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Ayatollah Khamenei: 37 Years of Following Imam Khomeini's Path to Martyrdom



Opinion **T** We are mournful We are proud

Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN - The air in early June 1989 was hot, but not as hot as the hearts of a nation that had lost its father—left orphaned and grieving.

Imam Ruhollah had departed us with a serene soul and a tranquil heart, yet we wept over his passing as if mourning a lifeless body over the loss of its own spirit. We were deeply terrified of a world without Khomeini, because he was not only the spirit of God, but also our very soul.

With the grace of God, what helped us endure this great loss was a man who - though the most grief-stricken of the nation - possessed such depth of devotion to **▶ Page 2**

Qalibaf warns of direct response to continued Israeli attacks on Lebanon

TEHRAN— Iran has intensified its warnings against Israel over the continued military campaign in Lebanon, signaling that Tehran may take broader political and strategic measures if attacks on Lebanese territory persist despite ongoing diplomatic efforts to secure a comprehensive ceasefire across the region.

The latest warning came from Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who told Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri in a telephone conversation on Monday that Iran has been actively working to stop Israeli military operations in Lebanon in recent days. **▶ Page 3**

US aggression on Iran sparks gasoline crisis, record price hikes at home

TEHRAN- A Reuters report has revealed that US gasoline inventories are facing a near-record decline, sounding a stark alarm for fuel markets as seasonal demand peaks.

The data shows that the system is rapidly losing its safety buffer, a crisis directly traced back to the consequences of Washington's military actions. The 15-week stretch of gasoline stock draws since mid-February has matched the longest run on record, with current inventories sitting at just 211.5 million barrels - a steep plunge from over 253 million barrels before the conflict began, and 5.5% below the five-year average.

While the combination of falling supplies and rising demand does not guarantee immediate shortages, the report warns that it dramatically raises the odds of sudden price explosions if replenishment efforts falter.

US gasoline prices have already skyrocketed by 50%, reaching an average of \$4.33 per gallon, according to EIA data. **▶ Page 4**

New cancer treatment hospital inaugurated in Tehran

TEHRAN - A new cancer treatment hospital equipped with more than 600 beds was inaugurated in Tehran on Tuesday.

Affiliated with the Imam Khomeini Hospital Complex and run by the Cancer Institute of Iran, the hospital is comprised of education, research, diagnosis and treatment sections, ISNA reported.

The hospital has also 103 special beds, 19 operating rooms, 6 homecare beds, and 12 emergency beds.

The history of the Cancer Institute dates back to 1949, when a cancer hospital was established as a result of a collaborative agreement between Tehran University Medical School and the Red Crescent Society. **▶ Page 7**

Grieving the story of Lebanese and Gazan students facing existential struggle

TEHRAN - Leen Ezzeddine's Harvard Medical School graduation speech presents a critique of how the global system values human life and intellectual freedom. It compares the physical destruction of life and education in Lebanon and Gaza with the institutional suppression of speech in the West.

There exists a profound and tragic paradox. The plight and ambition of Lebanese and Gazan students who study under fire is a telling story.

Academic ambition and capability are universal, but safety and the luxury of a normal student life are dictated by geography.

Ezzeddine fundamentally deconstructs the idea that her graduation from Harvard was solely due to hard work, disputing the myth of pure meritocracy. She acknowledges that her peers in Lebanon and Palestine possess the exact same discipline, devotion, and intellect. The only differentiator is luck, the arbitrary border that spared her from studying under the buzz of drones and the collapse of civil infrastructure.

The ghost of Beaufort Castle

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN - The diplomatic language surrounding the conflict in southern Lebanon has undergone a fundamental shift. For months, international statements had been couched in the cautious lexicon of border clashes and temporary security measures.

But as Israeli armor pushed past the Litani River and the evil-favored flag of the occupiers was hoisted over the ruins of Beaufort Castle, the terminology changed decisively.

France's convocation of an emergency UN Security Council session laid bare an uncomfortable reality: Israel's deepest ground offensive into Lebanese territory in nearly a quarter-century is increasingly being viewed as a grinding, open-ended occupation, even by international friends of Israel.

This military escalation unfolds against a backdrop of immense human devastation. Since early March, the campaign of aggression has claimed over 3,200 lives and driven more than 1.2 million Lebanese civilians from their homes, turning entire southern villages into uninhabitable fields of rubble.

Israel's war objectives in Lebanon shrink

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - The Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) have acknowledged casualties to more soldiers in southern Lebanon as the Zionist regime's war objectives diminish in the face of Hezbollah's strong resistance.

The IOF admitted the death of a military doctor holding the rank of captain in the Givati Brigade, along with the injury of seven others, including four officers and a battalion commander, in an attack carried out by the Lebanese resistance using explosive drones.

According to details released by the IOF, a captain serving as a battalion doctor in the elite Shaked Battalion of the Givati Brigade was killed during fighting in southern Lebanon.

The Israeli army radio reported that Hezbollah launched six explosive drones toward a gathering of soldiers and a Namer armored vehicle belonging to the Givati Brigade, which was stationed on the outskirts of the village of Zawtar al-Sharqiya near the Shqef position.

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Egyptian popular support for Iran amid the Zio-American war: A shared history and a common enemy

By Dr. Ahmed Moustafa

CAIRO - In the heart of the Middle East, where historical memory intersects with contemporary geopolitical challenges, the widespread support of the Egyptian people for the Iranian people and state in their confrontation with the Israeli-American alliance stands out as a phenomenon that reflects the depth of Arab popular consciousness. This support is not a fleeting reaction but a natural extension of a shared history of resistance against occupation and colonialism. **▶ Page 3**



Iranian deputy FM tells Tehran Times:

'Israeli crimes in Lebanon cannot occur without US green light'

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi told the Tehran Times that Iran will take "proportionate" measures if Israel continues its strikes in Lebanon and blamed the United States for greenlighting the "Zionist regime's crimes."

Visiting the headquarters of the Tehran Times on Tuesday, Gharibabadi reiterated that the April 8 ceasefire between Iran and the United States covers all fronts, including Lebanon. **▶ Page 2**

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

New equation in the Strait of Hormuz

Resalat commented on the new conditions and equation in the Strait of Hormuz. According to Resalat, during the Ramadan War, the Strait of Hormuz not only revealed its geographical and strategic potential to all countries in the world, but also became one of the effective tools of the Islamic Republic of Iran in confronting the American-Zionist enemies. The reality is that the West and other actors in the field of international relations have no choice but to accept the new order in the Strait of Hormuz. No matter how much the United States and its allies oppose adapting to this new and emerging reality, they will definitely pay more strategic and economic costs in confronting Iran. Undoubtedly, the Trump administration cannot prevent the formation of this order and the establishment of new rules for the Islamic Republic of Iran to manage the Strait of Hormuz by issuing various statements and ridiculous threats in cyberspace. Undoubtedly, in the near future, examples of the failure and defeat of the United States and the Zionist regime in this battle will emerge one after another.

Hamshahri: Iran is a global player

In a note, Hamshahri discussed the importance of Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz and quoted Mashallah Shamsolvaezin, an advisor to the Center for Strategic Studies in the Middle East, as saying: If Iran can exert its control over the Strait of Hormuz, it will in fact have control over the nerve center of the world economy. Imagine a country like Canada, or a European country, or any other country in the world, deciding to join the illegal US sanctions against Iran; in such a situation, Iran could reciprocate and restrict or sanction the passage of ships and related transfers from that country through the Strait of Hormuz. In this sense, Iran is arming itself with a weapon through the Strait of Hormuz that may no longer require nuclear weapons. If this military power and geopolitical upper hand are combined with a smart agreement on the Strait of Hormuz, Iran will be in a position to influence world energy prices, change economic flows, and generally play the role of a global player.

Arman-e-Melli: Changing Iran's trade map after the war

Along with the recent war, many political

and economic equations in the country and the region changed. The change in Iran's trade and economic exchanges with some countries in the region after the Ramadan War is one of these developments. The reduction in the level of some previous exchanges with regular partners in the region has highlighted the need for Iran to seek more reliable routes and more stable partners in order to maintain the sustainability of its trade. In such circumstances, Oman, due to its balanced political relations with Iran, constructive approach in bilateral relations and developing port capacities, has been raised more than ever as one of the important options in the country's new trade equations. Some experts believe in this regard; countries such as Oman, Iraq, Pakistan, Eurasian countries, etc. are suitable options that can form a suitable platform for the development of maritime-land trade relations and these cooperations will definitely not be a short-term choice, but rather are considered a strategic necessity in Iran's economic relations.

Ettelaat: Traitor royalists

In an article, Ettelaat addressed the humiliation of the royalists again in the 40-day war and wrote: The resistance of the Iranian people in recent wars led to dignity and victory, and at the same time, by exposing the role of the royalists who supported the American and Israeli attacks, it showed that their claim of pro-Iranism was a cover for betrayal and deception. The people of Iran and many people in other countries, observing the behavior of the small group of royalists towards the war imposed on Iran by the terrorist armies of the United States and the Zionist regime, clearly concluded that this group is neither patriotic, nor philanthropic, nor does it adhere to moral standards. From the top to the bottom, they have long called on Trump and Netanyahu to attack Iran so that their false idea of returning to the country and seizing power can be opened. The great failure that has befallen them has made them oblivious to the fact that when their bully masters have failed to achieve their sinister goals by launching the most intense war and committing the worst crimes for 40 days and nights, these lowly servants will be powerless and will be defeated by the Iranian nation's offer.

The language of threat: How Western discourse constructs Iran

By Xavier Villar

MADRID - The most consequential political fictions are those that no longer need defending. They operate below the threshold of argument, embedded in vocabulary, presupposed in syntax, circulating with the self-evidence of shared common sense. The Western, and particularly American, discourse on Iran offers a remarkably clean example of this mechanism. What presents itself as threat assessment is, on closer inspection, a sustained act of political construction: the production of Iran as an entity whose dangerousness precedes any specific accusation and survives any particular refutation. The mechanism has a specular logic: by representing Iran as dangerous and irrational, the United States simultaneously constitutes itself as the opposite pole, a rational and moderate subject speaking on behalf of what the discourse calls the «international community». This community is, of course, a selective construction whose members are not chosen by vote, but its repeated invocation serves a precise legitimising function: it converts American positions into positions of the civilised world, and Iranian positions into challenges to that order rather than political demands with their own history.

This is an argument about the discursive conditions under which Iranian foreign policy becomes legible, or more precisely, the conditions under which it is systematically rendered illegible as policy and re-encoded as pathology.

The vocabulary does the work

Teun van Dijk's concept of the ideological square identifies a pattern observable

across political discourse: the systematic amplification of the adversary's negative attributes alongside the minimisation of one's own. The American lexical repertoire on Iran executes this pattern with unusual consistency. Iranian actions are «destabilising», «malicious», «irresponsible», «illicit». Expressions such as «Iran's dangerous and destabilising behaviour in the region», «Iran's persistent threat to security», «reckless and malicious conduct» constitute only a sample of the vocabulary deployed. The same actions, performed by allied states, attract no comparable register. The asymmetry is load-bearing and its effects are cumulative: each deployment reinforces the field of associations already in place, so that the vocabulary eventually requires no argument to support it because it has become the argument.

