Straight Truth

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The Strait of Hormuz Becomes Trump's Nightmare

Iran's decisive control of the vital waterway exposes U.S. military failures and media warfare tactics amidst escalating conflict

▸ Page 2

Iran's Leader upholds his late father's appointments

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei has issued a directive underscoring the continued service of managers and officials who were directly appointed by his late father, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The statement, issued in response to inquiries from various officials, clarifies that these appointees do not require new appointments. Instead, they are to continue their duties in accordance with the directives and policies established during the tenure of the former martyred Leader.

Iran FM rejects Trump's ceasefire claim, says aggression must end

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has dismissed U.S. President Donald Trump's claim that Iran is appealing for a ceasefire.

"We have not sent any messages and do not request a ceasefire, but this war must end in a way that it is not repeated," Araghchi told reporters at the Foreign Ministry in Tehran on Monday.

The top Iranian diplomat added, "The reason we say we do not want a ceasefire is not because we are seeking war, but because this time the war must end in a way that our enemies never even consider repeating these attacks and acts of aggression. I think they have learned a good lesson by now and understand what kind of nation they are dealing with – one that does not hesitate at all in its self-defense and is prepared to continue the war as far as necessary." ▸ Page 2

US facing military humiliation in its illegal war on Iran

By staff writer

TEHRAN - The United States and Israel started an illegal and unprovoked war on Iran Feb. 29. The war began two days after Iran and the U.S. held their third round of talks on Iran's nuclear program, first in Muscat, Oman, and second and third rounds in Geneva.

They were going to meet again a week later after consultations in the capitals. The sides also agreed that experts hold technical discussions talks in Vienna in the coming week. The Omani Foreign Minister, Badr Al Albusaid, who acted as a mediator between Iran and the U.S. wrote on X that the sides made "significant progress".

This new round of talks was resumed after the June 2025 aggression on Iran, again by Israel and the United States. ▸ Page 5

Exports from Iran's free zones increase by 14% in 11 months on year

TEHRAN- As announced by Iran's Secretariat of the High Council and the Free Zones Organizations, the value of exports form the country's free zones has increased by 14 percent during the first 11 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2025-February 20, 2026), as compared to the same period of time in the previous year, IRNA reported.

As reported, commodities worth $1.322 billion were exported from these zones in the mentioned 11-month period.

Secretariat of the High Council and the Free Zones Organizations highlighted that the performance of the country's free trade and industrial zones' economic indices during the 11-month time span indicates noticeable growth in domestic and foreign investments, production and export value, which is the indication of economic activities development in these areas.

Diversifying entry points for goods and expanding alternative corridors is the first step towards neutralizing the economic siege and pressure on the main arteries of the national economy. ▸ Page 4

Iran's strategic and operational mastery over US-Israeli aggression

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – To assess the current trajectory of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran as of March 2026, it is essential to analyze how the involved parties have arrived at their present positions.

In the 12-day war in June 2025, the Israeli Air Force conducted most of the attacks, and approximately 1,500 projectiles were used against Iran throughout the conflict.

During the first 48 hours of that war, significant damage was inflicted on Iran. However, the failure of the enemy to exploit internal divisions within Iran, combined with the operational exhaustion of the Israeli Air Force—exacerbated by long-range missions, fuel shortages, and the depletion of its target list—significantly constrained Israel's strategic options.

Additionally, the premature exposure of Israel's military strategies within the first two days of the conflict, paired with a surge in Iranian missile strikes, forced Tel Aviv to rely on direct Washington's direct involvement ▸ Page 5

The cost of U.S. miscalculation

By Xaviar Villar

MADRID – War is often framed in terms of military objectives: targets destroyed, command structures degraded, and contested territory measured in maps and coordinates. Yet in practice, modern conflicts rarely remain confined to the battlefield. When hostilities intersect with the infrastructure that underpins global trade and energy flows, the consequences extend far beyond kinetic engagements.

The confrontation between Iran and the United States illustrates this dynamic. What began as a campaign of strikes, designed to rapidly degrade Iran's military capabilities and compel compliance, has failed to achieve its central objectives. Military installations remain operational, critical systems continue to function, and Iran's ability to project power along its borders has not been decisively curtailed. The strategy of rapid paralysis has proven inadequate.

Instead, the decisive terrain of the conflict has shifted. Military strikes have been met with persistent disruption, and the focus has moved to the economic arteries that sustain the global energy system. The Strait of Hormuz, ▸ Page 3

Disruption in Strait of Hormuz paralyzes global economy: intl. energy analyst

TEHRAN- Fereydoun Berkashli, an international analyst in the oil and energy sector, believes that disruption in the Strait of Hormuz paralyzes global economy.

In an interview with IRNA, the analyst said that a new storm is being shaped in the Persian Gulf, when oil prices have sharply risen following the US-Israel attack on Iran.

The wars in the West Asia over the past decades have always led to rising global oil prices, and reactions have been severe specially in the Persian Gulf region, he stated, adding that the US-Israel attack on Iran on February 28 sent a new wave to the market.

Despite the sharp rise in the prices, the market reaction was weaker than expected, the analyst noted, and commented that the severe condition seems not still understood.

He continued that oil is produced in the West Asia, but its price is set in the exchange markets of America and Europe; the global oil market receives its analysis from the International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris, the entity that its addresses are the world's main oil and gas consumers, ▸ Page 4

Thousands of volunteers join network to provide war-affected people with medical, welfare services

TEHRAN – The Welfare Organization has organized a network of some 20,000 of volunteers to help provide a wide range of services, particularly medical and welfare services, to people affected by the U.S.-Israeli aggression.

The network includes ordinary people, medical specialists, psychologists, and social workers, IRNA reported.

Over the past few months, particularly during the recent war, public participation and volunteering have noticeably developed.

The Welfare Organization has hold several meetings with the volunteers in different provinces of the country to plan and coordinate their activities, ▸ Page 7



Tribes of Charmahal-Bakhtiari Province gathered in the mausoleum of Shahr-e Kurd on Monday morning, to pledge allegiance to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution

What Trump failed to calculate



TEHRAN - American sources have recently revealed that senior U.S. commanders had warned President Donald Trump before the start of the aggression against Iran that such a war could lead to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Trump reportedly responded to this warning by saying that Iran would surrender before things ever reached that stage.

Now, more than two weeks after the war began, it has become clear that Trump's calculations on this matter were nothing more than wishful thinking. The Strait of Hormuz is under Iran's full surveillance and control, and no vessel can pass through this vital waterway without Iran's permission. According to Iran, the strait is closed only to the aggressors and their partners in this war—an outlook that has created a nightmare scenario for the United States. Western analysts are already warning that oil prices could reach $150 to $200 within the next two weeks.

The situation in the Strait of Hormuz and its consequences for the United States and its partners is not the only sign of America's failure. The enemy believed that the heavy first wave of attacks would trigger several decisive developments within just a few days. They assumed that with the assassination of Iran's Leader Ayatollah Khamenei and several senior commanders, the governing structure would quickly fall into crisis and then collapse. Perhaps they cannot be entirely blamed for this assumption, because almost any other country might have been brought to its knees by such a devastating storm. But Iran is a land of unknowns and surprises.

In the political and governance arena, the responsible institutions—especially the executive bodies—not only did not suffer paralysis, but instead worked with strength and determination to remain present in the field, managing the consequences of the war at various levels and keeping the wheels of daily life and the country's affairs turning. At the same time, the country's military—despite being the main target of the heaviest attacks and losing a number of its brave senior commanders—did not bow its head. Instead, it quickly shifted to an offensive phase and imposed a regional war on the enemy.

Although the enemy is trying to conceal the scale of Iranian fighters' achievements through strict censorship, even the limited and incomplete information available shows that at least ten U.S. military bases across different countries in the region have been struck by heavy Iranian missile and drone attacks and have suffered significant damage. The situation is such that, according to a well-known Western media outlet, Iran has left the United States stunned on the battlefield.

All of this, beyond calculations of visible military and material capabilities, stems from the strong will and faith of the Iranian people—the very factor that had no place in the enemy's calculations and ultimately became the point of its failure. Thirty years ago, Imam Khomeini, the late founder of the Islamic Revolution, said in one of his speeches: "This nation is awake. This nation remains faithful to its beliefs. By God's grace, the path, movement, and progress of this nation still go far beyond the analyses of its enemies. In their analyses and statements we see how deeply mistaken they are in understanding the realities of this country.

Those same flawed analyses shape their decisions, and flawed decisions inevitably lead them to defeat. That is why they suffer defeat after defeat—because they do not know our nation, our revolution, or our country. God has willed that His banner remain raised and that His religion gain honor. Why? Because the believers in this faith have committed themselves to it."

Today is the day when the divine prediction of that great man is being fulfilled.

U.S., Israel root cause of insecurity in region: Pezeshkian



TEHRAN- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian denounced the hostile measures by the United States and the Zionist regime as the root cause of insecurity and instability in the region, reaffirming Iran's determination to ward off aggression and safeguard its territorial integrity,Tasnim news agency reported.

In a telephone conversation with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron on Sunday night, President Pezeshkian condemned the illegal US and Israeli war of aggression against Iran.

He decried the relentless US and Israeli strikes against civilian targets in Iran, saying the Iranian islands of Abu Musa and Khark have come under aggressive attacks.

Pezeshkian explained that the recent strikes on those Iranian islands have been conducted from the soil of a number of Persian Gulf countries, warning them that allowing the US to use their territory and facilities to launch brutal attacks on Iran contradicts the international law and the principles of good neighborliness.

"The Iranian nation, government and Armed Forces have never sought tension and conflict, but we have no hesitation in countering aggressors and defending our territorial integrity and national security resolutely and legitimately with popular backing and reliance on national power," Pezeshkian stated.

The root cause of insecurity and instability in the region are the Zionist regime's aggressive measures, the slaughter of people in Gaza and Lebanon, as well as its move to impose two wars against Iran with the help of the US, he added.

The Iranian president also decried the destructive stances of a number of European countries in support of the Israeli and US crimes in the region, calling on Europe to remain committed to the international regulations and rule of law in the world.

For his part, Macron stressed the need for de-escalation and ending the war, expressing concern about the escalation of tensions in the region, the current situation at the Strait of Hormuz, and the clashes between Hezbollah and the Israeli regime.

The two presidents further discussed consular issues, including the Iranian and French prisoners.

The Strait of Hormuz becomes Trump's nightmare

Iran's decisive control of the vital waterway exposes U.S. military failures and media warfare tactics

TEHRAN - Iran's decision to control the Strait of Hormuz, set against the backdrop of the ongoing U.S.-Israeli joint assault, has further exposed President Donald Trump's strategic miscalculations. It appears President Trump has resorted to psychological and media warfare against Iran to gloss over U.S. military failures in the war with Iran, which began on February 28.

The U.S. and Israel launched a war on Iran in a bid to cripple the country's military capabilities and leadership. They martyred top Iranian military commanders and Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. Nonetheless, from the first day of the aggression, Iran began retaliatory strikes against Israel and U.S. bases in the Persian Gulf region. Experts believe President Trump made a miscalculation because he could never have imagined that Iran would give a forceful response to the strikes of the U.S. and Israel. The U.S. was also not prepared for Iran's move to restrict access to the Strait of Hormuz. Washington was caught off guard by the speed and scale of Iran's response. Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) has stated it will not allow "aggressors" to move "a litre of oil" through the Strait of Hormuz, as rising energy prices ripple through the global economy as a result of the U.S.–Israeli aggression. Iran says the Strait of Hormuz is open, but not for the U.S., Israel, and their allies.

