation.

WAC’s Own Resolutions: The Council recalled WAC’s previous resolutions (Resolution 9 from WAC-7 and Resolution 13 from WAC-8) condemning archaeological activities in occupied Palestinian territories and calling on archaeologists to avoid complicity in violations. It specifically referenced Article 6 of the WAC Dead Sea Accord, which strictly limits excavation in occupied territory to cases where it is essential for safeguarding heritage and prohibits changes intended to conceal or destroy evidence.

“The Council has determined that participation by Ariel University or its affiliates in WAC-10 would be incompatible with WAC’s foundational principles and with international legal norms,” the official statement declared.

WAC President Koji Mizoguchi, announcing the decision on behalf of the Council, reiterated the organization’s commitment: “The World Archaeological Congress reaffirms its commitment to ethical, inclusive, and legally responsible archaeological practice, and stands in solidarity with all communities whose cultural heritage and rights are threatened by occupation and conflict.”

Muharram: a global scene, an Iranian narrative

From Page 1 ► Muharram is a mirror reflecting Iranian culture, art, history, literature, and customs. This mirror has also inspired other nations with different languages and traditions, who gather around a common message named “Hossein (A.S.).”

Cultural ties beyond borders

From the Arba’een pilgrimage in Iraq to mourning rituals in Karachi and Kashmir, from performances of Tazieh (passion plays) in Sarajevo and Berlin to Nakhli Gardani (palm-carrying) in Yazd and Tabas, the cultural ties resulting from Ashura have developed into an extensive network of human and historical relations across the Islamic world.

Iran has a prominent role as the center for producing and transferring these customs. The Iranian structure for mourning uses the language of art. In recent decades, a significant part of global society, particularly in regional countries, has come to know Iran through its religious and cultural rituals during Muharram.



Muharram has become a tool for cultural collaboration and civilizational dialogue.

Tazieh

One of the brightest cultural symbols of Muharram in Iran is Tazieh performance, an art which is rooted in oral traditions but has been combined with theatrical, musical, dramatic and literary elements. Today, Tazieh is performed in cities like Paris, Rome, London, Istanbul, and Beirut in different languages adapt-

ed from the Iranian model. Tazieh performances are tools for introducing Shia culture and the epic spirit of Ashura, presented in an art form understandable to other nations.

Mookebs

Mookeb is a service center with a religious nature where Shia Muslims come together and conduct religious rituals during Arba’een. Iranian Mookebs are the other capacities of cultural diplomacy. Mookebs show Iranian-Islamic lifestyle, a style in

which hospitality, simplicity, kindness, politeness, hospitality and respect for the pilgrim are at the highest possible level.

These processions have also had a positive impact among non-Iranian pilgrims. In public conversations, many pilgrims from Arab and even European countries mention the “Iranian processions” as the most memorable part of their trip; where they became familiar with Iranian culture, food, customs and manners.

In recent years, coverage of Iranian Muharram rituals in international media has increased significantly. Networks such as Al Jazeera, France 24, RT, and BBC Arabic have specifically covered the mourning processions, Nakhli Gardani (palm-carrying) ceremonies, Tazieh, and processions. In these media reports, Iran is presented as a country with a deep-rooted religious, spiritual, and popular culture.

These narratives are in complete conflict with the negative portrayal of Iran by some Western media outlets.

Isfahan, in the arms of art



TEHRAN--Amidst the noise of the news, Isfahan artists breathe the spirit of hope into society with their beautiful creations, playing a vital role in healing the wounds and creating an atmosphere of empathy and peace, so that the light of hope remains shining in this historical city.

Isfahan, as one of the most prominent historical and cultural cities in Iran and the world, has always been known for its art and handicrafts, which are symbols of the thousands of years old heritage of this land.

In a time when worry may have taken root in the hearts of people, the art of this ancient city, like a bubbling spring, whispers hope. The artists of this land, with creative hands and hearts full of love, create beautiful works of art, so that in this inevitable noise, they can be a refuge for the tired souls of the people.

The artists of this city, not with slogans, but by creating nice works, go to war with despair and hopelessness.

Isfahan’s arts, from enameling inspired by nature and history to engraving on precious metals, from inlay work with precise geometric patterns to turquoise carving that sets beautiful stones on copper and brass surfaces, from carpet weaving with delicate knots to hand-painted fabrics with traditional motifs, from music and painting to poetry and literature, are not only an inseparable part of Isfahan but also play a vital role in preserving Iran’s national and cultural identity.