Two terms merit particular attention. «Adventurism» does something more precise than condemn. It forecloses the possibility of strategic rationality: the adventurer does not calculate, he lunges. Iranian foreign policy decisions, however explicable in terms of regional security interests, are pre-emptively removed from the domain of comprehensible political behaviour and assigned to a register of impulsive, ungovernable excess. A state whose actions are defined as adventurist cannot be negotiated with, only contained.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iranian deputy FM tells Tehran Times: 'Israeli crimes in Lebanon cannot occur without US green light'

From page 1 ▶ "The continuation of the Zionist regime's crimes and strikes in Lebanon amounts to a violation of the ceasefire because the truce between Tehran and Washington includes Lebanon. Its violation will prompt the Islamic Republic to take proportionate measures, and the necessary messages were conveyed to the relevant parties on Monday," he said.

The deputy foreign minister said the United States is capable of preventing Israeli crimes in Lebanon, noting that such actions cannot take place without Washington's greenlight.

Before the April 8 ceasefire was finalized, Iran explicitly communicated to the United States that halting Israel's war in Lebanon was among its conditions. According to Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, President Donald Trump fully agreed to the condition at the time. Iran has stressed that any deal with the United States aimed at permanently ending the joint US-Israeli aggression that began on February 28 must include a halt to Israel's war in Lebanon.

Nonetheless, Israel has continued its aggression in Lebanon. On Monday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatened to bomb the Dahiyeh area, a Shia-majority district in Beirut's southern suburbs.

On the same day, Iran issued a stern warning to Washington and Tel Aviv over Israel's military actions in Lebanon.

Iran's Parliament Speaker and top negotiator, Mohammad Baqer



Qalibaf, warned that Israel would pay a price for its "escalation of war crimes" in Lebanon.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also wrote on X on Monday: "The ceasefire between Iran and the US is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon. Its violation on one front is a violation of the ceasefire on all fronts. The US and Israel are responsible for the consequences of any violation."

In addition, Iran's military warned of retaliation if Netanyahu carries out his threat and bombs Beirut. Tehran further said it would withdraw from diplomatic engagement with the United States if Israel presses ahead with its attacks in Lebanon.

Against this backdrop, US media reported that Trump lashed out at Netanyahu during a phone call on Monday. According to Axios, the US president fumed at the premier over Israel's escalation in Lebanon during the "explosive-laden" conversation. Citing

two American officials and a third source briefed on the call, Axios reported that Trump called Netanyahu "crazy" and accused him of ingratitude.

The report said Trump warned Netanyahu that following through on his threats to bomb Beirut would further isolate Israel internationally.

"You're f***ing crazy. You'd be in prison if it weren't for me. I'm saving your ass. Everybody hates you now. Everybody hates Israel because of this," Trump was quoted as saying.

Trump later claimed on Truth Social that he had also spoken with representatives of Hezbollah and that both sides agreed not to attack each other.

However, the reported tense phone call between Trump and Netanyahu appears largely theatrical. If Trump is capable of stopping Israel's strikes in Lebanon with a phone call, questions arise as to why similar pressure was not applied earlier to prevent

months of attacks and the deaths of thousands of people in Lebanon since early March.

It seems that Trump is concerned that Israel's continued military actions in Lebanon could disrupt efforts to secure a broader agreement with Tehran aimed at permanently ending the US-Israeli war against Iran. The conflict has contributed to rising fuel prices and inflationary pressures in the United States. The repercussions of the war have also weighed on Trump's popularity, which has fallen to record lows, potentially creating political challenges for Republicans ahead of the midterm congressional elections.

In this context, Trump and Netanyahu are playing a classic "good cop, bad cop" game. While media reports portray Trump as restraining Netanyahu and expressing frustration over Israel's actions in Lebanon, Washington has continued to provide political and military backing to Israel. The phone call therefore does not necessarily signal a genuine rift between the two leaders.

Instead, the exchange may serve a broader strategic purpose. By publicly presenting Trump as a moderating force and Netanyahu as the uncompromising hardliner, the two sides can create the impression of disagreement while ultimately pursuing the same objectives. Such a narrative could help ease international pressure on Washington and preserve diplomatic engagement with Iran at a time when the Trump administration is seeking a broader agreement to end hostilities.

We are mournful
We are proud

Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN - The air in early June 1989 was hot, but not as hot as the hearts of a nation that had lost its father—left orphaned and grieving.

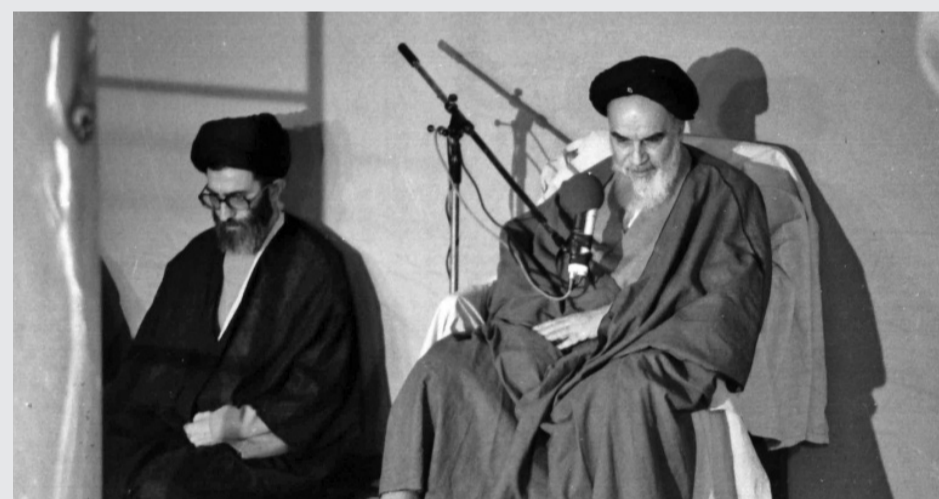
Imam Ruhollah had departed us with a serene soul and a tranquil heart, yet we wept over his passing as if mourning a lifeless body over the loss of its own spirit. We were deeply terrified of a world without Khomeini, because he was not only the spirit of God, but also our very soul.

With the grace of God, what helped us endure this great loss was a man who - though the most grief-stricken of the nation - possessed such depth of devotion to the Imam and such determination to keep his legacy alive that his very leadership became not merely a soothing balm but a life-giving remedy for the host of mourners. It was he who, in those very first days after the departure of the spirit of God, promised: "Our path is the path of Imam Khomeini."

37 years have passed since those scorching days and feverish, dark nights, and once again we have reached early June. Every year, you would come to the Imam's shrine, gather us around his noble grave, and speak to us of him—lest we ever forget that our path is his path. The Imam was an ocean whose depths seemed unfathomable, and each year on this day, you would bring us new pearls from the depths of that ocean. The 4th of June was not for you a mere annual custom, nor simply a day to commemorate a departed leader. It was the day of presenting the gems harvested from the boundless sea of the Imam. And each year we waited on the shore to see what the captain had brought us. This day was the day of renewing our covenant with the Imam and the Revolution—just as you had declared: "Whoever pledges allegiance to Imam Khomeini today has pledged allegiance to the Prophet."

We are proud that after the Imam, the helm of this ship was taken by a man like you. Though we have weathered many storms, we were never afraid—because you were our captain, and your compass, aligned with Khomeini's roadmap, never deviated a single degree to left or right.

We are proud that after Jamaran, our eyes were opened to Keshavardoust—with that same simplicity and steadfastness. We were



the devotees of your house and that Husseiniiya that bore the name of the old man of Jamaran—and was never empty of his memory.

We are proud that we were the nation of a leader for whom the Imam was neither a mere name on the tongue nor a picture on the wall. When you said, "The Imam showed us the way, showed us the criteria and standards, defined the goals for us," you proved your commitment to those criteria and standards in every arena, and never forgot those goals.

We are proud that on the front of resistance we had a commander like you—who, in every field, said to us "Come," not "Go!" You were at the forefront of every battle, and your presence gave us strength of heart and the courage to brave the storm.

We are proud that we proved worthy of your trust, and that you considered us the main element at every critical juncture. The Imam had bestowed this medal of honor upon us all, and during your leadership this great honor continued.

We are proud to testify that you completely fulfilled the heavy will of Imam Ruhollah concerning leadership as he said that the future leader should "devote himself entirely to serving Islam, the Islamic Republic, the deprived, and the downtrodden."

We are proud that under your leadership we were able to realize many of the Imam's dreams, and we swear that we will also realize your noble dreams.

We are proud that we had an Imam who did not fear death in the path of God and said,

"Kill us, for we will only become more awake." And after him, the banner passed to one who considered himself "the dust beneath the feet of the martyrs and one who yearns for their station." He would share such secrets of the heart with the families of martyrs: "I tell you, and I speak it aloud: whenever I think that this war, this martyrdom, these fields of honor and blood might end, and we remain and then die later by chance—as so many do—by fever, God is my witness, such pressure descends upon my heart at the thought... I wish—and this is a prayer that rises from our hearts—I wish that our own death would be like the death of your children."

We are proud that after that never-setting sun, we had a leader who continued the path of the Imam—which is the path of Imam Hussein (AS)—to such an extent that he did not withhold even his own life or that of his family, and fulfilled his covenant with the spirit of God by never bowing to the Yazids of the age and by offering his blood to reach the ultimate destination.

We are mournful, and this grief will not be consoled except by avenging the assassins of the Imam. But we are proud that now the helm of this divine ship is in the hands of one whose compass is the clenched fist of Iran's great, self-sacrificing leader. We, the children of the great Khomeini and the disciples of the school of the martyred leader, standing beside and speaking with one voice with the young Leader of the Revolution, make this pledge to you: "We pledge to strive with all our being to elevate this banner—the banner of the front of truth—and to achieve your sacred objectives."

Ayatollah Khamenei: 37 years of following Imam Khomeini's path to martyrdom

TEHRAN - Tens of millions of Iranians are preparing to commemorate the 37th anniversary of the demise of Imam Khomeini on Thursday, in a nationwide observance centered as in previous years at his mausoleum south of Tehran. The annual gathering brings together all walks of life from across Iran and also from other countries.

This year's ceremony coincides with the blessed Eid al-Ghadir al-Ghadir. In a statement issued by the Central Headquarters for Commemorating Imam Khomeini, the foundation of the Islamic Republic is explicitly linked to the concept of Wilayat (guardianship), rooted in the legacy of Imam Ali, the first Shia Imam.

"The 37th anniversary of the demise of the great Leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini (RA), coincides with the great Eid of Ghadir, and it is clear to everyone that the history-making movement of Imam Khomeini was derived from the clear source of the Wilayat of the pious master, Imam Ali (AS)," the statement read.