Amid such misjudgments, Trump is trying to play down Iran's strong response.

"Iran has long been known as a Master of Media Manipulation and Public Relations. They are



Militarily ineffective and weak, but are really good at 'feeding' the very appreciative Fake News Media false information. Now, A.I. has become another Disinformation weapon that Iran uses, quite well, considering they are being annihilated by the day," Trump said.

Such accusations come as even U.S. media have admitted the losses suffered by the American military in the region. Since the outset of the war, more than a dozen U.S. service members have lost their lives and nearly 150 others have been injured. Several U.S. warplanes and refueling aircraft have either crashed or suffered damage. The Wall Street Journal reported last week that five U.S. Air Force KC-135 refueling aircraft were damaged on the ground at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia during an Iranian missile strike.

Further in his latest anti-Iran assertions, Trump tried to play down the might of Iran's military. "They showed phony 'Kamikaze Boats,' shooting at various Ships at Sea, which looks wonderful, powerful, and vicious, but these Boats don't exist — It's all false information to show how 'tough' their already defeated Military is! The five U.S. Refueling Planes that were supposedly struck down and badly damaged, according to The Wall Street Journal's false reporting, and others, are all in service, with the exception of one, which will soon be flying the skies."

He also accused Iran of using artificial intelligence in an attempt to cover up U.S. military losses.

"Buildings and Ships that are shown to be on fire are not — It's FAKE NEWS, generated by A.I. For instance, Iran, working in close coordination with the Fake News Media, shows our great USS Abraham Lincoln Aircraft Carrier, one of the largest and most prestigious Ships in the World, burning uncontrollably in the Ocean," Trump said.

Earlier, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth accused U.S. media of spreading fake news and threatened to have their permits revoked. Experts argue that such comments are merely a ploy to sweep the U.S. military losses in the war with Iran under the carpet.

Trump also once again claimed that his military has dismantled Iran's military capabilities, saying, "Iran is being decimated."

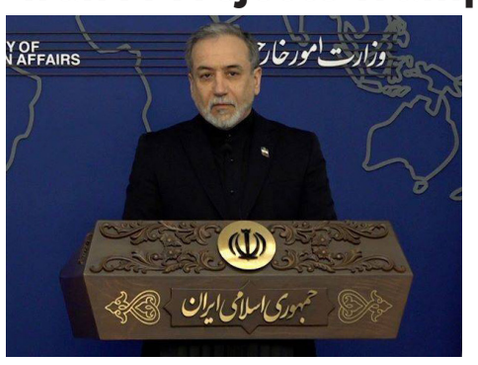
Trump has claimed the U.S. has destroyed "100%" of Iran's navy. But he has called on U.S. allies and China to deploy warships to the Strait of Hormuz to regain control of the Strait of Hormuz.

Countries including the United Kingdom, France, Japan, South Korea, and China have so far declined to commit warships in response to Trump's appeal for a naval escort mission through the Strait of Hormuz.

The strait normally handles roughly one-fifth of the world's oil exports, underscoring the strategic and economic impact of any disruption to shipping through this narrow passage. The U.S. and Israeli aggression against Iran has so far sent shockwaves across global energy markets. Many countries, particularly European nations, are feeling the pinch of rising energy prices, and the situation is expected to worsen. Energy prices are also soaring in the U.S. amid tensions in the Strait of Hormuz.

For now, it stands out a mile that the current crisis in the waterway is rooted in the misjudgment of President Trump. Instead of admitting his strategic mistakes, the U.S. air forces continue attacks across Iran, targeting residential areas and energy sites in a bid to spark discontent in Iran and pit the people against the government. Such a scheme seems unlikely, as Iranians from all walks of life have demonstrated resilience and boosted their solidarity in the face of foreign aggression.

Iran FM rejects Trump's ceasefire claim, says aggression must end



TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has dismissed U.S. President Donald Trump's claim that Iran is appealing for a ceasefire.

"We have not sent any messages and do not request a ceasefire, but this war must end in a way that it is not repeated," Araghchi told reporters at the Foreign Ministry in Tehran on Monday.

The top Iranian diplomat added, "The reason we say we do not want a ceasefire is not because we are seeking war, but because this time the war must end in a way that our enemies never even consider repeating these attacks and acts of aggression. I think they have learned a good lesson by now and understand what kind of nation they are dealing with – one that does not hesitate at all in its self-defense and is prepared to continue the war as far as necessary."

Over the past few days, President Trump has claimed that the U.S. military has completely destroyed Iran's military and that Tehran is desperate for a ceasefire. Despite the U.S. president's claims, Iranian armed forces continue to target strategic areas in Israel and American military sites in the Persian Gulf region. Iran states that the retaliatory strikes are in response to the joint U.S.-Israel aggression that began on February 28.

Referring to President Trump's "unconditional surrender" call, Araghchi said, "With the massive scale of attacks and the (military) action they took on the first day, and then again starting with the phrase 'unconditional surrender,' and now, after approximately 15 days of war, they resort to those they considered enemies until yesterday for the security of the Strait of Hormuz...The Strait of Hormuz is open, but it is closed to our enemies, those who carried out an unfair act of aggression against our country."

Trump had called on U.S. allies and China to deploy warships to gain control of the Strait of Hormuz after Iran said it would not allow the "aggressors" to transit oil through the strategic waterway. So far, the United Kingdom, France, Japan, South Korea, and China have declined to commit warships in response to Trump's appeal for a naval escort mission through the Strait of Hormuz.

The U.S.-Israeli strikes have so far claimed the lives of approximately 1,500 people in Iran. Residential areas, hospitals, and schools have not been spared from the bombardments.

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has declared that any ceasefire must lead to the recognition of Iran's rights, payment of reparations, and international guarantees that the U.S. and Israel will not attack Iran again.

'Retaliation for crimes': Iran's Army targets Israel's Rafael and IAI with drone strikes

TEHRAN - Iran has continued retaliatory strikes against Israel and American bases in the Persian Gulf in response to the joint U.S.-Israeli aggression against the country.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said in a statement on Monday that it initiated the 55th wave of missile strikes during the retaliatory Operation True Promise 4.

The IRGC said it targeted Tel Aviv and Ben Gurion Airport, including aerospace military weapons production centers and aerial refueling logistical centers with precision-strike, superheavy, and hypersonic Fattah missiles, Qadr and Emad missiles, as well as suicide drones.

The IRGC noted that it has also attacked the U.S. army centers in the Al Dhafra airbase, the Jufair naval base, and the Sheikh Issa airbase with mid-range, solid-fuel precision-strike Fateh missiles, Zolfaqar and Dezful missiles, as well as smart and combat UAVs.

On Monday, Iran's Army also said it targeted important and strategic centers of Rafael's arms manufacturing and the (IAI) aviation industries of the Israeli regime with drones. It said the strikes were in response to the "criminal acts of the American-Zionist enemy."

In the early hours of Monday, the U.S. and Israel carried out fresh deadly strikes against Iran. Several people were killed in a strike on a building affiliated to Tehran's electricity company in the center of the capital.

Approximately 1,500 people in Iran have been killed since the U.S. and Israel began their airstrikes in Iran. Civilian infrastructure, residential areas, hospitals, and schools across Iran have been bombed in the course of the war.



Senior Iranian military commanders, including Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, and Major General Mohammad Pakpour, commander-in-chief of the IRGC, were killed on the first day of the U.S.-Israeli assault on February 28. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei was also martyred in the same strike targeting his office in Tehran.

In the first hour of the aggression, a U.S. missile also hit an elementary school in the southern Iranian city of Minab. Nearly 170 people, most of them students, were killed.

Trump's Iran war: A hubristic gamble bogged down in escalation and miscalculation

TEHRAN - President Donald Trump had been laboring under the delusion that a war on Iran would yield a decisive victory in a short period. Trump assumed that through political and military leadership decapitation, Iran would descend into chaos, allowing him to advance his plans. He had proposed the idea of a Venezuela-style scenario for Iran, referencing the abduction of President Nicolás Maduro in a military operation on Venezuelan soil.

However, more than two weeks after launching a war on Iran, President Trump's dreams appear to have been wishful thinking. The martyrdom of Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and top military commanders has not only failed to weaken Iran but has further encouraged the country to deliver a crushing response to the aggressors.

In the third week of the war, U.S. media have intensified criticism of the Trump administration for its failed war strategy. A recent report by Axios implied that Iran holds the upper hand in the third week of the war. The report touched upon Iran's control over the Strait of Hormuz, stating, "Trump is working to help break the Persian Gulf oil jam. But in doing so, he risks getting caught in an escalation trap, where a stronger force is incentivized to keep attacking to demonstrate dominance amid diminishing returns."

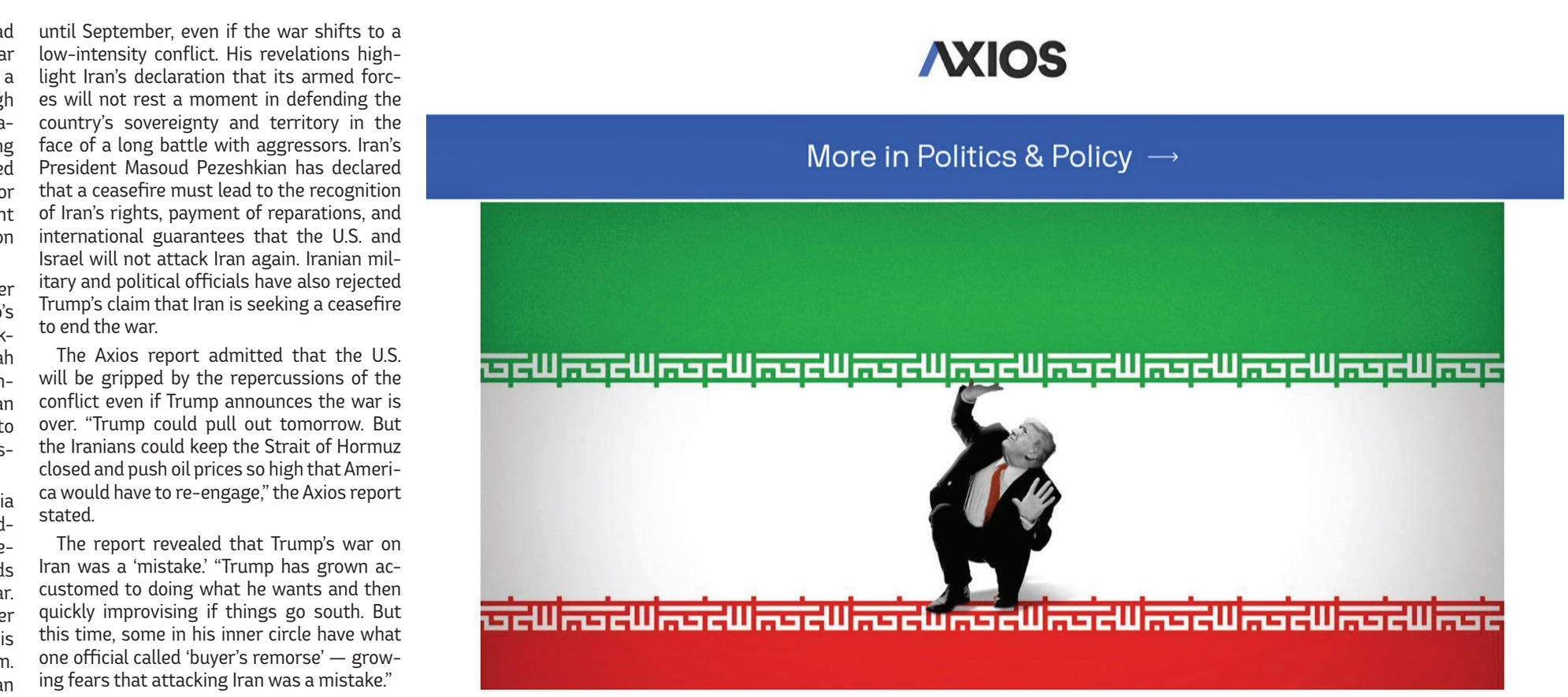
Axios reporter Barak Ravid also said he had heard from three different people in the Trump administration and allied countries who believe the instability in the Middle East and U.S. involvement could continue until September, even if the war shifts to a low-intensity conflict. His revelations highlight Iran's declaration that its armed forces will not rest a moment in defending the country's sovereignty and territory in the face of a long battle with aggressors. Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has declared that a ceasefire must lead to the recognition of Iran's rights, payment of reparations, and international guarantees that the U.S. and Israel will not attack Iran again. Iranian military and political officials have also rejected Trump's claim that Iran is seeking a ceasefire to end the war.