In the traditional workshops of Isfahan, where the smell of jujube, walnut and maple wood and the color of linden and spruce trees revive memories of the past, artists are busy creating works that transcend time and place, conveying messages of peace and friendship. Master craftsmen, who have been carving on wood with love and skill for years, carve designs of hope and life into the heart of wood.

In another corner of the city, painters, with their magical brushes, spread colors of joy and

vitality on canvas and create beautiful and original miniatures. They know that these days, people need bright and hopeful colors more than ever.

Mahmoud Nayeby, a miniaturist from Isfahan, told IRNA: “Only through painting, I think less about the war and its consequences. The war was like a great earthquake for me, which challenged my mental foundations. Before that, I might have thought more about pure aesthetics, but after the events of recent days, art has a deeper meaning for me.” He continued: “Although the style of my paintings is miniature, which has many differences from other styles of this art, I seek to record resistance and even glimmers of hope in my new paintings and no longer think only about color and form, but rather seek to convey a message that every spot of color can convey.”

He pointed out that art in times of war can have both the role of emotional release and awareness-raising, and for the artist, it is a way to express complex emotions such as anger, sadness, and hope. At the same time, for the audience, it can be a mirror to see the realities and perhaps a way to comfort or sympathize, he added. He also said: “Art can be a reminder of humanity, art is the power to create and we must let this power be our refuge and way of salvation, and every work of art in this era should be a hope for a better future.”

Art in Isfahan is not only soothing, but also a bridge to empathy and solidarity. The city’s street musicians, through their street performances, provide an opportunity for people to enjoy the beauty of music together and sympathize with each other. At one of these art gatherings in Jolfa, Isfahan, people expressed their feelings and sang along with each other as they listened to memorable pieces of music, perhaps believing that they are not alone on this path.

The history of most of the arts of Isfahan which are considered handicrafts, dates back to the Safavid era, an era when art and architecture flourished in this city. During this period, Isfahan artists with their own taste developed handicrafts and perfected designs and techniques such as enameling, inlaying, calligraphy, turquoise carving, carpet weaving, and many others.

Without a doubt, enameling is one of the most prominent arts of Isfahan, the art of decorating metals, especially copper, with colorful and glazed designs. Isfahan is known as the most important center of enameling in Iran, and the city’s enamel works, with their Islamic designs, flowers and plants, and miniature images, are

famous across the world.

Khatamkari, another art that has a special place in the art of Isfahan, is the art of decorating the surface of objects with small wooden, bone and metal triangles that, when placed together, create original geometric shapes. Isfahan Khatamkari has a special place due to the elegance and variety of designs.

Qalamzani, which is the art of engraving designs on metals such as copper, silver and brass, is very popular in Isfahan, and Isfahan artists use a pen and hammer to engrave traditional, mythical and religious designs on dishes, paintings and other metal objects.

The weaving of exquisite carpets with complex designs and diverse colors has long been popular in Isfahan, and Isfahan carpets have always been welcomed all over the world due to the high quality of the raw materials, the elegance of the texture and the beauty of the design.

Qalamkar tablecloth, which is a traditional type of printing on fabric in which beautiful and diverse designs are created on tablecloths, and other textiles using engraved wooden molds and plant dyes, is another fans art from the West Asia that has many customers.

In addition to these, other arts such as miniature, turquoise carving, tapestry work, copersmithing, traditional textiles (such as Zarbafi and Golabtun embroidery), pottery, gem work, aba weaving, Zarbafi, velvet weaving, tile work, and dozens of other arts are also popular in Isfahan, each of which in turn narrates authentic Iranian taste and art.

In these days, art reminds people that life still goes on and that beauty is waiting to be discovered. Art motivates people to continue working and creating with hope for the future and to build a better world for themselves and future generations. In the end, it can be said that art in Isfahan is not only a hobby or entertainment, but also a necessity. In these turbulent days, art, like a lighthouse, shows the way to hope and peace and helps people to withstand hardships and hope for the future.

With creative hands and hearts full of love, Isfahan artists continue to create a beautiful and peaceful world, so that the light of hope will always remain bright in this historical city.

More than 80,000 handicraft artists work in Isfahan province, of which 40,000 have been identified and certified in the past four years. Of the 602 handicrafts identified in the world, 299 are related to Iran, and of these, 200 are related to Isfahan province.

Shushtar water structures, a ground for sustainable tourism

TEHRAN—The governor of Shushtar, an ancient city in southwest Iran, has said that modeling water resources management, sustainable tourism, and linking industry with culture can be learned from the capacity of Shushtar’s historical water structures.