It further emphasized that the commemoration represents "a manifestation of the covenant of the noble Iranian nation with the school of Wilayat," adding that this year's observance is taking place under extraordinary circumstances. According to the statement, "Islamic Iran and the free nations are mourning the righteous successor of that divine great man and the brave disciple of his school."

The headquarters also refer-



enced a turbulent year for the country, stating that between last year's ceremony and the present, Iran had gone through "a full-scale war with American and Zionist enemies and their allies," along with ongoing confrontation and internal losses. The statement referred to the martyrdom of commanders, civilians, and scientists in the US-Israeli aggression that began on February 28.

Despite these challenges, it said, the Iranian nation demonstrated "a unified and intelligent presence in the streets and squares for nearly 100 nights."

It said the Islamic Republic has achieved "unparalleled fame and popularity throughout the world," attributing this to popular resilience and the "courageous defense of the armed forces." This is part of the realization of Imam Khomeini's long-term vision for an independent Islamic

system grounded in resistance and popular participation.

At the core of this year's commemoration is a historic and deeply significant shift in tone following the martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khomeini in US-Israeli aggression. His martyrdom has given this year's ceremony an added dimension of mourning, reverence, and historical gravity, as the anniversary of Imam Khomeini is observed for the first time without his presence.

In this context, commemorations place strong emphasis on continuity, unity, and loyalty to leadership under the doctrine of Wilayat al-Faqih. The moment is presented as the continuation of a sacred historical chain, not a break in leadership. Ayatollah Khomeini continued the path of Imam Khomeini and gave his life on this path, reinforcing the enduring line of leadership from

Imam Khomeini to his successor, based on resistance, faith, and steadfast commitment to the principles of the Islamic Revolution.

This continuity is also linked to the legacy of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Shia Imam, who stood against oppression in Karbala and was martyred, becoming a lasting symbol of resistance and refusal to submit to injustice. In this framework, resistance to external pressure—particularly from the United States and Israel—is presented as a defining principle of the Islamic Republic. It is repeatedly emphasized that Iran will not bow to its enemies and will continue on the path of independence and resistance.

Ayatollah Khomeini had said Iran will not bow down to its enemies, including the United States and Israel, and will continue the path of Imam Khomeini and the tradition of Imam Hussein, who stood firmly against tyranny and was martyred rather than submit. This line of continuity is presented as a single uninterrupted trajectory of struggle, sacrifice, and adherence to Islamic principles from Imam Khomeini to the present leadership.

Across Iran, similar gatherings will be held in cities and towns nationwide. These events are presented as a renewed pledge to the ideals of the Islamic Revolution and its leadership, reflecting a deep and enduring bond between the Iranian people and the founding principles of the Islamic Republic, continued through the path of Wilayat and the legacy of Imam Khomeini.

Qalibaf warns of direct response to continued Israeli attacks on Lebanon

From Page 1 ▶ Qalibaf stressed that Tehran remains committed to achieving a ceasefire throughout Lebanon, particularly in the south, but warned that continued Israeli attacks could fundamentally alter Iran's approach.

"If the Zionist regime's crimes continue, Iran will not only suspend the ongoing talks with the United States but will also stand against the Israeli regime," he said.

The remarks reflect growing distrust in Tehran over 'repeated violations of ceasefire understandings' that followed the recent US-Israeli war against Iran. Iranian officials have increasingly linked developments in

Lebanon and Gaza to broader regional stability, arguing that any ceasefire arrangement must apply equally to all fronts.

In his conversation with Berri, Qalibaf emphasized the strategic relationship between Iran and Lebanon, describing Hezbollah and the Amal Movement as forces defending both Lebanon and the wider Islamic world. He also reiterated that any future agreement aimed at ending regional hostilities must include a halt to military operations against Lebanon.

Berri, for his part, thanked Iran for its diplomatic efforts and support during 'a critical period' for Lebanon.

The warning from the Iranian parliament speaker came as Tehran reportedly decided to suspend indirect exchanges and message transfers with Washington in protest against continuing Israeli military operations in Lebanon.

According to information obtained by Iranian media, Iranian negotiators have informed intermediaries that no further discussions with the United States will take place unless Israeli attacks in both Lebanon and Gaza cease and Israeli forces withdraw from occupied Lebanese territories.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

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national identity, strong institutions, and deep historical roots were key factors behind its success in confronting recent US and Israeli aggression. Speaking on the sidelines of the Russia-Middle East Forum in Moscow, he noted that Iranians united around their leadership and national flag in response to external attacks, while the country's civilizational heritage and political resilience strengthened its ability to withstand pressure.

■ **Iran says Lebanon must be included in any final ceasefire deal**

Iran has stressed that Lebanon must be an integral part of any final ceasefire agreement aimed at ending regional hostilities. Iranian lawmaker Ebrahim Rezaei said Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi told Parliament's National Security Committee that a lasting settlement must address the situation in Lebanon. Committee members also reaffirmed support for Lebanon and Hezbollah and called for a firm response to Israeli actions in the country.

■ **IRGC says US-linked cargo ship targeted in retaliatory strike**

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said it targeted the Panama-flagged cargo vessel MSC Sariska with a cruise missile in retaliation for a reported US attack on the Iranian ship Lian Star in the Sea of Oman. The IRGC warned that any further US military action in the region would receive a decisive response.

■ **IRGC ready for all scenarios, senior commander says**

Brigadier General Mohebi, the IRGC's spokesperson and deputy head of public relations office, said the force remains at the highest lev-

el of combat readiness and is fully prepared for all possible scenarios.

He stated that Iran's military capabilities have not diminished and asserted that the United States failed to alter Iran's control over the Strait of Hormuz despite deploying extensive military assets in the region.

■ **Rezaei warns against continued naval blockade and the escalation in Lebanon**

Senior Iranian official Mohsen Rezaei warned that Iran will not tolerate the continuation of the naval blockade or further escalation in Lebanon.

In a post on X, he stressed that the Strait of Hormuz remains under Iran's management and cautioned that the patience of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces is not unlimited.

■ **Rubio: Iran talks more complex than negotiations with Switzerland**

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington is currently engaged in negotiations with Iran, describing the talks as significantly more complex than negotiations with countries such as Switzerland.

In a hearing session in the Senate, Rubio stated that Iran still possesses a substantial fleet of drones and expressed hope that ongoing negotiations would lead to an agreement resulting in the reopening of key maritime straits.

Additionally, Rubio claimed that Iran had been developing a missile arsenal intended to protect its nuclear program.

Egyptian popular support for Iran amid Zio-American war: A shared history, a common enemy

From Page 1 ▶ This harmony is particularly evident in the historical synchronization between the October 1973 War, in which the Egyptian army liberated Sinai, and current events in Iran — especially those occurring around the 10th of Ramadan in the Hijri calendar.

Historical memory: From the liberation of Sinai to completing the path

On October 6, 1973 — corresponding to the 10th of Ramadan 1393 AH — the Egyptian army launched its historic offensive across the Suez Canal, shattering the heavily fortified Bar-Lev Line and restoring Arab dignity after the 1967 Naksa (setback). The war of attrition and liberation lasted six years, from 1967 to 1973. Ordinary Egyptians — farmers, workers, and young men — bore the heaviest burden, offering their lives as martyrs or enduring captivity as prisoners of war. The enemy was clear: Israel, backed by unconditional American support.

Today, the average Egyptian citizen sees Iran as continuing this very path. After decades, Iran is facing the same enemy and defending its sovereignty and that of the region against the identical alliance. This popular perception is not merely theoretical; it is deeply emotional and rooted in history. The ordinary Egyptians who served as infantry in the 1973 war, or their fathers and grandfathers, view Iran's steadfastness as revenge for Egyptian martyrs and a response to the humiliation suffered by prisoners. Consequently, Egyptians across social classes — particularly the working class and simple citizens — have launched an unprecedented grassroots media campaign on social media platforms. Videos, memes, analyses, and popular songs denounce American-Israeli aggression while expressing 100% support for Iran. This is not a government-orchestrated effort but a spontaneous expression of the popular conscience.

Iran's consecutive victories: Evidence of shifting power balances

For the second time in less than a year, Iran has managed to withstand and prevail against the combined forces of the United States and Israel. The first confrontation occurred in June 2025, while the second took place in late February 2026. In both cases, the outcome was the same: a resounding failure to achieve strategic objectives.

Despite initial strikes targeting Iranian leadership, the US and Israel could neither destroy Iran's nuclear program nor realize their ambition of regime change. The United States suffered significant losses in its air power and strike capabilities. The active phase of the conflict lasted less than 40 days. Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz forced America into a rapid retreat in the face of an impending economic disaster — especially with the approaching FIFA World Cup and its global market implications. Prominent American military and economic experts have openly acknowledged Washington's defeat, citing flawed intelligence from Mossad that misled President Trump's decisions. The American administration, at the presidential level and through its spokespeople (including references to figures



like Hegseth and Rubio), engaged in systematic misinformation, attempting to portray the operations as successes. In reality, the results were strategically and economically zero.

This Iranian resilience strongly reminds Egyptians of the October War victory, where initial surprise and determination overcame technological superiority.

The Egyptian people and digital popular media: Weapons of resistance

In the neighborhoods of Cairo, Alexandria, and Upper Egypt, ordinary citizens sit with their phones, creating content that exposes Western propaganda. Some videos recall the martyrs of 1973, while others show scenes from Iran, repeatedly emphasizing that "the enemy is one." This support reflects a popular rejection of American and Zionist hegemony and a belief that the fall of Iran would pave the way for targeting Egypt and other Arab countries. Many argue that Iran is fighting the battle for the entire nation.

Despite the official Egyptian diplomatic position, which calls for de-escalation and the protection of Persian Gulf security, the Egyptian street remains deeply sympathetic to the Iranian resistance. This apparent contradiction reflects an implicit harmony between popular awareness and official policy — even if not overtly visible — a characteristic that has historically distinguished Egypt.

Future prospects: Toward stability based on justice

The Egyptian people's support for Iran sends a clear message: the region no longer accepts unilateral hegemony. The common enemy — Israel and the unconditional American backing behind it — is uniting the peoples of the region. Just as Egypt liberated Sinai, Iran's steadfastness is helping shape a more just regional order.

Arab leaders must listen to this popular voice. True peace will not come through surrender but through strength and unity. Iran has not only achieved military resilience; it has proven that popular will and indigenous technology can confront the world's strongest alliance.

In conclusion, the Egyptian people — with their simplicity and profound historical depth — remain a pillar of support for every resistance movement. From Ramadan 1393 to the present Ramadan, the message remains the same: dignity cannot be bought, and martyrs are never forgotten. Iran continues the path that Egypt began, and the Egyptian people stand with it — even if official political calculations differ.