The Axios report admitted that the U.S. will be gripped by the repercussions of the conflict even if Trump announces the war is over. "Trump could pull out tomorrow. But the Iranians could keep the Strait of Hormuz closed and push oil prices so high that America would have to re-engage," the Axios report stated.

The report revealed that Trump's war on Iran was a 'mistake.' "Trump has grown accustomed to doing what he wants and then quickly improvising if things go south. But this time, some in his inner circle have what one official called 'buyer's remorse' — growing fears that attacking Iran was a mistake."

It also said Trump's hubris, following last year's war with Iran and Maduro's abduction, pushed him toward a new conflict with the Islamic Republic.

In June last year, Israel launched a war on Iran only two days before Tehran and Washington were scheduled to hold a new round of talks over Iran's nuclear program. The U.S.



later joined the war and bombed three nuclear facilities in Iran. After the bombing, Trump claimed that he had completely and totally obliterated Iran's nuclear program. Since last year's June war, Iran has not enriched uranium. However, Trump said one of the main aims of the ongoing war was to prevent Iran from building nuclear weapons, a claim Iran has rejected as baseless, stressing that its nuclear program is peaceful.

In the Axios report, Ravid also pointed to Trump's message on Truth Social on Friday night, in which he claimed he had totally defeated Iran, stating the message was aimed at claiming victory.

For now, it has become more evident that President Trump seeks to project a manufactured sense of victory in an attempt to find a political exit from the conflict, which has dealt severe damage to American installations in the Persian Gulf and has so far claimed the lives of over a dozen American service members.

Iran commends China's humanitarian assistance for Minab school victims

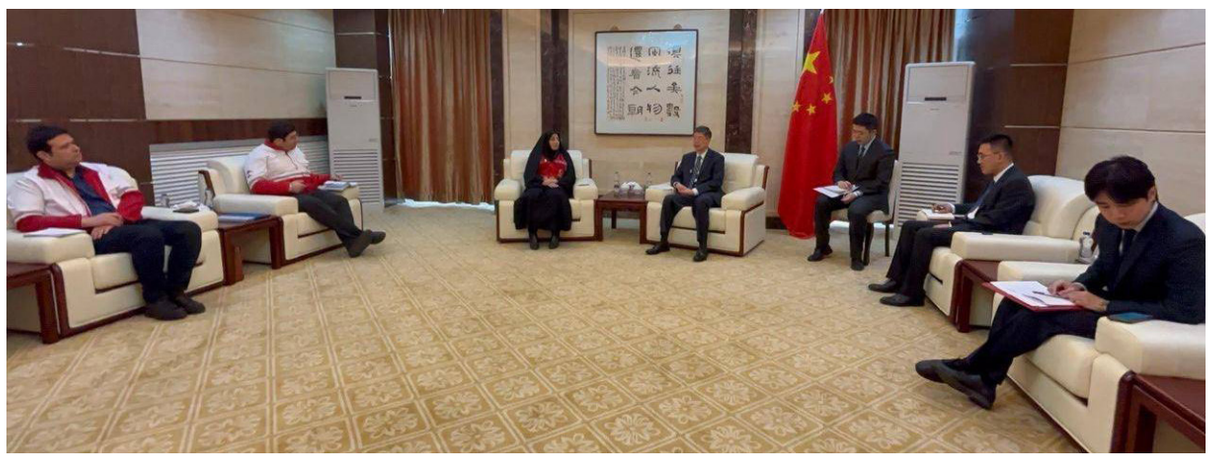
TEHRAN – Iran's Red Crescent Society has thanked China for providing $200,000 in emergency humanitarian assistance to support the families of scores of children and teachers who were killed in a U.S. missile strike on an elementary school in southern Iran.

The U.S. missile attack targeted Shajareh Tayyebeh School in the city of Minab, Hormozgan Province, on the first day of the U.S.-Israeli assault against Iran on February 28. At least 168 people, most of them students aged between 7 and 12, were killed and dozens more injured.

In a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu at the Chinese Embassy in Tehran on Sunday, Razieh Alishvandi, deputy for international affairs of the Red Crescent Society of Iran, hailed Beijing's humanitarian move.

"Protecting civilians, especially children, teachers, and educational centers, based on the principles of international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions, is a fundamental obligation for all parties involved in armed conflicts," Alishvandi told the Chinese ambassador.

She added: "Targeting civilians and educational facilities, in addition to violating international laws, has irreparable humanitarian and social consequences and challenges fundamental human values."



Referring to the importance of solidarity among nations in times of crisis, Alishvandi stated: "In such circumstances, the humanitarian action of the Chinese Red Cross Society in supporting the families of the teachers and students who lost their lives in Minab is valuable and commendable."

She said the Chinese Red Cross Society's move to allocate $200,000 in financial assistance to support the families of the deceased teachers and students "sends a clear message of sympathy and solidarity from the Chinese nation with the people of Iran and shows that human values can bring nations closer together beyond borders."

Alishvandi expressed hope that relief and humanitarian cooperation between the Iranian Red Crescent Society and the Chinese Red Cross Society will further expand.

Chinese ambassador: China stands by the Iranian people

The Chinese ambassador, for his part, expressed sympathy with the people of Iran and the families of the victims and condemned attacks on civilian centers, particularly schools and hospitals.

Cong Peiwu stressed that attacking civilians, especially children and educational centers amounts to a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

"Humanitarianism is a concept that goes beyond geographical borders, and nations can stand by one another in difficult conditions."

Underscoring Iran-China friendly relations, Cong Peiwu said Beijing has always emphasized respect for national sovereignty and the legitimate rights of countries.

"The Chinese nation stands beside the people of Iran and seeks peace and tranquility for all nations," the Chinese envoy pointed out.

Earlier this month, the Chinese Foreign Ministry expressed deep condolences regarding the deaths of students in the elementary school in Minab and extended sincere sympathies to their families.

"Attacking schools and harming civilians seriously violate international humanitarian law and cross the baseline of humanity and human conscience," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said last week.

The cost of U.S. miscalculation

By Xaviar Villar

MADRID – War is often framed in terms of military objectives: targets destroyed, command structures degraded, and contested territory measured in maps and coordinates. Yet in practice, modern conflicts rarely remain confined to the battlefield. When hostilities intersect with the infrastructure that underpins global trade and energy flows, the consequences extend far beyond kinetic engagements.

The confrontation between Iran and the United States illustrates this dynamic. What began as a campaign of strikes, designed to rapidly degrade Iran's military capabilities and compel compliance, has failed to achieve its central objectives. Military installations remain operational, critical systems continue to function, and Iran's ability to project power along its borders has not been decisively curtailed. The strategy of rapid paralysis has proven inadequate.

Instead, the decisive terrain of the conflict has shifted. Military strikes have been met with persistent disruption, and the focus has moved to the economic arteries that sustain the global energy system. The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow passage through which a substantial share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas flows, remains effectively closed. Tankers are unable to transit safely, insurance costs have skyrocketed, and shipping companies are rerouting or halting operations altogether.

Three weeks into the conflict, the impact is evident not only in damaged infrastructure and the material costs of military assets but also in financial markets and energy prices. Brent crude has surged, natural gas markets are volatile, and investors are pricing in prolonged instability. The center of gravity has clearly shifted from airfields and radar systems to supply chains, commodity flows, and economic endurance. Geography—specifically, Iran's control over the Strait—has become a strategic asset that military superiority alone cannot overcome.

The longer the strait remains closed and instability persists, the more cumulative the effects. The conflict is no longer measured solely in destroyed equipment or munitions expended; it is measured in energy price shocks, market volatility, and the economic strain imposed on the United States and its allies. Iran's position, combined with a strategy calibrated for endurance rather than rapid battlefield victory, has transformed a failing military campaign into a potent tool of economic leverage.

The material and financial toll of U.S. operations

The United States has absorbed substantial losses in the opening weeks of what it has designated "Operation Epic Fury." Estimates indicate that approximately $3.84 billion in assets have been destroyed or damaged. The largest single items include AN/TPY-2 radar components belonging to THAAD missile defense systems in the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, valued at an estimated $2 billion. Satellite imagery confirms that four of these radars were struck across multiple locations.

An AN/FPS-132 early warning radar at Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar, valued at $1.1 billion, was hit when retaliatory strikes began on February 28, and Qatari authorities confirmed the damage. Eleven MQ-9 Reaper drones, each costing roughly $30 million, have been downed, amounting to $330 million in losses. On the second day of strikes, three F-15E Strike Eagle fighter jets were destroyed in a friendly-fire incident in Kuwait, with replacement costs estimated at $282 million. A KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft crashed during operations in western Iraq, costing $80 million to replace.

Damage also extended to infrastructure: Iran struck the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet headquarters in Manama, Bahrain, destroying two satellite communications terminals and several large buildings, with losses estimated at $20 million. Satellite imagery further revealed the destruction of three radomes at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait, adding roughly $30 million to the tally.

The financial implications extend beyond the battlefield. Daily operating costs for the U.S. remain high, with estimates placing the burn rate between $800 million and $1 billion. Should the conflict continue for several months, total unbudgeted expenditures could surpass $65 billion. Meanwhile, U.S. equities have reflected the uncertainty, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average declining consistently during the third week of the conflict. The stock market is pricing in both operational losses and the economic repercussions of disrupted energy flows.

Iran's ability to impose tangible costs despite repeated airstrikes underscores the inadequacy of the U.S. military strategy. Rather than compelling rapid compliance, strikes have provoked a persistent campaign of attrition, shifting the contest from physical destruction to the broader domain of economic and financial endurance.

The Strait of Hormuz and global markets

Control over the Strait of Hormuz is central to Iran's strategic approach. Roughly 20 million barrels of oil per day, nearly one-fifth of the world's supply, pass through this narrow maritime corridor. In addition, approximately 20 percent of global liquefied natural gas trade traverses the same route. Iran has maintained the strait in a condition that is largely closed: shipping is uncertain, insurers charge elevated war-risk premiums, and tanker traffic has slowed dramatically.

Energy prices have responded immediately. Brent crude surged from $71.32 per barrel at the end of February to over $100 per barrel by mid-March. Diesel and gasoline prices in the United States have risen by more than 20 percent, reflecting the direct impact of constrained oil flows. Disruptions are not limited to crude oil: natural gas, essential for industrial production and fertilizer manufacturing, has experienced similar volatility, driving urea and ammonia prices up by 35 percent.