Marking the anniversary of the UNESCO inscription of the Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System on the fifth of Tir (June 25), Arash Qanbari called Shushtar water structures a precious treasure in the heart of Khuzestan province, IRNA reported.

The monument was registered on UNESCO’s list in 2009, he said, add-

ing that it is a symbol of genius, engineering knowledge, and innovation of Iranians in the management of water resources.

It is expected that national and provincial bodies that recognize the status of this global monument, be more serious about implementing the commitments set by UNESCO, he mentioned.

This system, which dates back to the time of Darius the Great in the 5th century BC, involved the creation of two main diversion canals on the Karun River. One of these, the Gargar canal, remains in use today, supplying water to Shushtar

through a series of tunnels that power mills. This system forms a spectacular cliff from which water cascades into a downstream basin before entering the plain south of the city, where it has enabled the cultivation of orchards and farmland over an area of 40,000 hectares.

The Shushtar Hydraulic System is not just an ancient marvel; it is a symbol of human ingenuity and the ability to harmonize with natural elements. The system includes a variety of interconnected elements, such as bridges, dams, tunnels, and mills, all working together to man-

age and utilize water efficiently. The design and construction of these structures demonstrate a profound understanding of hydraulic engineering and a deep respect for the environment.

The legacy of the Shushtar Hydraulic System continues to inspire modern engineers and architects. Its innovative design and functionality have been studied and admired by scholars worldwide. The system’s ability to sustain agricultural practices and support the local population for centuries stands as a remarkable achievement in sustainable engineering.

Watershed management budget increased by fifteenfold

TEHRAN –The national budget bill for watershed management in the current Iranian calendar year (March 2025–March 2026) is fifteenfold the budget for its preceding year, the head of the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization has said.

Implementing watershed and aquifer management projects can lead to rainfall penetration into the land or infiltration, strong vegetation cover, reduced soil erosion, and improved land dynamics, ISNA quoted Ali Teymouri as saying.

Referring to the drop in rainfall and the rise in global temperature, which can contribute to sand and dust storms, the official said that although the Ministry of Energy focuses on governance in water resources management, from the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization's perspective, territorial sovereignty needs to be considered.

Natural resources, vegetation, biodiversity, fauna, soil, and even air must be seen as an interconnected whole. If the rate of water evaporation is ignored, decision-making based on the amount of water remaining cannot be efficient.

Out of some 400 billion cubic meters of annual rainfall, with 280 billion cubic meters evaporating, only 110 to 120 billion cubic meters of manageable water remains. According to the Ministry of Energy, this year the figure has dropped to 66 billion cubic meters, indicating a 20 to 30 percent decrease compared to its preceding year, Teymouri stressed.



If just 10 percent of the water that evaporates is managed through watershed and aquifer management methods, many positive changes will be brought about.

Currently, about 6,500 villages and 450 cities are at risk of flooding. Managing runoff upstream in these areas is one of the duties of the Natural Resources Organization. Totally, about 25 to 28 million hectares of critical lands have been identified in the country that have the capacity to implement watershed management projects. They are at the top of the agenda of the organization's programs, Teymouri said.

According to the seventh national development plan (2023–2027), over the course of 5 years watershed management project is scheduled to cover 20 million hectares of the land in the country, that is four million hectares each year.

Less than normal rainfall forecast for next 6 months

Precipitation in the remaining months of the year until early De-

cember is forecast to be less than normal, according to the Meteorological Organization.

Summer average rainfall will be less than normal in provinces located north of the Alborz Mountains, on the southern slopes, and northwest. In some areas in the south-east, it tends to be above normal; in other parts, there will be low or no precipitation, ISNA reported.

As summer precipitations contribute to a relatively small proportion of the total annual rainfall, the current water year is projected to end (on September 22) with 40 percent less than normal rainfall.

Autumn rainfall is expected to start later than normal; in the northwest, it is forecast to be 60 percent less than normal, and in other parts, there will be some 50 to 60 percent reduction in precipitation.

In the first two months of the summer, the temperature in the southeast of the country and the Caspian coast will be normal; it will

be 1-2 degrees higher than normal in the northwest, and 0.5 –1 degree higher in other regions, respectively.

From September 6 to October 7, average rainfall in most parts of the country will be the same as the normal long-term amount. In the northwest region, the temperature will rise by 1-2 degrees; in other regions, it will be 0.5 – 1 degree higher than normal.