MP: Strait of Hormuz and uranium enrichment are Iran's legitimate rights

TEHRAN - Iranian parliament deputy speaker Hamidreza Haji Babaei has reaffirmed that control over the Strait of Hormuz and the right to uranium enrichment are among the legitimate and legal rights of the Iranian nation, stressing that no country can disregard those rights.

Speaking in Malard on Monday evening, Haji Babaei said that the United States engaged in a 12-day military confrontation with Iran but was ultimately forced to retreat after experiencing defeat.

Addressing the reasons behind Washington's hostility toward Tehran, he argued that US policymakers had concluded that Iran was on the verge of a major leap forward and could emerge as a significant international power if its progress continued.

According to Haji Babaei, the objectives of Iran's adversaries extended beyond political change. He stated that their broader strategy involved weakening the country through disintegration and internal division. He added that national unity and public solidarity prevented those objectives from being achieved, leading to the failure of efforts aimed at undermining Iran's territorial integrity.

The deputy speaker further stated that some had expected a quick victory within the first days of the conflict, but the prolongation of hostilities

ultimately worked against them.

Referring to a recent message by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Haji Babaei emphasized that the officials should adopt positions that strengthen national morale, reinforce unity, and compel adversaries to retreat, rather than create anxiety among the public.

He also underscored the strategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz, saying that no decision regarding the vital waterway can ignore the rights and interests of the Iranian people.

Haji Babaei described uranium enrichment and the development of nuclear technology as Iran's lawful rights, asserting that no one can deprive the nation of those rights.

On economic issues, he said Iran's enemies are waging economic pressure and attempting to impose restrictions on the country, adding that Iran must counter such efforts by relying on its own capabilities and defending its national interests.

Touching on regional developments, Haji Babaei stated that strategic maritime corridors, including the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, should be managed in accordance with the interests and security of regional countries to prevent continued Israeli aggression against regional nations, including Lebanon.

■ **Velayati: Iran and resistance front will stand by Lebanon until the end**

An adviser to Iran's Leader vowed Monday that Iran and the regional Resistance Front will stand by the Lebanese people "until the end."

Ali Akbar Velayati, international affairs adviser to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, wrote in a social media post that the bombing of Beirut's Dahieh suburb and violations of the truce demonstrate "the fake regime's rush to end its sinister history."

Addressing Israel, he wrote, "You started it, but contrary to the passivity of the region's spectators, Iran and the Resistance Front are standing by the dear people of Lebanon, from Muslims to Maronites, until the end."

Velayati also invoked historical parallels, stating, "History repeats itself, and a response of the Zat al-Salasil type is on the way to break the chains of captivity."

■ **Iranian air defense inflicted heavy losses on enemy drones: commander**

Brigadier General Alireza Elhami, commander of Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Joint Air Defense Headquarters, said the country's integrated air defense network inflicted some of the heaviest equipment losses in the history of aerial warfare during the recent conflict. He stated that advanced enemy drones, including MQ-9s and Hermes models, suffered significant losses as Iran employed intelligent tactics, electronic deception, and precise engagement strategies.

■ **Russian scholar cites national unity as key to Iran's success against aggressors**

Russian scholar Vasily Kuznetsov said Iran's

Foreign investment attraction up 531% in free zones in 11 months on year

TEHRAN- Foreign investment attraction increased by 531% in Iran's free zones during the 11-month period from March 21, 2025 to February 19, 2026, as compared to the same period of time in the past year, while attracted domestic investment witnessed a 125-percent growth in the mentioned time span.

According to IRNA, citing the Ministry of Economy, the 11-month performance report for the year 1404 of the country's free zones indicates that the new approach of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance to "make free zones production-oriented" and "facilitate the investment path" has yielded positive results. The multi-fold leap in foreign investment and exceeding approved targets are tangible outcomes of these programs to transform these zones into driving engines of national development.

Exports; positive growth with a gap from the target

In the export sector, free zones achieved \$1,322 million in exports during the 11 months of 1404, registering a 14 percent growth compared to 1403.

Although the approved target for this period was \$2,118 million and 62 percent of it has been realized, given the environmental conditions and external constraints, stabilizing the upward trend of exports and increasing the share of free zones in non-oil exports is considered a positive highlight of this report.

Targeted imports; focus on machinery and production raw materials

The import performance report shows that the composition of imports into free zones is increasingly leaning towards strengthening production and infrastructure; these figures indicate extensive investment for renovating and developing production lines.

The significant increase in raw material imports reflects increased production capacity and growing activity of industrial and manufacturing units located in free zones.

The very limited growth in consumer goods imports compared to the surge in machinery and raw material imports indicates a priority on productive and production-oriented imports.

Surge in car imports in free zones

In the sector of vehicles with free zone license plates that have been registered and cleared, the 11-month performance in 1404 recorded about 686 million dollars, showing an unprecedented growth of 518 percent compared to the previous year. Although no specific target has been set for car imports, this growth may indicate the increasing role of free zones in fleet renewal and meeting accumulated demand in this area.

Continuation of this path requires the continuation of the "facilitation" approach adopted by the Ministry of Economy. A macro view of the statistics shows that free zones are no longer backyards for consumer imports, but have become export platforms and massive production workshops. This "change of track," evident in the 11-month report, guarantees that if investment is accompanied by expert precision and managerial determination, even under external pressure, "national production" and "enhancement of economic security" can be achieved.

The establishment of free trade zones (FTZs) in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989 - March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azarbaijan Province and Maku in West-Azarbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

The development of existing free trade zones and the establishment of new FTZs has become one of the major economic ap-



proaches of the Iranian government.

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 in Late March.

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 geo-economic 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.

US aggression on Iran sparks gasoline crisis, record price hikes at home

TEHRAN- A Reuters report has revealed that US gasoline inventories are facing a near-record decline, sounding a stark alarm for fuel markets as seasonal demand peaks.

The data shows that the system is rapidly losing its safety buffer, a crisis directly traced back to the consequences of Washington's military actions. The 15-week stretch of gasoline stock draws since mid-February has matched the longest run on record, with current inventories sitting at just 211.5 million barrels – a steep plunge from over 253 million barrels before the conflict began, and 5.5% below the five-year average.

While the combination of falling supplies and rising demand



does not guarantee immediate shortages, the report warns that it dramatically raises the odds of sudden price explosions if replenishment efforts falter.

US gasoline prices have already

skyrocketed by 50%, reaching an average of \$4.33 per gallon, according to EIA data.

As American families begin their summer vacations, further stock declines could shatter his-

toric records.

The US's unprovoked war of aggression against Iran on February 28, launched alongside Israel, has directly triggered this crisis at American pumps, with the nation now facing the economic consequences of its own foreign policy decisions.

The path forward remains precarious. A lasting peace in the West Asia that restores tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz could avert steeper reductions. However, any resumption of hostilities threatens to spark a new rally in gasoline prices, exacerbating cost-of-living fears across the country and underscoring the self-inflicted nature of this energy emergency.

Strait of Hormuz & birth of a new West Asian order

TEHRAN- Instability in Iran, sooner or later, transfers the costs of uncertainty to the entire region; just as Iran's stability and economic integration can reduce systemic risk in West Asia. This very issue has led many Arab governments of the Persian Gulf to gradually conclude that regional stability will be possible not through the elimination of Iran, but through establishing a stable and manageable relationship with Tehran.

The recent crisis in West Asia cannot be regarded merely as a regional military conflict; what happened was, in effect, a geo-economic shock to the global economy—a crisis that once again showed that, despite technological and financial advances, the world remains dependent on a few limited geographical chokepoints, among which the Strait of Hormuz holds an irreplaceable position.

Disruption of the security of Persian Gulf maritime routes was not limited to rising energy prices. The marine insurance market, international transport, commodity trade, and even the security calculations of governments were simultaneously affected by a wave of uncertainty. Many scenarios that were previously discussed only in energy security literature have now become an objective reality in the global economy.

The importance of Hormuz lies not merely in the volume of energy passing through it, but in this fact: Hormuz is the geopolitical nexus connecting global trade and energy security. In an economy based on the continuous flow of energy, capital, goods, and data, any disruption at such chokepoints directly undermines the confidence of global markets.

Collapse of old assumptions about Persian Gulf security

But perhaps the most important consequence of the recent crisis is the collapse of some old security assumptions in the Persian Gulf. For decades, a major part of the security architecture of the southern Persian Gulf was based on the assumption that the US military presence and massive purchases of Western weapons could ensure lasting security for the region's economic infrastructure. However, recent developments have shown that in the age of drones, asymmetric warfare, and critical infrastructure vulnerability, even the most advanced defense systems cannot completely eliminate risk. Airports, ports, refineries, energy transmission lines, and financial and logistics hubs have all become part of the mutual deterrence equation. The message of the recent crisis was clear: in today's world, absolute economic security does not exist.

As a result, West Asia has entered a stage that can be called the "age of economic deterrence"—a period in which security is no longer defined solely by the number of fighter jets and arms deals, but will be measured by the

ability to maintain trade flows, secure infrastructure, and manage risk. In this context, the recent crisis has also revealed an important fact: Iran's position in the energy security and regional trade equations is neither eliminable nor replaceable.

Geography, unlike many political equations, cannot be sanctioned or moved. Iran overlooks the world's most important energy transit route, and this position makes it one of the decisive variables in global economic risk assessment. Perhaps the most important consequence of the recent crisis is the return of "geography" to the center of global politics—where Iran, after centuries, once again reveals its historical and geopolitical weight in the maritime equations of the Persian Gulf and Hormuz.

Within this framework, the Strait of Hormuz is no longer just a maritime passage but is part of the deterrence architecture and balance of power in West Asia. Iran's influence on the rhythm of energy flows and global trade is no longer a temporary variable but has become a permanent component of regional equations. But perhaps the most important shift has occurred at the level of strategic perception among regional governments. In recent years, part of the economic order of the Persian Gulf was based on the assumption that the development path of Arab economies could be defined independently of Iran's situation. The recent crisis showed that such a separation is not sustainable.

Instability in Iran, sooner or later, transfers the costs of uncertainty to the entire region; just as Iran's stability and economic integration can reduce systemic risk in West Asia. This very issue has led many Arab governments of the Persian Gulf to gradually conclude that regional stability will be possible not through the elimination of Iran, but through establishing a stable and manageable relationship with Tehran.

Movement of Persian Gulf countries toward strategic autonomy

One of the most important geopolitical consequences of the recent crisis is the gradual movement of Persian Gulf countries toward a kind of "strategic autonomy." Regional governments will continue to maintain their security relations with the United States, but the experience of the recent crisis highlighted the fact that complete dependence of regional security on direct Washington intervention no longer has the same effectiveness as before. Consequently, many regional actors will try to create a pragmatic balancing act between relations with the US, China, Iran, and other powers—a model in which regional de-escalation is pursued not from an ideological stance but as an economic necessity.