The disruption in Persian Gulf shipping extends to critical raw materials beyond energy. Aluminum production, concentrated in the Persian Gulf region due to energy requirements, has been affected, pushing global prices to multi-year highs. Helium, a byproduct of natural gas processing and essential for semiconductors and medical applications, is now in tighter supply. Even air travel has been affected, with jet fuel costs rising nearly 60 percent and surcharges for flights over Persian Gulf airspace reaching unprecedented levels.

The wider implications for the U.S. economy are significant. Higher energy and commodity prices feed directly into inflationary pressures, threatening to undo gains made by the Federal Reserve over the past two years. Analysts now project inflation to exceed 3.5 percent in the coming months, with mortgage rates remaining elevated, consumer confidence weakening, and GDP growth potentially slowing.

Iran's strategy illustrates a recognition of leverage: direct military confrontation is unnecessary when control over key economic chokepoints can produce persistent, systemic pressure on adversaries. The longer the strait remains effectively closed, the more the United States and its allies must confront the financial, political, and operational costs of sustained instability.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Renewable power plants with capacity of 2,878 MW under construction in 26 provinces



TEHRAN- As announced by the deputy head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) for investment and development, renewable power plants with capacity of 2,878 megawatts (MW) are simultaneously under construction in 26 provinces of the country.

According to a report by IRNA from the Energy Ministry, Jafar Mohammadnejad Sigaroudi said that it is anticipated that these power plants will start operation by late April.

Mentioning the process of clean energy development in the country, the official said that renewable energy capacity has grown three-four folds to over 4,200 MW by late February.

On February 22, Mehdi Hosseini, director general for planning in SATBA, said that Iran's renewable power capacity has risen sharply, with solar installations expanding more than fivefold and total renewable capacity reaching 4,162 megawatts.

The official stated that renewable capacity under the current administration has increased by around 2.5 times compared with all previous periods combined.

He described renewable development as a key priority amid persistent electricity shortages affecting both industrial and household consumers.

Hosseini said substantial financial resources have been injected from the National Development Fund of Iran, and that a new financing model approved by the Economy Council in August shifted from loan-based funding to joint investment with the private sector.

Under current plans, renewable capacity is targeted to reach 11,000 MW by the end of the next summer peak season, with the longer-term objective of achieving 12,000 MW under the Seventh National Development Plan expected to be met by the end of next year (March 2027).

He said renewable expansion, alongside efficiency improvements and integration with thermal power plants, could help reduce the country's electricity imbalance.

To stimulate demand in the green power market, Hosseini pointed to government and Supreme Energy Council resolutions requiring industries to source 20 percent of their electricity from renewables starting in 1407 (March 2028), while government buildings must secure 40 percent of their electricity from renewable sources or through the green energy exchange.

He added that enabling household participation in the green exchange, expanding renewables in industrial parks and introducing capacity certificates are among measures under way to accelerate deployment.

Hosseini described solar power plants as the lowest-risk renewable investment option, citing their independence from fuel supply uncertainties that affect gas-fired plants.

He also said the potential launch of a carbon market or access to international carbon revenue streams could raise internal rates of return for renewable projects by five percent to 10 percent, further enhancing investment appeal.

On January 30, the state media reported that more than 22 megawatts of solar power capacity was connected to Iran's national electricity grid across six provinces over the past three months, reflecting the continued expansion of renewable energy projects.

A total of 10 solar power plants became operational during the months of Aban, Azar and Dey, with projects coming online in Isfahan, Khorasan, Hamedan, Markazi, Zanjan and Fars provinces, according to data from the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA).

Several plants with capacities ranging from 100 kilowatts to two megawatts were connected under guaranteed power purchase schemes or through the green electricity board of the Iran Energy Exchange.

Larger projects included the first phase of a 10-megawatt solar plant in Fars province and a three-megawatt facility in Zanjan.

SATBA said the sealing of power plant meters, the final step before commercial operation, has accelerated in recent months following faster project implementation and grid connection procedures.

Under Energy Ministry regulations, meter sealing is carried out after technical inspections are completed, allowing electricity generation to be formally recorded for monitoring and financial settlement.

On January 27, a deputy energy minister had said that Iran plans to raise its renewable power generation capacity to more than 5,200 megawatts by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20), citing faster permitting and improved financing as key to meeting the target.

Mohsen Tarztalab said capacity additions have accelerated, but delays in administrative procedures at the Energy Ministry and grid management have slowed the full integration of new plants.

Of the roughly 3,700 megawatts of renewable capacity installed so far, about 3,400 megawatts are currently feeding into the national grid, he said, adding that around 870 megawatts of installed capacity is not yet fully visible in official grid figures.

Meetings have been held with grid operators to speed up coordination, Tarztalab said, noting that the gap between announced capacity and what is operational needs to be closed.

Iran has announced plans to reach 5,200 megawatts of renewable capacity by year-end, but under directives from the energy minister and the president, authorities are seeking to raise the figure further by late February, he added.

Around 1,000 megawatts of clean power capacity is expected to be added in February alone, though achieving that goal will require closer cooperation among relevant agencies.

Tarztalab, who also heads the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), said adequate financing could significantly accelerate project execution.

Renewable capacity is forecast to reach 11,000 megawatts by the end of summer, representing growth of three- to seven-fold compared with previous periods, he said.

He added that private sector developers are facing challenges in securing foreign currency, warning that greater support in this area would be critical to meeting targets.

Tarztalab said permits for inactive renewable power projects are being revoked, with priority given to active investors. Licenses that have seen no progress for more than six months are being cancelled and reassigned, he said, noting that more than 115,000 megawatts of permits have been issued nationwide, leaving little unused capacity in many provinces.

SATBA also plans to introduce artificial intelligence across its operations, including permitting, investor services and project monitoring. Over the past two to three months, 40 AI-related proposals have been submitted, with 10 unveiled so far, he said.

Electronic government services are being expanded to allow investors to complete procedures online, with pilot programs launched in several provinces from Feb. 11. The system will gradually move toward full digitalization and wider use of AI, Tarztalab said.

He called on the Industry Ministry and the central bank to step up cooperation to accelerate order registration, equipment procurement and financing.

Disruption in Strait of Hormuz paralyzes global economy: intl. energy analyst



TEHRAN- Fereydoun Berkashli, an international analyst in the oil and energy sector, believes that disruption in the Strait of Hormuz paralyzes global economy.

In an interview with IRNA, the analyst said that a new storm is being shaped in the Persian Gulf, when oil prices have sharply risen following the US-Israel attack on Iran.

The wars in the West Asia over the past decades have always led to rising global oil prices, and reactions have been severe specially in the Persian Gulf region, he stated, adding that the US-Israel attack on Iran on February 28 sent a new wave to the market.

Despite the sharp rise in the prices, the market reaction was weaker than expected, the analyst noted, and commented that the severe condition seems not still understood.

He continued that oil is produced in the West Asia, but its price is set in the exchange markets of America and Europe; the global oil market receives its analysis from the International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris, the entity that its addresses are the world's main oil and gas consumers, so the analysis of big consumers plays determining role in the market status.

The international analyst believes that the key factor ignored in the geo-economic calculations of the US is the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 million barrels of oil passes, of which 80 percent goes to Asia. China, India, Pakistan, and ASEAN countries are highly dependent on the West Asia oil, the Europe has small share of the Persian Gulf oil, but there is the global independence of refineries and need for the oil and gas products.

He underscored that any interruption in the Strait of Hormuz can paralyze the global economy.

Meanwhile, the Iranian Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Products Exporters Union (OPEX) spokesman and oil and energy market analyst, pointing to the dependence of 700 refineries worldwide on oil produced in the Persian Gulf, believes: The world's dependence on the Strait of Hormuz is not limited to crude oil; gas condensates, liquefied natural gas (LNG), refined petroleum products, and a portion of the region's mineral and petrochemical exports also pass through this route.

Seyed Hamid Hosseini stated in an interview with IRNA, explaining the Islamic Republic of Iran's strategy in managing the Strait of Hormuz to counter the American-Zionist coalition's aggression against our country: Recent developments in the Persian Gulf and the disruption of oil flow through the Strait of Hormuz have once again highlighted the vital role of this strategic passageway in the global economy; a passageway through which approximately 20 million barrels of oil pass daily. A serious disruption could place unprecedented pressure on energy markets and global supply chains.

He explained: In many wars, the initial reactions appear on the battlefield, but the deeper consequences usually manifest themselves in markets, supply chains, and the strategic calculations of governments. The recent aggression by the US and Israel against our country is no exception to this rule.

He added: Although at the beginning of this war, it was thought to be a quick and limited military conflict, increasing signs indicate that this crisis could become a far more decisive test, not only for the global economy but also for the stability of the international order.

Hosseini, stating that war economies usually form in two stages, the first being immediate and short-term, added: In this stage, markets react sharply, energy prices rise, panic buying intensifies, and investors move towards safe-haven assets.

He stated: The second stage, which emerges in the medium term, raises a more fundamental question: Are the involved parties truly prepared for a long-term conflict? In this stage, military power alone is no longer what matters; economic endurance, social resilience, and the ability to adapt to sustained disruptions will be decisive.

Hosseini added: If the disruption in the Strait of Hormuz lasts more than a few days and extends into the medium term, the economic pressure will quickly transfer from energy markets to the entire global economy. This is because energy remains one of the main components of the cost structure for goods and services, and a sharp increase in oil and gas prices typically creates an inflationary wave, raises production costs for manufacturers, and reduces consumers' purchasing power.

He noted: For energy-importing economies, this shock is doubly painful; production becomes more expensive while demand decreases.

Hosseini further stated that according to the latest developments as of March 13, 2026, reports indicate that tanker traffic in the Strait of Hormuz has sharply decreased, and the oil flow has almost been reduced to a 'trickle'. According to a report by the International Energy Agency, about 20 million barrels per day of oil supply flow – equivalent to about 20% of global supply – has been disrupted.

He acknowledged: Meanwhile, oil prices have jumped again, exceeding $100 per barrel; a situation some analysts describe as the largest supply disruption in the history of the oil market.

When Trump was planning to attack Iran for the second time in less than nine months—and again in the middle of nuclear negotiations— he was warned about the potentially devastating consequences of the day after, according to reports by U.S. media.

His military and economic advisers cautioned that if Iran chose to constrict navigation through the Strait of Hormuz in response, forcing the waterway open again would not be easy for U.S. naval forces, which could face Iranian missile and drone attacks, the same reports add. Trump allegedly replied that Iran's government would collapse before it could move to "shut" the strait.

The U.S. president nevertheless moved forward with his plans.

Iran announced heavy restrictions on navigation through the Strait of Hormuz on March 1.

Oil prices climbed above $104 per barrel on Friday, stock markets in the United States and across the Persian Gulf have continued to incur heavy losses, and consumers around the world—including in the U.S.—are anxiously watching energy prices rise with no end in sight.

But this is not all. In his first address to Iran and the region since assuming leadership, the new Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei—the son of the martyred Leader—said the Strait of Hormuz must remain under Iran's control. He also declared that Iran may open additional fronts "where the enemy does not have experience and is vulnerable."

Exports from Iran's free zones increase by 14% in 11 months on year

TEHRAN- As announced by Iran's Secretariat of the High Council and the Free Zones Organizations, the value of exports form the country's free zones has increased by 14 percent during the first 11 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2025-February 20, 2026), as compared to the same period of time in the previous year, IRNA reported.