From October 7 to November 6, average rainfall is estimated to be less than normal on the two sides of the Alborz Mountains, northwest, and provinces in the northern and southern Zagros. There will be no precipitation in other regions of the country.

The temperature will get 1-2 degrees higher in the northwest, northern, and middle Zagros; in the eastern part of the country, the average temperature will be normal, while in other parts, a temperature increase of 0.5–1 degree above normal is expected.

From November 6 to December 6, average rainfall tends to be less than normal in northern, middle, and southern Zagros, as well as provinces located east of Zagros.

Average temperature will be normal in some areas of the east, south-east, and Dasht-e Kavir (the central desert of Iran), 1-2 degrees above normal in the middle and southern Zagros, and 0.5–1 degree higher than normal in other parts.

The greatest decrease in precipitation is projected to occur in the second month of autumn, particularly in the middle Zagros.

Iranian delegation attends Agritec Africa 2025



TEHRAN –Supported by the Prosperity and Innovation Fund, Iranian knowledge-based companies participated in the tenth edition of the Agritec Africa 2025, held at Kenyatta International Exhibition Centre, Nairobi, Kenya.

During the three-day event, held from June 11 to 13, twelve knowledge-based firms showcased their latest achievements and products including genetically modified fruit and vegetable seeds such as corn and onion, modified tropical seeds, greenhouse cultivation technologies, fruit quality preservation technologies, sorting machinery, probiotics, agricultural machinery, livestock vaccines and premium cattle embryos, food additives, cage fish farming technology, different packaging bags, canopy nets, and safety nets.

The 10th Agritec Africa, an International Exhibition and Conference on Agriculture Technologies, brought together 175 companies from 25

countries.

The event provided ample opportunities for industry professionals to connect and collaborate, as well as examine the latest science and technology related to the agricultural sector.

The event showcased advancements in various agricultural sectors, including machinery and equipment, aquaculture, biotechnology, fertilizers and chemicals, animal husbandry and dairy, poultry, and greenhouses. It will also featured concurrent events like the Dairy Livestock & Poultry Expo and Graintech Africa Expo.

Notable growth in knowledge-based companies

The significant and fast-paced growth in the number of knowledge-based companies with over 200 percent increase in their number just over the past year (March 2023 – March 2024), shows the solid foundation, dynamism, and growth of the country in innovation and technology and the productive atmosphere which have been made available in line with the goal of boosting domestic production with public participation.

Knowledge-based companies have progressed well. However, with continuously increasing support, knowledge-based companies will have a brighter future.

The high number of knowledge-based companies active in the capital market proves they have fully grown. Currently, there are 108 com-

panies in the capital market, which is anticipated to grow by 100 percent by the end of the current year, March 2025.

Iran's knowledge-based companies exported over 3.6 million tons of products, valued at \$2.506 billion, in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended March 19, 2024), according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Based on the IRICA data, some 1158 million tons of goods, valued at \$5141 billion, were also imported by knowledge-based companies into the country from March 21, 2023, to March 19, 2024.

About 85 percent of the goods imported by the knowledge-based companies came from China, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, Germany, and India, IRNA reported.

The domestic knowledge-based companies exported their products to China, Iraq, the UAE, Turkey, and Russia in this period, IRICA said.

In this period, the knowledge-based companies accounted for 2.6 and 5 percent of the country's total exports in weight and value respectively.

Advanced materials and products based on chemical technologies accounted for about 80 percent of the export value of these companies.

China was Iran's first buyer of knowledge-based products in this period.

‘Iran Digital’ program kicks off, focusing on AI in schools

TEHRAN –The first phase of Iran Digital initiative, a national free artificial intelligence (AI) training program, has been launched, targeting two million junior high school students and one thousand teachers.

Having completed the introductory courses, students will learn different functional areas of AI and carry out practical projects, IRNA quoted Abdolhossein Bahrami, an official with the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy, as saying.

Directors of the Ministry of Education, heads of junior high schools, heads of educational technology departments, as well as educational groups, participated in the opening session.

Addressing the session, Bahrami highlighted the significance of teaching AI to students, saying that boosting digital literacy will prepare students for future job markets, help them develop their critical thinking, and become familiar with emerging technologies; it will also foster creativity and innovation among students.

The official went on to say that experts, policy makers, and users will have the chance to discuss and reach agreements on the laws and principles to be followed for the development of AI use. This will help developers and decision makers to understand people's needs, expectations, and concerns, and improve the technologies accordingly.