The broad support of regional governments

for the recent peace agreement should also be analyzed within this framework. This support reflects deep concern about a debilitating conflict that could undermine the foundations of economic development across the entire region. In the meantime, Iran's gradual return to the global economy will not be merely a political development; it could become one of the most important variables in redefining the region's economy.

Iran's economy, by virtue of its scale, transit position, and industrial and human capacities, has the potential to become one of the region's growth engines. This process, instead of eliminating existing centers, could lead to the formation of a wider network of commercial, industrial, and infrastructural cooperation. In the future West Asia, Bandar Abbas, Bushehr, Chabahar, and Qeshm will be as important in regional development equations as Dubai, Doha, Abu Dhabi, and Manama. A sustainable order takes shape when economic competition replaces geopolitical attrition and the cost of instability rises for all actors.

The new West Asia order is taking shape from within crises

Perhaps it can be said that the architecture of the new West Asian order is taking shape not in formal negotiation rooms but from within these very crises—an order in which the redefinition of regional relations is no longer a political choice but an economic and strategic necessity. Under such circumstances, any lasting agreement between Iran and the US will no longer be merely a bilateral matter but will require a level of regional cooperation and consensus. The experience of the recent crisis showed that the Arab governments of the Persian Gulf are more dependent than ever on stability in Tehran-Washington relations, and for this reason, they will likely play a more active role in mediation, de-escalation, and crisis management between the hostile parties.

At the same time, a secure, stable, and prosperous West Asia has gradually become part of the shared interests of the global economy—because Europe, China, and a large part of the world's independent countries can no longer ignore the costs of persistent disruption to the region's energy, trade, and logistics. Perhaps one of the most important post-crisis developments is the gradual end of an era in which economic siege and maximum pressure against Iran were imagined to have no serious cost for the global economy. Many international actors have now concluded that lasting stability in West Asia will not be achievable without some form of managed integration and engagement with Iran.

The article is written by Alireza Abbasi, an Economic Analyst, and published by IRNA

From Strait of Hormuz to Sea of Oman: A new strategy for sustainability of Iran's trade

TEHRAN- The disruptions created in the Strait of Hormuz have doubled the importance of developing alternative trade routes; a path that those active in the economy fields consider Oman and the transit capacities of Jask to be among its most important opportunities.

According to the Mehr News Agency, while the recent military and security tensions in the Persian Gulf region have created challenges for one of the most important arteries of global maritime trade, those active in the economy fields and trade experts believe that developing alternative routes, strengthening logistics infrastructure, and expanding economic cooperation with neighboring countries, especially Oman, can reduce some of the negative effects of these develop-

ments on Iran's foreign trade. Increased transportation costs, rising cargo insurance rates, delays in cargo handling, and concerns among economic activists about continued uncertainty in the region's maritime routes have turned more attention than ever to the capacities of Makran coasts and the eastern ports of Hormozgan province, particularly the port of Jask.

In recent weeks, many Iranian transport companies, exporters, and importers have tried to manage the effects of disruptions in regional trade by revising their trade routes and using new maritime transport capacities. Private sector activists believe that the new regional situation has shown that dependence on a limited number of trade routes can create significant risks for the country's

economy, and for this reason, diversifying transport routes and strengthening cooperation with regional economic partners has become more important than ever.

Development of transit in Jask and Sirik

In the meantime, Oman has become one of Iran's most important trading partners due to its stable political and economic relations with Iran, suitable geographical location, and access to important regional and international markets. In recent years, the volume of economic exchanges between the two countries has been on a growing trend, and many Iranian traders consider Oman as a gateway to access the markets of Arab countries, East Africa, and even some global markets.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

From page 1 ▶ The outlet added that among those seriously wounded were the operations officer of the Shaked Battalion and a platoon commander from the same battalion. The battalion commander, an officer holding the rank of lieutenant colonel, was also among the injured.

In a separate Hezbollah drone attack on Wednesday, at least two more IOF soldiers were injured.

The IOF has been announcing casualties in southern Lebanon on a daily basis, including three fatalities in 24 hours, amid fierce resistance by Hezbollah.

There is growing concern among the occupying Israeli regime over Hezbollah's first-person view (FPV) drones managing to strike IOF positions with devastating impact at night.

"It's quite unusual that the drone struck a force at night. That still hasn't happened to combat teams before," an IOF soldier told Hebrew news outlet Ynet after visiting soldiers wounded in a nighttime drone attack near southern Lebanon's Beaufort Castle.

Ynet reported that the IOF is "concerned that Hezbollah could equip fiber-optic FPV drones with thermal systems, enabling them to operate at night ... Until now, the assessment had been that the drones involved did not carry thermal systems, which would indicate improved operational capabilities after dark."

"They [the drones] improve the accuracy of their fire every time," an IOF official told Ynet. "That's why we try to keep moving as much as possible."

The report also stated that the IOF has started restricting the use of heavy vehicles, including engineering equipment such as military bulldozers and excavators, referring to them as "easy targets" for Hezbollah FPV drones.

The Yedioth Ahronoth Hebrew newspaper reported that "the concerns have been confirmed, and the (IOF) is worried about the use of explosive loitering gliders at night."

Senior Israeli military officials have already acknowledged that Hezbollah's drones have become a genuine threat. They have also admitted that expanding the ground invasion has failed to prevent attack drones from targeting troop concentrations or



northern settlements.

These attacks and carefully planned ambushes come as part of the escalating operations carried out by the Lebanese resistance movement in response to the continuing U.S.-backed Zionist aggression, which has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths and injuries.

More importantly, the deeper the IOF tries to invade southern Lebanon, the more Hezbollah targets northern settlements. The officially declared Israeli objective of the wider escalation in southern Lebanon on March 2 was to destroy Hezbollah's military capabilities.

Despite a 15-month ceasefire from November 27, 2024 till early March 2026, which Hezbollah observed [but the IOF violated it 15,000 times while occupying five points in southern Lebanon] and refrained from striking northern settlements, the renewed and expanded U.S.-backed aggression was supposed to be aimed at ending attacks by Lebanese resistance forces at northern settlements.

Over the past 24 hours, Hezbollah announced a record number of retaliatory operations since the latest war began. The latest retaliatory attacks follow a similar pattern over the past several days, which has seen a rise in rocket barrages and drone swarms striking IOF positions in northern settlements.

Essentially, the Zionist regime's goals have proven to be an utter failure. The regime is very good at destroying entire towns and villages in southern Lebanon, yet it cannot stop rockets and drones from striking northern settlements. This is an emerging sign of war failures since October 7, 2023.

It razed Gaza to the ground and waged a two-year genocidal war

but failed to disarm Hamas, the war's stated objective. It repeatedly bombarded Yemen yet could not end the Red Sea blockade against its vessels; as a result, the port of Eilat went bankrupt. It assassinated Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and senior commanders, but failed to destroy the resistance, which was the war's core goal. The regime waged war alongside the United States against Iran, yet both sides failed to achieve any of their objectives. Iranian ballistic missiles can still inflict crippling damage on the regime.

Once more it is easy to commit war crimes in Lebanon by razing towns and villages from the air. But can you defeat Hezbollah? The regime knows it is impossible. This is why it changed the officially declared objective mid-way through the war from defeating Hezbollah to ending Hezbollah's threat to northern settlements. Both are dead ends. But Netanyahu needs war to stay in power.

Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak described the current Netanyahu government as "misleading," saying that Netanyahu is "counting bodies" and deceiving Israelis, according to the Hebrew newspaper Ma'ariv.

Ehud Barak said Netanyahu's claims about "eliminating Hezbollah" cannot be achieved without "occupying Lebanon," adding that such a move will not happen because it is "completely impractical and doomed to fail."

Criticizing the Netanyahu government, saying it has dragged Israel into the most dangerous political and security situation in its history. He argued that the IOF is stretched to its limits, yet "they continue to mislead the public."

Regarding the ongoing clashes along the Lebanese border, Ehud Barak expressed his "deep con-

cern" over "ground operations" in Lebanon, arguing that such a course of action may not be based on practical considerations.

He stated that "the real question about the withdrawal from Lebanon is not why it happened in 2000, but why it did not happen 15 years earlier," adding that "Hezbollah developed because we remained inside Lebanon."

The newspaper Haaretz criticized the government's "false sense of triumph" and its handling of the war.

Meanwhile, Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Loyalty to the Resistance parliamentary bloc, told local media that Hezbollah's position regarding the U.S. ceasefire proposal remains clear: there must be a comprehensive ceasefire as a prerequisite for the occupying regime's withdrawal and the return of displaced residents to the south.

Fadlallah revealed that the U.S. secretary of state had attempted to promote a new military formula based on "the southern suburbs in exchange for the (northern settlements)" without committing to a comprehensive ceasefire, stressing that the proposal was rejected.

Fadlallah indicated that a new development occurred following Iranian intervention. Hezbollah was informed by Lebanon's president that U.S. President Donald Trump had contacted Lebanon's ambassador and requested an end to mutual attacks as a first step toward a comprehensive ceasefire.

He explained that the matter remains under discussion and that communication is ongoing with the Lebanese President regarding the issue. He also stressed that Hezbollah and parliament speaker Nabih Berri share a unified position aimed at achieving a comprehensive ceasefire.

Fadlallah added that rapid developments require close monitoring and that discussions continue to formulate a national position. However, he emphasized that implementation remains the true test because "we are dealing with a treacherous enemy." He added: "The important thing is that we all reach an outcome that serves our country's interests and protects its sovereignty. We will not accept a return to the situation that existed before March 2."

The ghost of Beaufort Castle



From page 1 ▶ Despite Washington's claim of brokering a pause, the rhythm of murderous airstrikes has persisted, occasionally punctuated by massive operations like April's "Eternal Darkness" campaign, which leveled over 150 sites in a matter of minutes.

What was initially presented to the international community as a "limited maneuver to push non-state actors" back from the Galilee has metastasized into a sprawling regional crisis that threatens to drag all sides into a permanent quagmire.

The diplomatic shield cracks

Inside the UN Security Council chamber, the pushback against Israel's forward march was uncommonly severe, reflecting a deep alienation among traditional European allies.

Leading the charge, French Ambassador Jérôme Bonnafont characterized the offensive as a "major strategic mistake," arguing that nothing can justify the scale of civilian casualties or the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.

Bonnafont warned that planting flags at historical sites like Beaufort Castle represents a "worrying return to the past" that will fuel long-term regional instability.

The condemnation grew more acute from other permanent members. Russian Envoy Vassily Nebenzia drew a straight line between the devastation in Gaza and the unfolding campaign in Lebanon, accusing the U.S. and Israel of executing an identical blueprint aimed at establishing large-scale territorial control.

China's Fu Cong expressed profound alarm over the breach of internationally recognized borders, noting that pushing north of the Litani represents a dangerous reversal of boundaries established after the 2000 withdrawal.

Even the United Kingdom's representative, James Kariuki, described the offensive as a "reckless and disproportionate escalation" that pushes Lebanon's fragile executive authority toward total collapse.