As reported, commodities worth $1.322 billion were exported from these zones in the mentioned 11-month period.

Secretariat of the High Council and the Free Zones Organizations highlighted that the performance of the country's free trade and industrial zones' economic indices during the 11-month time span indicates noticeable growth in domestic and foreign investments, production and export value, which is the indication of economic activities development in these areas.

Diversifying entry points for goods and expanding alternative corridors is the first step towards neutralizing the economic siege and pressure on the main arteries of the national economy. Free zones, by utilizing legal exemptions, play a vital role in this regard, according to an article published by IRNA.

The article reads:

"During the unjust aggression of the American and Zionist enemy against the country and the turning of a golden page in national resilience, the trade-industrial free zones and special economic zones of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in addition to their conventional functions in economic development and facilitating production and commercial exchanges, are playing a historical role as strong bastions of a "resistance economy" and the front lines of the economic warfront.

Today, when the ill-wishers of this land have targeted the nation's existence by imposing a comprehensive war in military and economic dimensions, these zones have become symbols of "resilience" and "continuity of service."

By the graces of God Almighty, strategic intelligence, and a specialized approach to crisis prediction, management, and passive defense within the Secretariat and the Free Zones Organization, conditions have been provided for these functions to transform, through an intelligent change in nature, into tools for "survival and dynamism."

Diversifying entry points for goods and expanding alternative corridors is the first step towards neutralizing the economic siege and pressure on the main arteries of the national economy.

In this regard, free zones, by utilizing legal exemptions and streamlined customs procedures, play a vital role in "reducing transaction costs" and "accelerating the supply chain."

Iran, possessing free zones in the north, south, east, and west, enjoys a unique geoeconomic advantage. From the Makran coasts in Chabahar to Aras and Anzali, which serve as a communication bridge with Eurasia; each of these points is a strategic node in the global trade network that does not cease its service process simply due to aerial military attacks or indiscriminate bombing.

The capacities of the Free Zones Organizations and the Secretariat of the High Council, with a cross-sectoral view, have provided coordination among governing institutions to turn these geographical advantages into economic opportunities. This geography is a shield that protects our strategic depth against imposed shocks.

Reports received from the free zones on the four sides of the country indicate an indomitable spirit within their managerial and executive bodies.

Despite continued missile and aerial attacks on vital infrastructure, especially in the southern regions, and the imposition of serious damages in some areas, the service delivery process has not stopped for a moment.

The security committees and supply councils of the zones are active around the clock, providing comprehensive support for the stability and calm of the people. Crisis management in these zones, by prioritizing damage compensation and rapid reconstruction of vital infrastructure, has conveyed a clear message to the enemy: "Destruction will not stand in the way of construction."

In the area of supplying essential goods, the free zones have entered the field with full seriousness. The clearance of stranded goods and online monitoring of the import process have provided the necessary assurance for the people's livelihoods.

Accelerating the clearance of essential goods, holding continuous meetings with traders, offering exceptional incentives for importing essential goods, instantly aligning the annual budgets of the zones with the urgent needs of the crisis situation, and finally, managing the movement and accommodation of passengers and tourists in high-risk areas such as Kish and Qesh have been carried out meticulously and without creating social tension. This itself demonstrates the operational mastery of the Free Zones Organizations.

What is happening today in the trade-industrial free zones of Iran, in addition to intelligent crisis management, is a "manifestation of the nation's will" to overcome difficult historical passages. The special functions of these zones during wartime, including streamlining the customs system and protecting production infrastructure, have shown that the enemy has made a strategic error in its calculations to overcome the great nation of Iran by paralyzing the national economy.

Iran's strategic and operational mastery over US-Israeli aggression

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – To assess the current trajectory of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran as of March 2026, it is essential to analyze how the involved parties have arrived at their present positions.

In the 12-day war in June 2025, the Israeli Air Force conducted most of the attacks, and approximately 1,500 projectiles were used against Iran throughout the conflict.

During the first 48 hours of that war, significant damage was inflicted on Iran. However, the failure of the enemy to exploit internal divisions within Iran, combined with the operational exhaustion of the Israeli Air Force—exacerbated by long-range missions, fuel shortages, and the depletion of its target list—significantly constrained Israel's strategic options.

Additionally, the premature exposure of Israel's military strategies within the first two days of the conflict, paired with a surge in Iranian missile strikes, forced Tel Aviv to rely on direct Washington's direct involvement for a targeted strike on the Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan nuclear facilities.

Notably, while the United States had long prepared for such an operation—Israel's reliance on American backing underscored the shifting balance of power and the eventual call for a ceasefire.

After the end of the war, Israeli planners apparently concluded that in a larger campaign, they could not attack alone, so serious consultations at various levels began to involve the United States directly in the attacks. These consultations and planning efforts encompassed comprehensive interagency coordination across political, military, and intelligence spheres.

There were multiple different plans on how to wage a new war against Iran, but ultimately Tel Aviv succeeded in directly involving the United States in a joint campaign.

The Pentagon's plan

Based on several reports and satellite images, we can conclude that the Pentagon decided to allocate the capability of around 400 fighter jets to operate against Iran.

To execute the operation, approximately 50 fighter jets deployed from the Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier were tasked with targeting southern Iran, while an additional 300 fighter jets based in the Middle East and Europe, alongside around 50 aircraft from the Gerald Ford aircraft carrier, joined the effort.

Complementing this aerial assault, cruise missiles and drones were integrated into the strategy, creating a coordinated aerial and



missile strike formation designed to overwhelm Iranian defenses from multiple directions.

American and Israeli military planners must have calculated that after the initial wave of attacks, Iran would initiate missile strikes on Israel and spend hundreds of missiles in each wave, but they would be able to defend against missile barrages.

Simultaneously, they thought that the Iranian offensive power could be quickly suppressed.

They distributed their fighter jets to various bases in the region: the UAE, Kuwait, Jordan, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, as well as airbases and an airport in Israel. They also used other bases in Iraq and Bahrain for other purposes in their aggression.

Iran's counteroffensive plan

Iranian military planners, anticipating this plan and monitoring the logistics movements of the United States and Israel, decided to implement three strategies:

I. Authorization for independent fire: Anticipating the enemy's plan to kill senior commanders, members of the Supreme National Security Council, and the Defense Council in the initial moments, it was decided to pre-determine plans and target banks and hand them over to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps' offensive units across Iran, so that as soon as the aggression began, the missile firings would start.

This caused a situation where, unlike the 12-day war, where Iran's first missile firing occurred 16 hours after the start of the Israeli strikes, this time the response began just one hour after the attack on Tehran.

II. Dispersing missile units: Previously, Iran's missile bases were limited to main bases, which the enemy aimed to destroy to suppress Iran's fire.

However, this time, in addition to increasing adherence to defense principles and creating additional defensive fortifications to strengthen defense, the launching sites were also increased and dispersed across the country.

As a result, we see that despite the enemy's stronger and more numerous attacks on Iran's bases, ballistic missile strikes and drone attacks have continued, albeit in smaller numbers. Therefore, Iran's attritional pressure is continuously maintained.

III. Despite the continuous missile strikes against Israel from the very beginning, the main counter-offensive power has focused on American bases in the region from the very first moment, as well as managing the Strait of Hormuz.

The initial goal was to destroy the enemy's radar and defense capabilities by dismantling their early warning network and reducing the operational effectiveness of the American military in the region.

Iranian commanders knew that over time, the enemy would inevitably launch a massive fire on Iranian bases, so it was important for Iran to deliver more powerful blows with fewer firings.

In this way, the enemy was caught off guard by the implementation of this plan at this scale and intensity.

The destruction of the main radars in American bases in the region, which had previously provided significant assistance to Israel in defense and preparedness during operations True Promise 1, 2, and 3, not only reduced the operational capacity of their bases or pushed them out of the region, but also reversed the previous plan.

Instead of tightening the operational rings, the United States was forced to mostly rely on airbases in Israel and Europe, which would require lengthy and numerous aerial refueling for each operation. Thus, Israel once again became the main center of aerial operations.

The entry of the resistance forces of Iraq and Lebanon further consumed another part of the air power of Israel and the United States, so that during Israel's attacks on southern Lebanon, Israel was forced to use its navy aggressively more and more.

Once again, similar to the 12-day war, the exhaustion and operational pressure on the Israeli Air Force increased.

These factors, along with the renewed limitation and depletion of the enemy's target bank, made them resort to alternative mechanisms, as their operational rhythm was clearly affected, which is evident.

At the same time as these developments on the battlefield and in the military sphere, the political atmosphere in the United States also tilted against the aggressors and warmongers, especially due to the pressure that Iran's management of the strategic Strait of Hormuz had on the global and American economies.

'Other fronts'

Additionally, Iran has cards that it has not yet used. On Monday, March 15, the first use of the long-range Sejjil ballistic missile was announced, and it can be expected that Iran will use more of its new and advanced missiles as the world witnesses the increasing weakness of Israel's and American air defense.

The message of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, in addition to clearly emphasizing the use of the "lever of blocking the Strait of Hormuz," referred to Iran's future cards and surprises in this way: "Studies have been conducted regarding the opening of other fronts where the enemy has minimal experience and will be highly vulnerable."

Additionally, Yemen's Ansarullah, which pre-war reports indicated had prepared for military action, has maintained its readiness and is prepared to enter the war in support of Iran and the resistance front in scenarios such as severe escalation by the enemy in the Persian Gulf, the direct entry of Saudi Arabia and the UAE in an attack on Iran, an attack on Ansarullah, or a different offensive use of the Gerald Ford aircraft carrier by the United States.

But now that their other options have proven ineffective, a leverage of the White House is the threat to target Iran's infrastructure.

A threat that, of course, has faced explicit and clear warnings from Iran; opening the front of infrastructure would give Iran's hand for more powerful blows and would once again shift the red lines in Iran's favor.

The number of facilities and infrastructure considered part of American interests is far greater than Iran's infrastructure in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. These highly vulnerable infrastructures are considered the lifeline of the American financial capitalist system, and can be targeted in self-defense by Iran's armed forces.

U.S. bases come under attack in Iraq

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Groups affiliated with the Islamic Resistance in Iraq have claimed responsibility for rocket attacks on U.S. military bases.

The group Saraya Awliya al-Dam announced that its fighters launched a barrage of rockets at U.S. bases, including the "Victory Base" located near Baghdad International Airport. In a statement, the group said the strike targeted the "American occupying presence" at the base.

The faction said the attack was part of ongoing operations carried out by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq against U.S. military positions across the country.

At the same time, Iraqi air defenses reportedly intercepted a drone flying near the U.S. embassy inside Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone. An Iraqi security source also told Al Jazeera that the country's air defenses are "confronting" another drone near the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.

These operations, according to the Iraqi resistance groups, have intensified since the illegal joint U.S.–Israeli war against Iran. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for downing U.S. MQ-9 surveillance drones during this period.

In a statement, Saraya Awliya al-Dam said the attacks were carried out as a "religious duty" and in retaliation for the killing of senior figures and fighters within the resistance. The group specifically referred to the death of Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei, describing him as a martyr and a religious authority whose assassination demanded retribution.

The statement also said the attacks were meant to deter further assaults that have killed Iraqi resistance fighters.

Meanwhile, violence continued elsewhere in Iraq. Two members of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) were killed, and a member of the Federal Police was injured in what Iraqi media reported as a U.S.–Israeli attack on Jurf al-Nasr, an area southwest of Baghdad.

According to reports from Baghdad, the strike targeted PMF units stationed in the region. The area, formerly known as Jurf al-Sakhar, lies north of Babylon province and has long hosted security deployments by the PMF.