To motivate students and teachers, a variety of incentives are considered. The platform is game-based and interactive, and the incentives include holding seasonal competitions, ranking top individuals in different geographical areas, and awarding prizes. The top individuals will also have the chance to participate in advanced and internship courses, Bahrami noted.

AI, education

According to Audrey Azoulay, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director-General, “AI offers major opportunities for education, provided that its deployment in schools is guided by clear ethical principles.

To reach its full potential, this technology must complement the human and social dimensions of learning, rather than replace them.

It must become a tool at the service of teachers and pupils, with the main objective



being their autonomy and well-being.”

The official made the remarks on the occasion of the International Day of Education, which is observed annually on January 24.

UNESCO highlights the role of AI in reshaping education and learning. The event will spotlight the dynamic interplay between AI and education—how AI technologies are revolutionizing teaching and learning practices, while education, in turn, serves as a guiding force to ensure that AI is ethical, inclusive, and aligned with human values.

In Iran, the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in education and learning was examined during a national conference held in Tehran on October 9, 2024.

The use of AI-driven technologies in education and learning as a transformative element has not only helped to promote the quality and efficiency of the educational process but has also provided different individuals with cutting-edge technologies and smart solutions, ISNA reported.

By precisely analyzing educational data and providing instant feedbacks, it has improved students' assessment and educational content production.

It also focused on three major axes: recognizing challenges and capabilities; establishing a dynamic and collaborative environment, as well as discovering assessment and evaluation methods based on emerging technologies.

It focused on topics like AI and medical education, cognitive Sciences, schools, design and content production, human resources development, educational assessment and evaluation, AI in the future of education, and ethical considerations, as well as artificial intelligence and schools.

The main objective of the conference was to raise awareness of modern technologies and their applications in education and learning systems.

Some 33,000 illegal Afghan migrants deported in a day



TEHRAN – In an unprecedented move, a total of 33,000 undocumented Afghan refugees were sent back from Iran to their home country on Wednesday.

Ahmadullah Muttaqi, the Taliban's director of information and culture in Herat, has posted the same figures on X, noting that additional buses carrying Afghan migrants were still en route from Iran.

According to Amu TV, the scale of the deportation is highly unusual and comes ahead of a July 5 deadline issued by Iranian authorities, who have ordered undocumented Afghan migrants to leave the country voluntarily or face arrest and forced expulsion.

Iran's national police command has previously warned that those who remain past the deadline would be subject to detention and deportation. Formerly, the country sent back three thousand Afghan refugees on a daily basis.

Which Afghan nationals are allowed to stay in Iran?

Afghan nationals who are university students, vulnerable women heads of house-

holds, children with an Iranian parent, and those who have a job code are allowed to live in the country.

Students whose parents do not have legal permission to reside in the country have to return to Afghanistan by July 6.

However, the case is different for university students. Having passports, they can extend their stay in the country, IRNA quoted Nader Yar-Ahmadi, the head of the National Organization for Migration, as saying.

Women heads of households whose life is confirmed to be threatened by their return will be able to stay temporarily in the country and benefit from treatment services.

According to the law, being born in Iran does not grant Iranian citizenship. If the child's father is Iranian and the parents' marriage is legally registered, the child will be considered Iranian and will have an identification (ID) card.

In cases where the mother is Iranian and the father is a foreign national, even if the marriage is not registered, the child will receive an ID card with the mother's last name.

If undocumented nationals who have worked under a job code leave the country voluntarily, they can receive a visa to get back to their work, in case their employers agree.

However, if they are arrested and deported, they will be banned from applying for a visa.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

20% of areas in Iran at high risk of flood

Twenty percent of areas across Iran are highly prone to flooding, Khosro Shahbazi, head of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO), has said.

“Precipitation in Iran is one-third of the world's average, as the country is located in a dry and fragile region where we experience 11 millimeters decrease in precipitation each 10 years and an increase in evaporation of more than 50 millimeters every year,” he explained, ISNA reported.

Rainfall fluctuations usually lead to flood and devastation, so a comprehensive planning for watershed management and flood control is required, he noted.

بیست درصد ایران جزو مناطق با خطر سیل خیزی بالا است

سرپرست سازمان جنگلها، مراتع و آبخیزداری می گوید ۲۰ درصد ایران جزو مناطق با خطر سیل خیزی بالا است.