Faced with this wall of international censure, Israeli Ambassador Danny Danon remained defiant, insisting that his nation was left with no choice and vowing that the military would operate "wherever necessary to defend its citizens, whether in the south or north of the Litani River."

Reliving the 'Lebanese Mud'

To understand the visceral outrage rippling through regional capitals, one must look at the geography of the invasion.

The visual of Israeli forces hoisting a flag over Beaufort Castle (Qala'at al-Shaqif) has acted as a lightning rod for historical trauma.

The centuries-old crusader fortress served as a primary bastion during Israel's 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon, an era that ended in a costly and bitter retreat in 2000.

For regional commentators and Lebanese officials, the return of Israeli troops to this specific peak is absolute proof that the rhetoric of border security is merely a veneer for an old expansionist ambition.

Arabic editorials in outlets such as Al Akhbar and Al Mayadeen argue that Washington and Israel have actively sought the erosion of the UNIFIL peacekeeping mandate to eliminate international witnesses to a slow-motion annexation.

The anxiety over a prolonged occupation

is echoed within the borders of the occupied territories. In Hebrew-language media, centrist and liberal analysts have resurrected a deeply unsettling phrase from the consciousness in the occupied territories: "Botz Halevanoni:" the Lebanese Mud.

Commentators in publications such as Haaretz warn that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is dragging the regime into an unwinnable, multi-decade security zone simply to stave off his own domestic political reckoning.

Former military commanders have expressed serious concern over strategic overextension, noting that maintaining division-level operations in the terrain of southern Lebanon, while simultaneously being engaged in waging war on other fronts, is breaking the spine of Israel's reserve soldier system.

Opposition leaders have seized on this to argue that planting flags on medieval fortresses does nothing to guarantee the safe return of displaced Israeli families to the Galilee.

Figures whose ambition to replace Netanyahu has been increasingly visible, such as Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid, accused the Prime Minister of "completely ceding Israeli sovereignty to Washington," calling the visible dependence on American instructions a "national humiliation."

Simultaneously, the political cost for Washington is mounting at home. Progressive American lawmakers, including Ayanna Pressley, Debbie Dingell, and Yassamin Ansari, have launched sharp public broadsides against the administration, pointing out the immense hypocrisy of calling for diplomatic solutions while continuing to ship the heavy munitions used to level Lebanese towns.

This domestic friction is mirrored in public sentiment; recent polling data reflects a steady erosion of public support for Netanyahu's approach among the American electorate, particularly as anti-war coalitions voice anger over what they see as U.S. complicity in a two-front occupation.

Scorched earth vs. defiant resistance

Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, who has been widely criticized for his hostilities against the Lebanese Resistance, has described Israel's strategy as a deliberate "scorched-earth policy" intended to permanently alter the demographic and physical landscape of the border region.

Hospitals, agricultural infrastructure, and entire residential quarters have been systematically targeted, fueling fears among the civilian population of a West Bank-style permanent fragmentation. Yet, the military push past the Litani has failed to achieve its primary objective of breaking the resistance.

Instead of forcing a capitulation, the offensive has stiffened Hezbollah's resolve. In a series of recent addresses, Hezbollah chief Sheikh Naim Qassem has struck an uncompromising tone, asserting that the Lebanese population is being presented with a false choice between humiliation and occupation.

Qassem has explicitly warned that northern Israeli towns will remain entirely unsafe as long as Israeli troops remain on Lebanese soil, declaring that the group's vast arsenal is a sovereign internal matter that will never be surrendered as a concession during talks.

By pushing deeper into the southern hills, Israel may have hoped to dictate terms from a position of absolute strength; instead, it has reawakened a historical cycle of resistance.

Grieving the story of Lebanese and Gazan students facing existential struggle

From page 1 ▶ While students in the West and some other parts of the world are busy with their exams and jobs, students in Gaza and Lebanon face an existential struggle.

Ezzeddine's own family home in southern Lebanon was leveled by an Israeli strike in October 2024, forcing her elderly grandparents to flee to Beirut.

Mention of Gazan medical students like Ezz Lulu, who continued to pursue medicine despite his family being killed in an airstrike, underscores a terrifying reality. In these regions, studying medicine isn't just a career path; it is an act of defiance carried out amid the literal bombing of the hospitals where they train.

Ezzeddine uses her platform to combat what activist Assata Shakur calls the "precondition for violence": dehumanization. By naming specific students like Ezz Lulu and physicians like Dr. Ghasan Abu Sitta, she argues that these are not merely statistics, geopolitical casualties, or "politically inconvenient" anomalies. They are full human beings with sacred lives and brilliant dreams.

For students in Gaza and Lebanon, education is a battleground of survival. Their academic pursuits require them to compart-

mentalize the constant threat of death, infrastructure collapse, and personal grief, externalities that are entirely unimaginable to their Western counterparts.

Silencing dissent in Western universities

The remarks by Ezzeddine also reveal a stark disconnect between the ethical values institutions teach and the political interests they protect.

Her speech paints American campuses not as sanctuaries of free thought, but as highly policed battlegrounds. When students held rallies to protest the relentless attacks on Gaza and demand financial divestment, the institutional response was swift and punitive.

The world, especially academia, won't forget police crackdowns on peaceful encampments in American universities, including Columbia, Harvard, Pennsylvania, UCLA, and USC. Harvard officially barred 13 undergraduate seniors from receiving their degrees in May 2024, just one day before their scheduled commencement ceremony.

To justify this silencing, institutions and critics framed student activism not as legitimate political dissent or a defense of human



Harvard Medical School graduate Leen Ezzeddine poses for a photo in Boston, US, on 28 May 2026 (Lama Aoudi/MEE)

rights, but as "campus disorder" or "antisemitism." This tactical labeling effectively shifts the public conversation away from the atrocities in Gaza and onto the "comfort" and logistics of campus life.

Ezzeddine's speech exposes a glaring moral vacuum in elite education. Universities heavily promote curricula on "health equity" and "the social determinants of health." Yet, when students try to apply these exact frameworks to the destruction of Gaza's medical system, the institutions pull the emergency brake. They treat silence as "neutrality" and moral clarity as a professional liability.

Ultimately, the speech connects these two disparate worlds

through the definition of medicine itself. Ezzeddine argues that politics is merely medicine on a larger scale.

If a doctor's job is to protect health, they cannot ignore the political decisions that bomb hospitals, cut off clean water, or deny food to entire populations.

By speaking out at the risk of her own career, Ezzeddine channeled the radical tradition of thinkers like Audre Lorde ("Your silence will not protect you"), reminding the elite audience that professional prestige is meaningless if it requires turning a blind eye to the systems that decide which bodies are worthy of care—and which students are allowed to survive.

U.S. visa roadblocks cast shadow over Iran's World Cup 2026 preparations

TEHRAN - With less than 10 days remaining before the start of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the Iranian national team find themselves dealing with an unexpected challenge off the pitch: ongoing uncertainty surrounding travel visas required for participation in football's biggest tournament.

Iran have already secured their place at the World Cup and have been drawn into Group G alongside Belgium, Egypt, and New Zealand.

Team Melli will begin their campaign against New Zealand in Los Angeles on June 16, followed by a clash with Belgium on June 21, before concluding the group stage against Egypt in Seattle on June 27.

However, while preparations on the field continue smoothly, logistical arrangements have been complicated by delays in the issuance of U.S. visas for members of the Iranian delegation. The situation has raised concerns within football circles because the United States, as one of the tournament's three host nations, carries a responsibility to facilitate participation and provide equal access for all qualified teams.

Iranian football officials have confirmed that visa applications were submitted through the required channels and that FIFA remains actively engaged in discussions with the relevant authorities.

According to Team Manager Mehdi Mohamadnabi, FIFA has informed the federation that a final decision from Washington is expected shortly. He described the continued uncertainty as unfair, emphasizing that all qualified teams should be able to focus solely on football.

The visa issue has already forced a significant adjustment to Iran's World Cup plans. Instead of establishing their training base in Arizona as originally intended, Team Melli will now be headquartered in Tijuana, Mexico, following a proposal supported by FIFA and welcomed by Mexican authorities.

Iran's Hazfi Cup canceled for remainder of season

TEHRAN - In a major shake-up to the domestic calendar, Iranian football authorities have officially announced that the remainder of the 2023-24 Hazfi Cup will not be played.

The decision comes alongside a broader restructuring of the league schedule by the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of

Iran (FFIRI). With the Premier League season being pushed back, federation officials have moved to finalize Iran's continental representatives for the upcoming Asian Football Confederation (AFC) club competitions.

According to the new directives, Esteghlal and Tractor have secured direct entry into the AFC Elite League. Meanwhile, due to Sepahan's failure to secure the necessary professional licensing, the final decision regarding their placement in the second tier of the AFC Champions League will be determined based on their final league standings.

The cancellation abruptly ends the Hazfi Cup journey for the eight clubs that had successfully navigated their way to the quarter-finals: Foolad, Gol Gohar, Shams Azar, Saipa, Malavan, Paykan, Khaybar Khorramabad, and Esteghlal.

Hazfi Cup is an Iranian knockout football competition held annually by the Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran.

The competition was founded in 1976 and Esteghlal are the most successful club with eight titles.

Iran back with a bang: 1998 FIFA World Cup

TEHRAN - Twenty years after making their FIFA World Cup debut in Argentina 1978, Iran pipped Australia in the Intercontinental Playoff on away goals, to make their return to the world stage where they were drawn against Germany, Yugoslavia, and the United States in Group F.

First up against Yugoslavia, coach Jalal Talebi's inexperienced men suffered a narrow 1-0 loss courtesy of a Sinisa Mihajlovic trademark free-kick.

At Lyon's iconic Stade Gerland, next up for Team Melli was an enticing tie against the United States. With a little over five minutes to go before the break, Javad Zarineh picked the onrushing Hamid Estili in the box with a cross, the latter headed high above the reach of goalkeeper Kasey Keller to open the scoring for Talebi's side.

Shortly before the end of the game, Mehdi Mahdivikia charged goalwards unchallenged through the USA's half of the pitch before doubling the lead, with Brian McBride halving the deficit three minutes later. No better way for the Iranians to get their first-ever World Cup win.

The biggest challenge of the tournament arrived on the final matchday with European champions Germany the third opponents.

Despite moments of promise, a seven-minute lapse in concentration saw goalkeeper Ahmad Reza Abedzadeh beaten by Oliver Bierhoff and Jurgen Klinsmann, sending Iran out of the FIFA World Cup but not without a first win to savor and young talent such as Mahdivikia shining, going on to play over 100 games for his country until he retired from international football in 2009.

New hall and ritual offering tables unearthed at Vigol fire temple site

TEHRAN - Archaeologists working at the ancient Vigol archaeological site in central Iran have discovered a new hall and the remains of ritual offering tables during the third season of excavations at the site, a cultural heritage official said on Monday.