Explosions were also reported in Mosul, the largest city in Nineveh province in northern Iraq. Local sources suggested the blast may have been caused by an airstrike, though details about the target or casualties were not immediately clear.

The escalation follows the killing of several figures linked to Iraqi armed factions. On Sunday, the Iraqi movement Harakat al-Nujaba issued a statement announcing the death of Abu Ali al-Ameri, a commander in Kataib Hezbollah, along with several of his associates.

In a statement, Harakat al-Nujaba described the killings as the result of what it called a "cowardly Zionist-American betrayal".

The group warned that the attack marked a turning point in its confrontation with U.S. and allied forces.

"The arrogant enemy has opened the gates of hell through its recklessness," the statement said, adding that condemnation alone would not solace them. Instead, it said, the response would come "from the actions of men on the battlefield."

The group also warned that it no longer considered itself bound by traditional "rules of engagement," stating that retaliation would continue without limits if its leaders and fighters continued to be targeted.

The deaths of al-Ameri and his associates come after a series of deadly strikes in Iraq over recent days. Last week, about 22 soldiers were killed in a U.S. airstrike targeting PMF positions between Akashat and al-Qaim in Iraq's western Anbar province.

In a separate incident early Saturday, three people were killed when a strike targeted a house belonging to a resistance faction in the Karrada district of central Baghdad.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

US facing military humiliation in its illegal war on Iran

By staff writer

TEHRAN - The United States and Israel started an illegal and unprovoked war on Iran Feb. 29. The war began two days after Iran and the U.S. held their third round of talks on Iran's nuclear program, first in Muscat, Oman, and second and third rounds in Geneva.

They were going to meet again a week later after consultations in the capitals. The sides also agreed that experts hold technical discussions talks in Vienna in the coming week. The Omani Foreign Minister, Badr Al Albusaid, who acted as a mediator between Iran and the U.S. wrote on X that the sides made "significant progress".

This new round of talks was resumed after the June 2025 aggression on Iran, again by Israel and the United States.

In last session of the talks in Geneva, the Iranian negotiating team announced that it was ready to present a detailed plan which will ensure that Tehran's civilian nuclear activities will never be diverted toward a weapons program.

However, this round of talks and the one prior to the last June were primarily intended to deceive Iran. They were simply deceptive talks.

Writing an article in the pro-government IRAN newspaper, prior to the Feb. talks, Ata'ollah Mohajerani, a former Iranian culture minister and history professor who lives in London, warned that this new round of talks is also a deception. Unfortunately, his warning came true.

When asked by American reporters why his administration ordered attack Iran in the middle of the talks, Donald Trump comically claimed that Iran was preparing to take a preemptive action against the U.S. interests in the region.

However, days later, Israel openly acknowledged that the attack was preplanned but it was conducted earlier than the scheduled time.

This war is shocking, immoral and unwarranted. Even U.S. allies, including Canada, are saying that the aggression against Iran shows that the post-World War II order is collapsing. Spain and Italy, two other U.S. allies, have openly said the war on Iran runs contrary to international law.

In their illegal war against Iran, Israel and the U.S. have been committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. The instances are clear. Missile attacks on an elementary school in Minab, south Iran, in the first day of the war led to the death of about 170 female students and their teachers. The air raid has been traced to the U.S. The raid has been documented by former Pentagon officials and American media through satellite images and the kind of missiles used.

An attack by a U.S. submarine on an unarmed Iranian frigate in the waters near Sri Lanka is also heart-rendering. The frigate had participated in a joint naval drill along with Indian Ocean countries prior to the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

Israel's air raids on Iranian cultural and historical monuments are other examples of crimes against humanity. The Zionist regime's indiscriminate attacks on residential areas and even villages are instances of human crimes.

These desperate attacks are laced with lies as well. For examples, Trump claimed that the attack on the school in Minab had been done by Iran itself. When asked about the kind of the missile used, he also said Iran has such missiles. Israel also claims it only targets arms manufacturing centers and military headquarters. However, no day passes in which civilians don't fall victims to the attacks in different parts of the country. For example, a funeral procession was held for six transport ministry employees in Zanjan, northwest Iran, on Sunday. An attack on a village near the city of Khomein in Markazi province also led to the death of all members of a family.

War criminal Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and Trump are envious of Iran's ancient cultural and artistic monuments. Like Daesh that destroyed the ancient monument of Palmira in Syria, they are also trying to erase Iran's rich cultural heritage in any possible way.

Trump's hatred of Iran's ancient civilization was first revealed after the assassination of Iranian Quds Force Commander Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani in January 2020 when he threatened that if Iran retaliated to the assassination, he would order the bombardment of 52 Iranian historical sites equal to the number of American diplomatic staff taken hostage by Iranian university students following the seizure of the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979.

Analysts say since Israel and the U.S. have no roots in history, as Israel was established on the stolen Palestinian lands and the U.S. on the Native American lands, they want to destroy Iran's cultural heritage.

However, after 17 days since the start of war, the U.S. and Israel have failed to achieve any of their malicious goals in Iran. Their only achievements have been the massacre of people (military and non-military by dropping bombs from the air), destruction of infrastructure, such as civilian and military airports, damage to health centers, etc.

The war has taken an unexpected course to the surprise of military analysts. So far, Iran is the winner of the war despite being caught off guard.

Once in a while, Trump and his lieutenants claim that Iran's military has been degraded about 90 percent and it can fire only a few missiles at Israel or U.S. military assets in the region, and that if any missile is launched it will be intercepted. However, every day scenes of Iranian ballistic missiles landing in Israel are shown on TV screens across the world.

Feeling that its military prestige is in jeopardy, the Pentagon is moving its only air defense system in South Korea and its aircraft carrier in Japan's waters to the Middle East to counter powerful retaliations by the Iranian military.

The U.S., which boasts it is the most powerful country in the world and its president in every opportunity before the cameras claims "we have the most advanced weapons and military int the world," is begging its allies in the East and the West – Britian, France, Japan and South Korea - and even its rival China to help open the Strait of Hormuz closed by Iran.

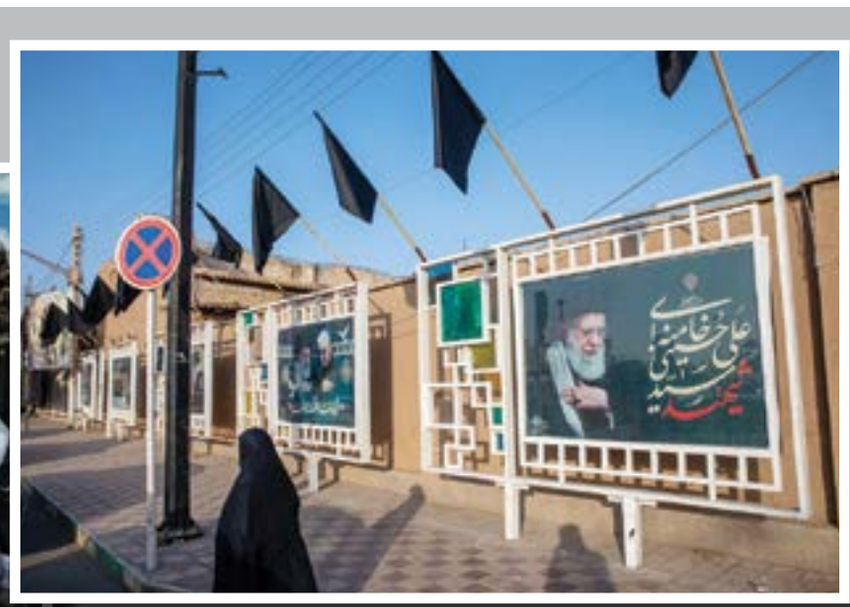
Of these countries that Trump is begging help from, only South Korea has said it is considering the request. Trump is feeling so terrified who says if the Strait remains closed, the credibility of NATO will be undermined.

Iran's move in closing the strategic waterway, that one-fifth of the global oil and gas supplies passes through, has unsettled global oil markets and economies. This is while Iran has partially closed the Strait. It only does not allow the commercial ships owned by the U.S. and its allies, that have tacitly approved of the war against Iran, to traffic. Imagine what will happen if Iran closes the strategic waterway completely.

The most important lesson from this illegal and immoral war on Iran is that the U.S. military is being humiliated before the eyes of the world. This is while Trump and his mentor Netanyahu were imagining that Iran will surrender in a matter of days.










شهید محمد پاکپور
مراسم بزرگداشت
و شهیده
مهسا طاهری




شهید محمد پاکپور






شهید محمد پاکپور



Thousands of volunteers join network to provide war-affected people with medical, welfare services



TEHRAN – The Welfare Organization has organized a network of some 20,000 of volunteers to help provide a wide range of services, particularly medical and welfare services, to people affected by the U.S.-Israeli aggression.

The network includes ordinary people, medical specialists, psychologists, and social workers, IRNA reported.

Over the past few months, particularly during the recent war, public participation and volunteering have noticeably developed.

The Welfare Organization has hold several meetings with the volunteers in different provinces of the country to plan and coordinate their activities, and derive maximum benefits from their high capacity.

The result has been great, and the volunteers provide services to different strata of society.

The network of volunteers help to deliver generous donations faster and more targeted to the needy.

Apart from medical and essential supplies, volunteers have helped repairing damaged houses.

More than 69,000 essential goods have been distributed among the beneficiaries.Benefactors have also donated over 235 billion rials (about 160,000 dollars), to the Welfare Organization so far.

The raised money will be used to meet part of the beneficiaries'special needs.

According to the latest report by the head of the Welfare Organization, Javad Hosseini, 18 daily care centers affiliated with the Welfare Organization were damaged in airstrikes across the country, behzitsi.ir reported.

Moreover, 30,000 families under the coverage of the Welfare Organization have been impacted by the war, and they need immediate support. Also, two beneficiaries with disabilities were martyred.

A total of 956 houses, belonged to families under the support of the organization, were damaged, of which 41 were destroyed.

Protecting civilians in wars

Over the past 60 years, civilians have been the main victims of the wars; hence their protection in armed conflicts is regarded a cornerstone of international humanitarian law (IHL).

However, the United States and Israel forces have been launching violent attacks on Iran targeting residential areas, and bombarding health, educational, and sport infrastructures.

Their violation of IHL has been confirmed and condemned by many individuals, media, and international organizations worldwide.

"The principle of distinction between civilians and combatants is an important principle of the international humanitarian law; it only justifies targeting armed forces.

Civilians have to be treated with respect. Even political officials who are not directly involved in wars are not legitimate targets. It highlights that injured military forces should not be targeted, let alone rescuers, children, and health staff, and in case the invasion of military targets would bring about too much damage to civilians, it is better not to be carried out," Behzad Saberi, an international law expert, said in an interview with IRNA.

The protection of civilians extends to those who try to help them, including medical staff, humanitarian and relief organizations that are providing essential goods such as food, clothing, medical tools, and parties to a conflict should not violate the law.

In the second World War, and its subsequent conflicts, a large number of civilians suffered huge hostilities, witnessing a large scale of war crimes against humanity.

Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 were updated in response to these war crimes. Pursuant to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols, medical units, hospitals, rehabilitation institutions, and humanitarian facilities enjoy special protection.

Parties to a conflict are under a binding obligation to respect the fundamental principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution.

These principles, recognized as customary and peremptory norms of IHL, prohibit attacks against civilian objects and any conduct resulting in civilian casualties. Violations of these obligations may amount to grave breaches of IHL

Four Geneva Conventions was later strengthened by Additional Protocol I of 1977, which requires the absolute distinction between civilians and combatants.