به گزارش روز جمعه ایسنا، خسرو شهبازی افزود: میزان بارش در کشور ما یک سوم متوسط آن در دنیا است و از نظر جغرافیایی در منطقه ای خشک و شکننده واقع شده‌ایم که هر ۱۰ سال با ۱۱ میلیمتر کاهش بارش و بیش از ۵۰ میلیمتر افزایش تبخیر و ترقق مواجه هستیم که همه منجر به این شده که بارش‌ها در منطقه ما سیلابی و ویرانگر باشد، به همین خاطر نیازمند برنامه ریزی جامع برای مدیریت حوضه‌های آبخیز و کنترل سیلاب‌ها هستیم.



JUNE 28, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Every religion has its distinct characteristic, and the distinct characteristic of Islam is modesty.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:07 Evening: 19:45 Dawn: 3:04 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:50 (tomorrow)

“Tent of Art” celebrates Muharram with cultural, artistic events

TEHRAN – The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance's Artistic Affairs Department has inaugurated a special cultural program titled “Kheimeh Honar” (“Tent of Art”) at the Rudaki Open-Air Theater in Tehran.

The event, which commenced on Friday, seeks to honor the sacred month of Muharram and the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), ISNA reported.

This comprehensive gathering aims to unite artists and enthusiasts from diverse disciplines—including music, performing arts, and visual arts—to pay tribute to the Ashura and celebrate Islamic heritage through creative expression, the report added.

The Ashura event is one of the most dramatic historical occurrences. It marks the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), along with his 72 loyal companions.

The program, set to run until July 6 (corresponding to the Day of Ashura, 10th day of Muharram), will be held daily from 6:30 PM to 10:00 PM, coinciding with the first ten nights of Muharram, a period deeply rooted in mourning and reflection for Muslims worldwide.

“Tent of Art” is designed to serve as a vibrant platform for cultural expression, spiritual reflection, and community engagement.

The event features a diverse lineup of performances and exhibitions that highlight the themes of sacrifice, faith, and resistance associated with Imam Hussein's (AS) martyrdom. The program includes traditional and contemporary musical performances, performances of tazieh, a traditional Iranian passion play, visual art exhibitions, poetry recitals, and storytelling sessions—all curated to evoke the profound spiritual atmosphere of Muharram.

The opening day featured a special performance by renowned pop singer Mostafa Ragheb, who is known for his soulful renditions and patriotic songs. His participation underscores the program's inclusive approach, bridging popular music

with religious themes to reach a wider audience.

Following this, the event hosted a tazieh performance dedicated to Prophet Mohammad's grandson, Imam Hussein (AS), with prominent artists and scholars participating in the recitation and narration of the tragic events of Karbala. Poet and researcher Amir Marzban also delivered a poetic recitation, adding a literary dimension to the evening. Later, Ragheb performed a selection of his heartfelt songs, accompanied by an ensemble of wind instruments that evoke the spiritual and emotional depths of the mourning ceremonies.

Throughout the ten days, “Tent of Art” will showcase an array of performances and exhibitions, including ten tazieh performances with notable performers.

These performances aim to vividly depict the sacrifices of the martyrs and deepen the audience's understanding of the historical and spiritual significance of Karbala. Additionally, the program features both traditional and modern eulogies delivered by experienced reciters and renowned singers, ensuring that the message of mourning and remembrance resonates across generations.

A puppet opera titled “Ashura,” directed by acclaimed artist Behrouz Gharibpour, will be staged at Hafez Hall. This innovative theatrical production uses puppetry and artistry to depict the epic of Karbala, offering a unique and engaging perspective on this pivotal event.

Complementing these performances, visual art exhibitions curated by leading artists and scholars will explore themes of sacrifice, martyrdom, and spiritual resilience, enriching the cultural experience for visitors.

Poetry sessions featuring prominent Iranian poets will also be held, with recitations inspired by the tragedy of Karbala, fostering a reflective and poetic atmosphere. Musical performances emphasizing traditional instruments such as the tar, tombak, and ney will highlight the rich musical heritage associated with Muharram rituals.

Triumph of ancient civilization of Iran over enemies depicted on huge billboard in Shiraz

TEHRAN – A new large billboard at Imam Hussein (AS) Square in Shiraz, Fars Province, tells the story of the triumph of the ancient civilization of Iran, whether it be over the Roman Emperor Valerian about a millennium ago or the Zionist aggressors in the modern day.

The vast land of Iran, due to its strategic geographical position, has throughout history often been coveted by oppressive invaders. Yet, this land has never been devoid of brave and honorable men and women who have always defeated the aggressors during history, IRNA reported.