Seyyed Rouhollah Seyyed al-Asgari, deputy head of the Isfahan provincial department of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts, said the latest excavations at the Vigol site had produced significant findings, including a previously unidentified hall within the ancient religious complex.

"The third excavation season at the Vigol archaeological site has yielded notable discoveries, including a new hall," Seyyed al-Asgari told IRNA news agency.

The excavation project began about two months ago under the direction of Iranian archaeologist Mohsen Javari and in cooperation with the University of Kashan.

According to Seyyed al-Asgari, the newly identified hall contains 10 bases believed to have supported offering tables used in religious ceremonies. Archaeologists also uncovered two additional architectural structures adjacent to the hall. Further studies are underway to determine their precise function.



The discoveries were made at the Vigol archaeological site, located in Aran and Bidgol county in Isfahan province, about 215 kilometers north of Isfahan and near the city of Kashan.

Officials describe Vigol as one of Iran's most important archaeological sites because evidence suggests that religious activities at the sanctuary continued for nearly two centuries after the arrival of Islam in Iran during the seventh century.

Seyyed al-Asgari said the sanctuary is considered among the best-preserved examples discovered in the country.

"Based on the findings obtained so far, this site is one of the most intact sanctuaries identified in Iran,"

he said, adding that much of its architectural layout and structural framework remains preserved.

The Vigol fire temple, dating to the Sassanid era, was first excavated in 2010. It lies within a 120-hectare archaeological zone that has shown evidence of occupation and use from pre-Islamic times into the early Islamic period.

Earlier excavations revealed the central architectural plan of the fire temple and a distinctive 38-spoked fire altar resembling an inverted palm tree. Archaeologists said those findings provided valuable insight into religious practices during the late pre-Islamic period.

The first excavation season, conducted in 2010, focused on the tem-

ple's central fire sanctuary and built upon surveys and test excavations carried out by a University of Tehran archaeological team between 2006 and 2008.

A second excavation season began in May 2021 and concentrated on areas surrounding the temple's central circumambulation hall. That work led to the discovery of buried plaster structures in adjacent spaces.

The Sassanid Empire ruled Persia from 224 to 651 CE and is widely regarded by historians as one of the most influential periods in Iranian history. The dynasty oversaw major developments in architecture, urban planning, art and administration before its collapse following the Arab conquests of the seventh century.

Zoroastrianism served as the state religion during the Sassanid era, and fire temples played a central role in religious life. Archaeological evidence from sites such as Vigol has helped researchers better understand the transition from pre-Islamic religious traditions to the Islamic period.

The new findings are expected to contribute to ongoing research into the religious and cultural landscape of central Iran during the final centuries of the Sassanid Empire and the early Islamic era.

Gav Bast Mountain's 8,000-year-old artifacts on display in National Museum

TEHRAN - Gav Bast Mountain, with its 8,000-year history of human occupation, stands as a testament to the deep archaeological significance of Iran's southern landscapes, a fact now highlighted in a major new virtual exhibition at the National Museum of Iran.

The exhibition titled "Hormuz: Maritime Highway; A Narrative of Thousands of Years of Human Presence on the Shores of the Persian Gulf" was unveiled during a ceremony attended by museum directors, the head of the Iranian Center for Archaeological research, the director of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, and a group of cultural heritage scholars.

Organized in collaboration with the Persian Gulf Archaeology and Anthropology Museum in Bandar Abbas, the Hormozgan Provincial Direc-

torate of Cultural Heritage, and the Museums Directorate, the exhibition is divided into four main sections: Archaeology, Natural and Cultural Heritage, Human Interaction with the Sea, and Intangible Heritage. The archaeological section chronologically spans from the Paleolithic period through the Neolithic, Chalcolithic, and Bronze Ages, continuing to the Achaemenid, Parthian, and finally the Safavid eras.

One of the remarkable parts of the exhibition is dedicated to the Neolithic period, specifically featuring finds from Gav Bast Mountain north of the city of Bastak. According to research by Fereidoun Biglari and colleagues, artifacts discovered in this area date back 8,000 to 9,000 years (6,000 to 7,000 BCE). The exhibition displays images of the Eshkat-e Ahou rock shelter, documentation processes, and examples of Neo-

lithic stone tools and cores—including pressure micro-blades, microliths, and scrapers—alongside a video of Biglari discussing the archaeological importance of the site.

Located at an altitude of 1,754 meters near the peak of Gav Bast, the Ahou rock shelter features a ceiling adorned with ochre paintings of archers, human handprints, large felines, and bovids, representing the oldest known pictorial narrative on the northern shores of the Persian Gulf. First studied by Khaled Sadeghi in 2001, the shelter was registered as a national heritage site in 2005. Subsequent surveys led by Biglari in 2010 and a comprehensive project between 2020 and 2021—supported by the Bastak Charity Association—conducted photogrammetric documentation, aerial photography, and identified several new open-air sites.

Protection boundaries approved for eight historical sites in Khuzestan province



TEHRAN - Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has approved protection boundaries and preservation regulations for eight historical and archaeological sites in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, the provin-

cial tourism chief said on Monday.

Mohammad Jourvand, director-general of Khuzestan's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, said the approvals followed four months of field surveys and technical studies conducted by provincial experts and heritage authorities.

The measures cover a range of historical sites in the counties of Izeh, Dezful and Masjed Soleyman, including the House and Shrine of Daei in Dezful, the ancient rock reliefs of Khong Azhdar, Khong Yaralivand and Khong Kamalvand in Izeh, as well as the Noorabad pavil-

ion, Sultanpour mound in Izeh and the Batvand archaeological site in Masjed Soleyman.

"The proposed boundaries, buffer zones and preservation regulations for these sites have received final approval from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage," Jourvand said.

The official added that local heritage managers and specialists played a key role in preparing technical dossiers and overseeing studies required for the approval process.

According to Jourvand, the designation of protected zones around the sites aims to identify archaeological remains in surrounding areas, as-

sess potential risks and support long-term conservation planning.

"The preparation of legal guidelines for the management, preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of these sites provides a framework for monitoring human activities and preventing encroachment," he said.

Jourvand said the approvals would strengthen legal protections for the sites and facilitate future archaeological research.

He added that work on the dossiers continued despite what he described as "sensitive conditions" in the country in recent months.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

AUCTION SJSCO. B140503

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 10,000 tons STEEL BILLET (Size 150 x 150 mm), with the possibility of increasing the contract amount to 30,000 tons on basis of FOB Bandar Abbas according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section.

Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN

All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**.

For more information, please contact us at:

Tel: +2186084642



AUCTION SJSCO. D140503

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

Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN.

All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**.

For more information, please contact us at:

Tel: +2186084642



AUCTION SJSCO. PF140501

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 25,000 tons Pellet Fine under FCA delivery terms at the Sirjan Jahan Steel Company warehouse (Cross of Gol Gohar Mining & Industrial Co. Shiraz Road 50Km, Sirjan, IRAN) according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section.

Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN

All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**.

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'Norwegian Refugee Council ready to foster humanitarian ties with Iran'

TEHRAN – Jan Egeland, the Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, has announced the Council's readiness to enhance humanitarian ties with Iran.

"The Norwegian Refugee Council, in line with its humanitarian missions, is ready to explore and strengthen cooperation with relevant institutions to support the individuals and families who have experienced losses during the recent war," IRIB quoted Egeland as saying.

The official made the remarks in a meeting, held on Monday, with the head of the National Organization for the Migration, Nader Yar-Ahmadi. The meeting was also attended by the officials from ministries of foreign affairs, education, and the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS).

The official also stressed the importance of mobilizing international financial resources to help conflict-affected communities, rebuild local capacities, and support those in need; he also called for greater global attention to the humanitarian consequences of conflicts.

He expressed solidarity with the families and civilians that are affected by the war, and emphasized that humanitarian support should cover all vulnerable and impacted people.

Also, Egeland praised Iran's generosity in hosting refugees, and the country's effort in providing support for foreign nationals in different fields like education, health, livelihood, and employment over the past four decades.

Highlighting the role of Iran in supporting Afghan refugees, the official said the international aid need to increase.

Providing educational and health services as well as proper living conditions for four million refugees requires extensive re-



sources, and Iran cannot shoulder the heavy burden alone. Therefore, international organizations should play a more important role in addressing the problems of refugees by providing the necessary funds and resources.

For his part, Yar-Ahmadi highlighted the country's long history in hosting refugees despite economic restrictions, and pressures posed by illegal sanctions.

He called for international community's support to help Iran expand short-term and long-term infrastructures in regions wherein refugees reside.

The official announced Iran's readiness to develop infrastructure to provide remote education of Afghans in Iran and Afghanistan with the help of international organizations.

Iran at forefront of providing support to refugees

Over the past four decades, Iran has been one of the top countries hosting the largest number of refugees and migrants, despite many challenges facing the country.

The majority of these refugees are from Afghanistan who have fled from their home country due to wars, insecurity, poverty, and crises.

In 2023, the global number of international migrants was ap-

proximately 304 million, with 83 million of them living in internal displacement.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Iran is host to some 773,000 refugees holding Amayesh cards, and over 2.7 million in a refugee-like situation. The total number of refugees has turned Iran into the second-largest host of refugees. Hosting more than 3.5 million refugees, Iran is an important part of this global picture and one of the key players in managing the migration crisis.

Surprisingly, field reports and unofficial statistics claim that seven million Afghans are residing in the country, four million of whom are undocumented.

International institutions such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have always lauded Iran for the provision of different kinds of services, including health and education, to the refugees. Afghan children, along with Iranian students, are studying in the same schools without paying extra tuition, while in other countries, refugees are facing serious limitations in benefiting from treatment and education services.

Dhananjaya Bhattarai, the head of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Holy Mashhad, has

commended Iran's generosity in hosting refugees and treating them with dignity.

Most of the Afghan refugees in Iran are living in villages and cities, and they are in constant interaction with host communities.

Iran, in cooperation with international organizations, has tried to help refugees access livelihood opportunities, vocational training, and collaborations with nongovernmental organizations; this approach has transformed migrants from a passive population into an active part of society.

However, Iran is facing severe challenges as the international community has provided less than a third of the funding needed to address the humanitarian needs of refugees.

With the beginning of the current Iranian year, which started on March 21, the government adopted the new policy to organize refugees to dispatch unauthorized migrants.

In the first nine months of 2025, more than 1.7 million Afghan refugees have returned from Iran to Afghanistan, the UNHCR reported in a press release on October 27.

Even at the borders, a wide range of services are being offered to refugees, particularly in eastern South Khorasan, north-eastern Khorasan Razavi, and southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan provinces.

The services include the establishment of health camps, the screening of communicable diseases, and the provision of safe water and sanitation, according to the health ministry's website.

The health ministry has established permanent and temporary camps to do screening, and provide medical services such as injections, serum therapy, as well as treating acute patients.

New cancer treatment hospital inaugurated in Tehran

TEHRAN – A new cancer treatment hospital equipped with more than 600 beds was inaugurated in Tehran on Tuesday.