But, as ever, civilians, particularly women, children, and displaced people are suffering the brunt of war.

On the very first day of the war outbreak, February 28, a primary school, named Shajareh Tayyebeh, in Minab, Hormozgan province, was targeted in Zionist-American strikes, leaving tens of innocent individuals dead and wounded behind, depicting heinous acts and atrocity of the U.S.-Israeli criminals.

The schools are not merely buildings; they are protective spaces whose destruction results in loss of lives and long-term social harms.

It was not the first time that educational centers are targeted. There have been news on schools destructions before, killing innocent students whose only crimes were their presence in classrooms.

Three national health projects being developed



TEHRAN – Supported by the Vice-presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy, three national health projects in advanced medical sector are being developed.

These technological projects include development of regenerative medicine and cell therapy, national infrastructure for manufacturing and monitoring quality of cellular products, and personalized medicine, IRNA reported.

The Contract Research Organization (CRO), the regenerative medicine and cell therapy project, is being developed in oncology department of Shariati Hospital, where patients can refer to for pre-clinical and clinical tests.

CROs are specialized firms that support pharmaceutical companies throughout various stages of drug development. Their services include clinical research and clinical trial management, non-clinical or animal toxicology studies, clinical and data management.

With the approval of six new advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs), Iran has showcased breakthroughs in regenerative medicine, improving the country's global ranking from 12 to 7.

According to the latest global report, out of 148 ATMPs approved in 2025 under the supervision of 12 internationally recognized regulatory bodies, seven were made in Iran, placing it among the top 10 countries in the field, IRNA reported.

The number of licensed products in regenerative medicine has grown from one product in the Iranian year 1402 (March 2023-March 2024) to seven this year, which started in March 2025.

These include cell therapy, issue engineering, and chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy products, which are used to treat different diseases such as vitiligo, graft-versus-host disease (GVHD), cerebral palsy (CP), burns, diabetic foot ulcers, arthritis, and B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (B cell ALL). Some of these high-tech medical products have export potential.

The second project, the Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO), in Emam Khomeini Hospital, is expanding, as well. The center is planned to turn into a national, science authority in the country.

CDMO provides contract development and manufacturing services and has expertise in formulation development, analytical testing, process scale-up, and quality assurance. It will be responsible for assessing and approving the quality of cellular products in different centers and laboratories across the country.

The development of personalized medicine, the third project, will be pursued in Endocrine and Metabolism Research Institute in Tehran University of Medical Sciences. The personalized medicine relies on analyzing vast datasets encompassing a multitude of variables such as patients' demographics, clinical histories, genetic profiles, and developing a specialized treatment for the patients, particularly those who suffer from cancers.

Notable progress in cell therapy

Iran has made significant progress in the field of stem cells and cell therapy, advancing to eighth place in the world from 12th in the previous year.

"Last year, we had only one cell therapy product on the market and ranked 12th in the world, but this year we have reached eighth place in the world with 5 products," according to Mostafa Qanei, an official with the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology.

"Our goal is to be among the top five countries in the world in this field and eliminate the need for patients to travel abroad for treatment," he added.

Saeed Sarkar, an official with the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology, has said that twenty technological projects related to the health sector are on the agenda in the current Iranian year, which ends in March 2026.

These projects include the production of spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) drugs, the development of early detection kits for digestive cancers, and other health-oriented products, which are expected to save up to $40 million in foreign currency, IRIB quoted Sarkar as saying.

Referring to medicinal plants, the official said: "We are pursuing two main goals, the first one is to improve the effectiveness of medicinal plants through technologies such as nanotechnology, for example, nanocapsules loaded with curcumin to enhance absorption capacity.

The second goal is to conduct clinical trials to document the effects of traditional medicine and present the results to the health ministry for verification.

Talking about the use of artificial intelligence in the health system, Sarkar said, "We are deploying artificial intelligence tools in sectors like radiology and pathology. These devices will play a complementary role in medical diagnostics, helping to improve accuracy, reduce costs, and improve public access to healthcare."

The official went on to highlight the unprecedented potential of AI technology in the health sector, saying that the use of artificial intelligence in the health system can significantly enhance the accuracy and speed of clinical decision-making while simultaneously reducing costs and risks.

The Web of Science (WoS) has ranked Iran first among Islamic countries in molecular and genetic technologies over the 10 years from 2000 to 2024.

The country's best ranking is in transfection technology (14th globally), with 1,067 documents. It is also placed first in the region, followed by Turkey (with 309 documents), Egypt (with 273 documents), Saudi Arabia (with 207 documents), and Malaysia (with 190 documents), IRNA reported.

Iran urges UNESCO to investigate UAE's closure of Iranian schools following U.S.-Israeli strikes



TEHRAN - Minister of Education, Alireza Kazemi, has formally requested UNESCO to investigate a decision by the United Arab Emirates to suspend the operation of Iranian schools following recent military strikes by the United States and the Zionist regime of Israel against Iran.

Kazemi sent a letter to UNESCO Director-General Khaled El-Enany on Sunday, expressing concern over the closure, impacting approximately 2,500 students. The decision was made by the Dubai-based organization for development of education and human resources to halt the licenses of all Iranian schools in the UAE.

"The organization has decided to suspend the licenses of all Iranian schools," Kazemi stated in the letter, according to a report by IRNA cited by the Ministry of Education. "This was communicated via email and subsequent meetings with school administrators."

The suspension, effective March 16, 2026, follows recent all-out military actions by the U.S. and Israel against the Islamic Republic. The Minister stated that the Consulate of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Dubai has formally protested the decision, but it remains in place.

"This sudden decision, seven months into the academic year, poses significant challenges for students," Kazemi wrote. "It is in conflict with the fundamental right to education, particularly in times of crisis and instability."

The closure raises concerns about the well-being of students, with Kazemi highlighting potential psychological distress and difficulties in acquiring proficiency in languages other than Persian. He noted that many students lack sufficient English or Arabic language skills, potentially hindering their ability to continue their education.

Furthermore, Kazemi indicated that local schools lack the capacity to accommodate the sudden influx of 2,500 students. This leaves hundreds of families without immediate educational options.

Moreover, Kazemi echoed UNESCO's mission to safeguard the right to education and called for the organization to utilize its international standing to review the decision and support students' access to learning.

Earlier this month, Kazemi wrote separate letters to El-Enany; Salim bin Mohammed Al-Malik, the director general of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO); and Catherine Russell, the executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), urging them to condemn the U.S..-Israeli attacks to educational and cultural organizations in Iran.

"As the Minister of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I wish to express my deepest regret and strongest condemnation regarding the crimes committed by the United States of America and the Israeli Regime.

These acts, characterized by illegal aggression and the deliberate bombing of residential zones, healthcare facilities, and vital educational infrastructures, particularly schools, constitute a grave assault on my nation," Kazemi wrote to El-Enany.

"As you are aware, these targeted attacks represent a flagrant violation of the principles of international law, fundamental human rights, and the numerous international conventions and recommendations established to protect civilians, especially children and vulnerable populations.

The international targeting of schools and students is an inhumane and calculated act designed to devastate the future generations of our country."

"Beyond the tragic loss of these oppressed martyrs and victims, approximately 20 educational centers have sustained severe damage, with some being completely destroyed. These attacks have severely disrupted the educational process for thousands of students, depriving them of their fundamental right to learn in a safe environment."

"In light of UNESCO's crucial mission to support education and promote peace, I urgently request that your organization firmly condemn these anti-human crimes. I further call upon you to demand that the aforementioned aggressors cease their attacks against educational infrastructure, schools, and students immediately," the letter reads.

In separate and similar letters to UNICEF and ISESCO directors, Kazemi provided detailed information and statistics of these inhumane attacks as of March 3 across the country as follows:

In the city of Minab, in southern Hormozgan province, some 160 martyrs and 110 injured; in Fars province, 1 teacher and 5 students martyred; In Ilam province, 1 teacher and 2 students martyred; In East Azarbaijan province, 1 teacher injured and 2 students martyred; in Tehran province, 4 students martyred, 1 teacher martyred, and 2 students injured; and in Qazvin province, 1 student martyred.

Meanwhile, Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf has called for UNESCO to adopt clear and decisive stance against the violation of international law by the United States and the Zionist regime.

"The recent military attacks by the United States and the Israeli regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran not only has led to a vast destruction, but also is a shocking sign of the clear violation of international law, humanitarian principles, as well as international conventions advocated by UNESCO," Simaei-Sarraf said in a letter to UNESCO Director-General Khaled El-Enany, IRNA reported.

These attacks have systematically targeted the basic foundation of the life of civilians and human dignity, he added.

The letter has enumerated crimes, damage, and the violations thereafter in areas related to education, culture, and communication sectors, as well as human being.

Targeting a school in the city of Minab which led to the martyrdom of 168 innocent girl students, attacking UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace, targeting the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, and violating Geneva conventions regarding support of civilians and medical staff were highlighted by the science minister.

"We expect UNESCO to adopt clear and decisive stance with regard to such obvious violations of international law and condemn the attacks strongly.

The eyes of the world are on UNESCO take a leading role in safeguarding culture," the letter reads.

Moreover, in a letter to the World Health Organization, a group of Iranian students of medical science universities urged international organizations, especially the WHO, to condemn the U.S.-Israeli attacks to medical and healthcare centers across the country.

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MARCH 17, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Justice puts everything in its place, and liberality brings out things from a special direction. Justice is a statesman who gives everyone his right, and liberality is a habit belonging to one person only. Therefore, justice is worthier.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:12 Evening: 18:31 Dawn: 4:47 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:11 (tomorrow)

Hamoon Theater Hall damaged in Zionist-U.S. aggression on Tehran

TEHRAN- The Hamoon Theater Hall, located adjacent to Police Station 148 on Enqelab Street in Tehran, sustained significant damage from an explosion following Zionist-U.S. military strikes against Iran on Friday.

The attack on the police station sent shockwaves through the surrounding area, affecting nearby cultural and civilian infrastructure, ISNA reported.

Amir Mousa Kazemi, the theater's manager, confirmed the damage, noting that the explosion at Police Station 148 directly impacted the nearby Hamoon Theater Hall.

"I was present at the venue when the explosion occurred," Kazemi explained. "The blast wave and flying shrapnel caused significant damage to the theater."

According to Kazemi, the structural damage to the facility was extensive. The shockwave from the explosion resulted in holes and damage to sections of the theater's ceiling, shattered doors and windows, and broken glass throughout the venue. Additionally, the projectors and technical equipment within the hall were damaged.

"The full extent of the damage is currently being assessed," Kazemi stated. "Some repairs were completed on Saturday, and we are actively working on fixing other damaged sections."

Hamoon Theater is located in central Tehran. The damage to this cultural venue highlights the collateral impact of the recent Zionist-U.S. military actions on civilian and artistic infrastructure across the capital.

Following the coordinated U.S.- Israeli attack on February 28, which targeted key national facilities in Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, was martyred. Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei has since been appointed as the new Leader by the Assembly of Experts.

The tragedy extended beyond political leadership to civilian infrastructure. In one of the most devastating attacks, Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan Province, was struck, resulting in the martyrdom of 168 children and 95 injuries. These strikes destroyed numerous homes while directly targeting cultural and educational centers.