Three ancient rock reliefs in Persepolis, Darab, and Tang-e Chogan in Kazerun, Fars Province, are nationally and even globally renowned for depictions of the Sassanid emperor Shapur I's victory over the Roman emperor Valerian.

Following the defeat of the Roman army by Shapur I, Roman soldiers, commanders, and their leader Valerian were taken captive. In honor of this great victory, Shapur ordered the scene to be carved into stone in multiple locations.

These Sassanid-era carvings have now inspired the newly unveiled billboard in Shiraz. According to Vahid Namazi, head of the Fars branch of the Art Bureau, the designer of the billboard is Saeed Karimi, a distinguished graphic



rulers of Islamic countries, through their silence and indifference, have effectively endorsed such savage behavior.

“After thousands of days of oppression and child-killing in Gaza, the criminal Zionist regime dared to turn its eyes toward the heart of the Islamic world, Iran, based on flawed analysis and misguided advice. However, it faced a serious and sobering response from the Iranian nation, bringing it back to reality and out of its delusions,” Namazi added.

“There was a need to remind the

kneel before the Iranians.”

Shapur I's victory relief at Naqsh-e Rostam is a rock carving located three kilometers north of Persepolis. It is one of the eight Sassanid rock carvings in Naqsh-e Rostam.

The relief depicts a scene in which Valerian, the Roman Emperor, is kneeling before Shapur I and asking for mercy.

Shapur I, the Sasanian King of Persia, captured the Roman Emperor Valerian after the Battle of Edessa, which took place in Edessa (now the Turkish city of Urfa) in 260. This event is considered a significant humiliation for the Roman Empire and was a major victory for Shapur. The capture of a Roman emperor was unprecedented and became a symbol of Sasanian power.

In the carving, Shapur is riding a big horse with a royal crown and a decorated robe. Valerian is depicted with a Roman crown and a robe on his shoulder, as if he had rushed to the king's horse of Iran and knelt down. Valerian stretched out both hands as a sign of forgiveness. The greatness of the king of Iran can be clearly seen in the crown, bracelets, and hairstyle, as well as the saddle and bridle of his horse.

Saeed Karimi's artwork is a modern version of that rock relief. While the rider remains Shapur I, as in the ancient carving, the kneeling figure has been digitally altered to represent a contemporary war-monger, wearing an armband with the Israeli flag, and he is no other than Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel.

The background features the original stone-carved figures but is augmented with a strong message, reinforced by the Persian, Hebrew, and English text: “Kneel before the Iranians”.

There is also a verse line written on the billboard, which reads:



The rock carving at Naqsh-e Rostam in Kazerun, Fars Province, depicts a scene in which Valerian, the Roman Emperor, is kneeling before Shapur I, and asking for mercy.

artist from Fars Province.

“Once again, the artists of Fars have stood beside the people and, through the language of art, remind us of the greatness and honor of Iran and its people,” Namazi said.

He added that the usurping Zionist regime and its American overlords, for years, under the guise of Western civilizational superiority, have pursued a path of oppression, aggression, plunder, and coercion. Oppressed nations around the world have suffered under their tyranny, while international bodies that claim to uphold peace and justice have remained passive. Some

Western countries of the civilizational might of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to make them understand that they are confronting a nation with more than three thousand years of cultural and civilizational legacy, one whose strength lies not in military weaponry but in the beliefs, traditions, and heritage of its people,” he concluded.

“This billboard in the historic city of Shiraz, once again echoes the enduring legacy and power of the Iranian nation. In these turbulent times of war, it reminds the child-killing Zionist regime and its uncivilized patrons that, like those before them, they too shall soon

Strindberg’s “Father” returns to stage with free performances in Tehran

TEHRAN – Swedish playwright August Strindberg's 1887 tragic drama, “The Father”, has resumed performances at the Shahrzad Theatre Complex in Tehran following a pause caused by recent Israeli strikes on the Iranian capital.

The opening shows are being offered free of charge as a gesture of respect to theatergoers in Tehran.

Vandad Sadeqi is the director of the play translated into Persian by Javad Atefeh.

The cast includes Yasaman Fanayian, Samin Afshar, Mehdi Eskandari, Hooman Soleimani, Mahsa Tadayonfard, and Armin Eftekhartzadeh.

“The Father” (Swedish: “Fadren”) is a naturalistic tragedy, which explores the intense and often destructive struggle between parents over the future of their child, highlighting themes of power, manipulation, and the conflict between individual desires and societal expectations.

Through its compelling characters and dramatic tension, “The Father” vividly portrays how cunning and psychological manipulation can undermine even the most supposedly stable relationships, leading to tragic consequences.

The story centers around Captain Adolph, a cavalry officer, and his wife, Laura. They clash over how to raise their daughter, Bertha. Laura

envisions Bertha remaining at home to pursue art, believing in nurturing her creative talents.

In contrast, Adolph insists Bertha should move into town to study and become a teacher, asserting his authority by claiming that, as a husband, he has the final say—arguing that marriage entails relinquishing certain rights, as the law supports his stance. The dispute quickly escalates into a fierce confrontation, revealing underlying tensions and contrasting worldviews.

Laura, clever and manipulative, employs deceit to undermine her husband's authority. She falsely informs the family doctor that Adolph is mentally unwell, claiming he believes he has discovered extraterrestrial life through amateur scientific pursuits. In reality, Adolph has indeed made scientific discoveries—signs of organic life in meteorites viewed through a spectroscope. Laura further manipulates the situation by revealing to the doctor that she possesses a letter in which Adolph confesses to fears of losing his sanity.

These lies entrap Adolph in a web of deception, fueling his frustration and leading him to respond with violence—he throws a burning lamp at Laura as she leaves the room.

This act of violence marks his downfall, as Laura's cunning provokes him into an irrational act, which she then exploits to have him commit-

ted.

The play intensifies as the captain is restrained and placed in a straitjacket, with the household's spiritual and religious tensions coming to the forefront.

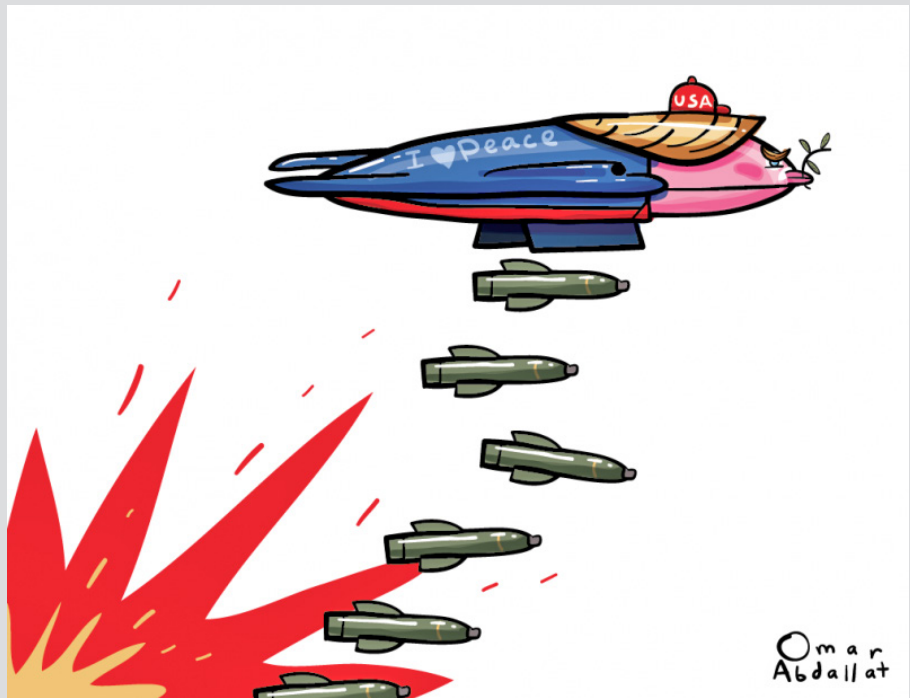
An old nurse, Margaret, gently convinces Adolph, now maddened, to accept the straitjacket, highlighting his tragic loss of control. Meanwhile, Laura's strength and cunning are emphasized, with the captain lamenting her ability to hypnotize him even when awake.

The climax culminates with Adolph suffering a stroke and dying, as Laura exclaims, “My child! My own child!” and the pastor utters “Amen,” underscoring the tragic culmination of manipulation, mental collapse, and familial breakdown.

“The Father” delves into themes of gender dynamics, power struggles, and societal influence. Reflecting Strindberg's personal life—his tumultuous marriage and exposure to various religious and spiritual beliefs—the play reveals how social and cultural forces shape human relationships.

It also alludes to classical mythology and literature, including references to Greek gods and Shakespeare's “Hamlet” and “The Merchant of Venice”, further enriching its exploration of human nature and conflict.

Cartoon of Day



Destruction for Peace

Cartoonist: Omar Al Abdallat from Jordan