These attacks caused irreparable damage to residential and cultural areas across Iran. Many schools, theaters, libraries, and cultural institutions were either completely destroyed or heavily damaged. Iranian families in cities like Minab, Tehran, Isfahan, Hamedan, Tabriz and other regions have faced the devastation of home destruction and the loss of loved ones. Despite this, the spirit of resistance and resilience among the Iranian people has been strengthened. The ongoing efforts to rebuild and preserve the country's cultural heritage continue.

Operation "True Promise 4" has been launched in response and will continue until the defeat of enemies. The operation stands as a symbol of Iran's response to foreign aggression and demonstrates the national determination to defend territorial integrity.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza

Cartoonist: Fares Garabet from Germany

Secretary of Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution praises artists' reaction to foreign aggression

TEHRAN – The secretary of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution has commended the performance of Iranian cultural and artistic figures following the U.S.-Israeli aggression to Iran.

The U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on February 28 and have so far martyred over 1,000 people including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, several military commanders, and civilians, among them women and children.

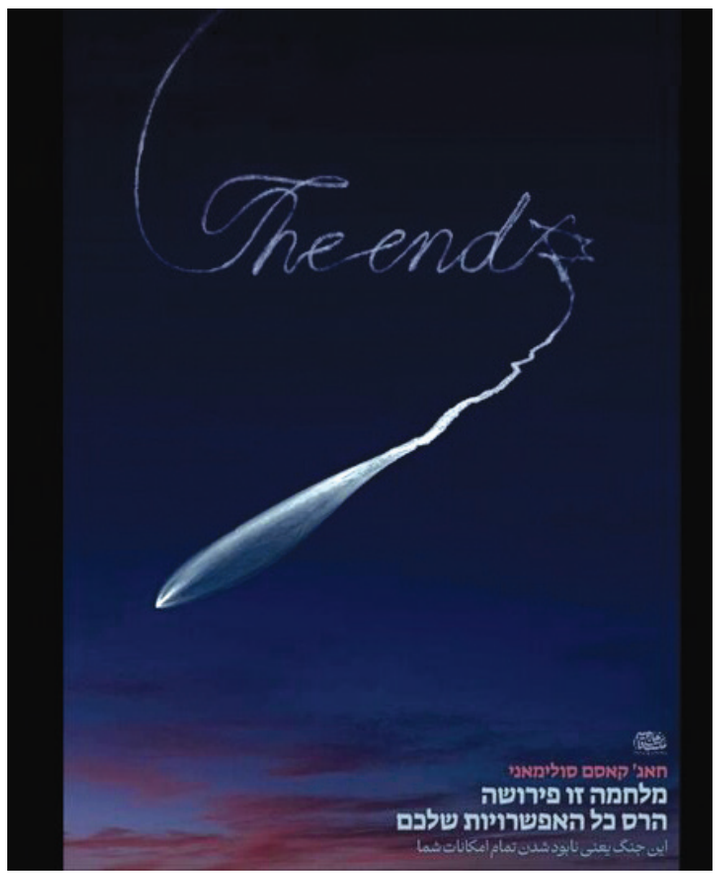
Following the attacks, several Iranian artists and cultural figures reacted to the issue be creating works or posting on social media, condemning the aggression and emphasizing the national unity.

According to ISNA, the text of Hojjatoleslam Abdolhossein Khosrowpanah's message is as follows:

"In the midst of the 'Ramadan Hybrid War,' the grand confrontation between the front of truth and falsehood has reached its most sensitive civilizational point. The cowardly and desperate enemy, defeated in the field by the crushing blows of our brave armed forces, has with full savagery turned the poisonous arrow of psychological terrorism toward the perceptual security of the nation".

"But in this critical juncture, what shattered the sinister plots of the empire of lies was a truth beautifully expounded by the new Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, in his first message: 'the Ammar-like presence of the Iranian nation and their astonishing insight guaranteed the country's power. This civilizational epic of the Iranian nation holds such grandeur that freedom-seekers around the world will admire this liberty and steadfastness for centuries to come".

"In this relentless cognitive battlefield and in days when some sealed their lips in the test of national honor, the true victors of the field were the artists, thinkers, and luminaries who, relying on epic rationality, built a mountain of steadfast calm. As a servant of the nation, I consider it my duty to kiss the hands of these vanguard elites of the national power front".



"The End" by Mehdi Shahverdi

"I appreciate the committed singers and composers of national music who became the resounding voice of Iran's power; especially the vigilant voice of Mohsen Chavoshi, who at this critical moment, with a timely work, built a sturdy shield of pride against the enemy's psychological terrorism; and also dear ones like Garsha Rezaei, Hamed Homayoun, Meysam Ebrahimi, Parvaz Homay, and Reza Sadeghi with their warm melodies, and the creator of enduring tunes, Karen Hemayounfar, who with their epic songs echoed national solidarity".

"I admire each of the esteemed individuals in the Quran program Mahfel, my dear ones Mahmoud Karimi, Mehdi Rasouli, Hossein Taheri, and Mohammad Hossein Pouyanfar".

"I am grateful to the creators of beauty in visual arts and poetry, the Ashura-inspired brushes of Hassan Ruholamin and the awakening scripts of Masoud Shojaei Tabatabai, alongside the steadfast words of Mohammad Mehdi Sayyar and Afshin Ala".

"I thank the truthful narrators of resistance cinema Ebrahim Hatamikia, Majid Majidi, Ahmad Reza Darvish, Jamshid Hashmehpour, Seyyed Mahmoud Razavi, and Merila Zarei".

"And I express my gratitude to the brave journalists and media activists who tore through the Western censorship barrier".

"The number of those who played roles in this magnificent epic is so vast that the pen falls short of mentioning all their names. Undoubtedly, those dear ones whose names are not here are the nameless and modest servants of the cultural front who are more rewarded in the presence of the Almighty God. Our endless gratitude is dedicated to the silent heroes of this civilization; the proud Iranian mothers and women who were the anchors of family tranquility".

"I also honor the pure struggles of others, from the vigilant professors, elites, students, and academics to the compassionate teachers and educators who safeguarded the spirit of hope in the trench of education and upbringing; from artists, writers, and cultural figures to the champions, heroes, and sports federations who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the armed forces and displayed the spirit of chivalry to the world; from the esteemed clergymen, religious preachers, and religious boards who, in harmony with the selfless warriors of the Basij force, remained in the field of jihad".

"I ask the valiant people to continue their magnificent presence in the streets and urge the artists to create noble works, thereby keeping the strong bond between the battlefield and public opinion unbreakable. The enemy should know that this nation rises from the heart of every crisis like a phoenix, more powerful. Just as it showed on the International Quds Day that the pure blood of our loved ones is the fuel of a fire that will eliminate Zionism. Undoubtedly, conquering hearts in cognitive warfare is the definitive prelude to the liberation of the noble Quds".

Millions of Iranians flooded the streets for Quds Day under U.S.-Israeli bombardment, declaring they will not yield.

Crowds were massive in hundreds of cities across Iran on Friday, March 13. From the northern city of Rasht to Bandar Abbas in the south, from Tabriz in northwestern Iran to the southeastern city of Zahedan, Iranians waved their national flags, held up pictures of their martyred Leader and their new Leader, and shouted "Allahu Akbar" (God is greater).

Following the martyrdom of the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, his son Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei has been appointed as the new Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran by the Assembly of Experts.

The attacks by the U.S. and Zionist regime prompted a swift response from the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), with missile and drone launches targeting Israel and several U.S. bases in the region, occurring less than two hours after the strikes, which have been intensified in recent days.

Beyond poetry: Shahnameh as guardian of Iranian identity

TEHRAN- Iran's national identity and culture owe their survival to Shahnameh, the epic masterpiece of the Persian poet Ferdowsi, Iranian scholar has said.

This epic poem preserved Iranian civilization through centuries of upheaval, ensuring that the language, festivals, and traditions continue to this day, Alireza Qiamati told ISNA in an interview on Monday.

He emphasized that Ferdowsi's epic did not merely preserve poetry—it safeguarded the very soul of Iranian civilization. "The true legacy of the Shahnameh is that Iran survived," Qiamati stated.

"Thanks to this epic, our national identity endured, our Persian language survived, and our festivals—Nowruz, Mehrgan, Sadeh—continue in their glory," he mentioned.

Qiamati explained that earlier versions of the Shahname, by other poets, have been lost to history. "The Shahnameh remained during a period when every other epic was being eliminated," he noted. "In this sense, it is indeed complete because it survived when all its predecessors did not."

The scholar also highlighted a historical revelation regarding the completion date of the epic. According to Qiamati, Ferdowsi explicitly marked March 16 as the definitive day on which he concluded his masterpiece. While the exact year remains debated, the day and month are undeniably clear.

Ferdowsi dedicated approximately 30 years to writing the Shahnameh and another 30 years to gathering sources and editing it, he noted.

"In reality, his entire life was consumed by the Shahnameh, with the ultimate goal of ensuring Iran's survival," he remarked.

"Even when the poet fell ill, he was not afraid of his own death. His fear was that the Shahnameh would remain incomplete," Qiamati said.



Qiamati shared that even the death of Ferdowsi's own son did not deter him. "Ferdowsi mourned for a time, filled with grief, but the Shahnameh could not be taken from him," he said.

Qiamati underscored that Ferdowsi's concern extended beyond the text itself to the preservation of Iranian culture and traditions. "He feared that without the Shahnameh, our festivals and rituals would lose their glory and be forgotten," the scholar explained.

"Fortunately, thanks to the Shahnameh, our national identity survived, our Persian language survived, and our festivals continue in their glory," he stated.

Shahnameh is not merely a literary work but a cultural fortress, he said and added: "Ferdowsi gave his life for Iran, even in the face of death for the sake of Iran, Rostam tells his brother to reassure their mother that he does not regret his fate. What matters is that Iran survives."

"The ultimate duty of every Iranian is to ensure that Iran, its culture, and its civilization endure through the generations," Qiamati stated.

"This is a unique and special lesson that the Shahnameh teaches us—all for the survival of Iran," he concluded.

Ferdowsi is the pseudonym of Abu al-Qasem Mansur, (935-1020), who was born in the city of Tus, located in present-day Iran. In 977 CE, he undertook the monumental task of writing the Shahnameh, completing it in 1010 CE after dedicating much of his life to this labor of love. The masterpiece is written in Persian verse and is divided into three parts, chronicling the mythical, heroic, and historical epochs of Iran.

The Shahnameh begins with the creation of the world as outlined in Persian mythology and follows the lineage of Iranian kings, heroes, and legends throughout history. Ferdowsi intertwines tales of courage, romance, deception, and loyalty, creating a tapestry of Persian culture and identity that continues to captivate readers.

Ferdowsi's Shahnameh frequently portrays Iran's battles against external enemies, particularly the Turanians, as a central theme. However, the epic also delves into internal conflicts and the consequences of division within Iran. It emphasizes the importance of national unity and the dangers of internal strife, portraying it as a threat to Iran's strength and well-being. While the epic celebrates Iranian heroism and victories, it also highlights the ethical considerations of warfare and the importance of justice and compassion, even towards enemies.

The influence of the Shahnameh transcends Iran's borders, having been translated into numerous languages and serving as a wellspring of inspiration for writers, artists, and intellectuals worldwide. Its themes of heroism, love, and integrity possess universal resonance, striking a chord with individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Following the Zionist regime and the U.S's a coordinated attack on February 28, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, was martyred. Also, in a deadly strike on a girls' school in southern Iran — Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school in Minab, a city in Hormozgan Province, 168 children were martyred and 95 were injured.

In response, Operation "True Promise 4" has begun and will continue until the defeat of enemies.