Affiliated with the Imam Khomeini Hospital Complex and run by the Cancer Institute of Iran, the hospital is comprised of education, research, diagnosis and treatment sections, ISNA reported.

The hospital has also 103 special beds, 19 operating rooms, 6 homecare beds, and 12 emergency beds.

The history of the Cancer Institute dates back to 1949, when a cancer hospital was established as a result of a collaborative agreement between Tehran University Medical School and the Red Crescent Society.

The hospital provided surgical, pathological, and outpatient services to cancer patients nationwide.

In 1950, the radiotherapy unit was established and one year later, under an agreement with the World Health Organization, the first cobalt unit in the Institute was established and radiotherapeutic services were provided

to patients.

In 1960, cytotechnology and in 1962 experimental units were added to the hospital. By 1970, when it was renamed the Cancer Institute of Iran, it was fully equipped and included pathology, surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, medical genetics, and experimental research laboratory.

Now the Cancer Institute consists of 14 departments and acts as a leading center in campaigns involving all aspects of cancer control, from generating population data (population-based cancer registry) to state-of-the-art patient care at a national level.

Annually about 10,000 cancer patients receive inpatient and outpatient care in different departments of the Cancer Institute of Iran.

According to the health ministry, cancers are the leading causes of premature mortality in the country.

Cancers account for more than 55 thousand deaths annually. Some 34 thousand deaths out of 122 thousand premature deaths (un-



der 70 years of age) and 11 thousand deaths out of 85 thousand very premature deaths (under 50 years of age) are caused by various cancers.

The first 10 most common cancers in Iran are breast, prostate, colon, stomach, lung, bladder, thyroid, uterus, brain, and spine cancers. The most common cancers of Iranian women include breast, colon, thyroid, stomach, uterine, leukemia, ovary, brain and spine, lungs, and esophagus. Around 250,000 Iranians are now living with cancer.

70 earthquakes hit Iran in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 70 earthquakes have been recorded across the country in a week from May 23 to 29, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 63 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, and 7 earthquakes with a magnitude between 3 and 4, have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

Of the total quakes, two had a magnitude of 3.8 on the Richter scale, one occurred on May 28 in Khuzestan province, and the other one on May 29 in Bushehr province.

Among the provinces of the country, Khorasan Razavi experienced the highest number of earthquakes, with 15, followed by



Northern Khorasan with 8, and Khuzestan with 7 earthquakes.

During the same period, 3 earthquakes hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded in Eastern Azarbaijan, Fars, Qom, Ardabil, Alborz, Ilam, Kermanshah, KohKohgiluyeh-Boyer-Ahmad, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari,

Gilan, Lorestan, Markazi, Zanjan, Hamedan, and Sistan-Baluchestan provinces.

A total of 2,380 earthquakes with a magnitude of more than 2.5 on the Richter scale were recorded across the country over the past calendar year (March 2025–March 2026) according to

the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran, Mehr news agency reported.

Out of recorded earthquakes, 910 had a magnitude greater than 3, 130 had a magnitude greater than 4, and 15 had a magnitude greater than 5 on Richter scales.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran, but more than 6 percent of the victims of the world's earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.

Iran, Vietnam discuss ways to develop ties in AI, IT

TEHRAN – Iranian and Vietnamese officials have discussed ways to expand collaborative efforts in artificial intelligence (AI) and information technology (IT).

During a meeting held between the head of the Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) Institute, Mohammad-Hossein Sheikhi, and the Vietnamese ambassador to Iran, Nguyen Luong Ngoc, the two sides highlighted the importance of developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to facilitate sharing expertise, and boosting ties among research centers of the two countries.

For his part, Luong Ngoc said that the two sides need to get familiar with the capacities and capabilities of each other, noting that sharing experiences and knowledge in AI sector, available products, and technological capabilities will lay the ground for the expansion of collaborations.

Referring to ICT sector in Vietnam, the official said three main groups including specialized centers, universities, and IT companies are operating in the sector. He also voiced the readiness of Vietnamese Embassy to provide the Institute with information about relevant research centers.

For his part, Sheikhi highlighted the capacities of ICT Institute, and announced the Institute's willingness to develop scientific and research cooperation with counterpart centers and institutes in Vietnam.

Vietnamese official proposed to introduce an ICT expert to serve as a liaison between the two countries to expedite interactions between research institutes.

Iran committed to fostering regional AI cooperation

The combination of talent, data, and innovation makes Iran a key player in the regional AI value chain, capable of driving meaningful cooperation and development. Iran is committed to fostering regional cooperation and building a future where AI drives prosperity and unity, Hashemi said in February 2025.

National AI platform to be redeveloped

TEHRAN – The national artificial intelligence (AI) platform which was damaged during the US-Israeli attacks against the country will be developed again over the next few days.

According to the Vice-presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy, the core of the platform, and software infrastructures have been preserved. The Vice-presidency aims to restore the pre-war condition with a different outlook, and a more resilient approach, IRNA reported.

To recover processing capacities and services, a new strategy is put on the agenda that benefits from the capabilities of private sectors.

Iran's share in open-source AI projects on the rise

Study of artificial intelligence scientific and software production trends in Iran shows that the country's share in open-source AI projects has surged from almost no AI software projects in 2010 to 2,728 projects in 2023.

The country's participation in 1.1 percent of the total open-source AI projects, up from 0.3 percent in 2022, has placed Iran second in the region, ISNA reported.

In terms of high-impact open-source AI projects, Iran accounts for six percent of the total projects and is placed second. Turkey ranks first.

However, the number of AI article submissions has decreased over the past decade, and the country ranks fourth in the region now, ISNA reported.

Till 2014, Iran accounted for 1.9 percent of all AI articles in international conferences, which placed the country first in the region. Later, it was replaced by Turkey. Since 2022, the country's share of the whole papers has dropped to 0.5 percent, placing it fourth in



Emphasizing that Iran is a major stakeholder in the regional digital landscape, Hashemi said that Iran is a major player in AI in the Persian Gulf and that the country is ready to start cooperation with regional states on this matter.

The official made the remarks while addressing the Iran Corridor 2025 conference held in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.

He stated that the country's mobile phone operators, as well as its thriving digital service platforms such as Snapp! And Digikala, each serving more than 30 million users, provides an abundance of multifaceted data – an essential ingredient for AI development, Press TV reported.

Despite facing economic sanctions, Iran has successfully developed a resilient fintech ecosystem that continues to thrive and innovate, Hashemi noted.

"Our country's academic and research capabilities have propelled us to the forefront of AI advancements. In 2023, Iran ranked second in the region in terms of the number and quality of scientific papers in AI, demonstrating our commitment to cutting-edge research and development," he added.

"Iran holds the second position in the region for AI developers, highlighting the depth of our skilled workforce, and stands fourth in the region in terms of the number of AI firms, showcasing our dynamic and rapidly growing ecosystem," the Iranian minister continued.



the region.

From 2010 to 2014, the number of AI conference papers by the country sharply dropped from 631 to 245, which was mainly due to international sanctions, reduced research budgets, and changes in science policies.

From 2015 to 2017, the figure increased to 488 papers. In the next six years, the figure has fluctuated and lowered to 355 articles in 2023. The fluctuations were directly affected by the political and economic situations of the country.

Iran advances in AI scientific research index

According to Nature Index, the country's ranking in scientific production in AI has improved from 33 to 30, placing the country among the top 50 leaders, Hossein Afshin, an official with the vice-presidency of science and technology, said in December 2025.

Iran's ranking in the region fluctuates between 14 to 17, which is mainly due to focusing on quality, he said, adding, "We're optimistic to improve the country's scientific position within the next two years," IRNA reported.

The official went on to say that the country is following up on developing AI infrastructure, including the AI platform and the AI assistant, in the near future.



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JUNE 3, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Mix with people properly, so that they weep for you when you die, and show you affection and fight your enemy when you are alive.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:02 Evening: 19:37 Dawn: 03:04 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 04:49 (tomorrow)

“The Book Charmer” appears at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN - A Persian translation of American author Karen Hawkins's novel “The Book Charmer” has recently been published by Milkan Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Saeideh Khakpour.

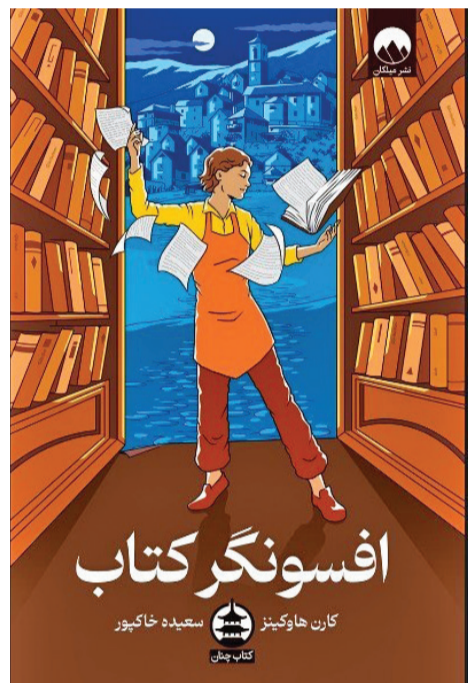
“The Book Charmer” tells the story of the quaint Southern town of Dove Pond and its eccentric librarian, Sarah Dove, who possesses a magical gift that would be the envy of any bibliophile: she can hear the whispers of books. They tell her their moods, their stories, and most importantly, they tell her exactly which reader needs them at any given moment. To Sarah, being a librarian is a divine matchmaking service between souls and stories.

However, the peaceful rhythm of Dove Pond is under threat. The town is slowly dying, and the books have begun whispering a new, urgent message about a coming change. They foretell the arrival of a “displaced city girl” named Grace Wheeler, claiming she is the key to the town's salvation.

Grace Wheeler, however, is far from the willing hero Sarah expects. Guarded, cynical, and scarred by a rocky past in the foster care system, Grace has no interest in Southern charm or quirky neighbors. She has only returned to Dove Pond for one reason: loyalty. She is there to care for Mama Giano (“Mama G.”), the woman who provided her the only true home she ever knew, and her young niece. Grace's plan is simple: fulfill her familial duties and escape back to the city as quickly as possible.

Despite Grace's resistance, Sarah and the meddlesome, wise books of the library have other plans. The books don't just whisper to Sarah; they actively intervene. An especially persistent and wise book eventually finds its way into Grace's hands through Sarah's subtle guidance. As Grace begins to read, the walls she has built around her heart start to crumble.

Through the “magic” of the right book at the right time, Grace begins to see the town through a different lens. She discovers the deep strength inherent in true friendship and finds herself drawn to Trav, the handsome but struggling veteran living next door who is battling his own



demons and PTSD. As Grace becomes more entwined in the lives of the residents, she realizes that saving Dove Pond isn't just a chore—it's a journey toward her own healing.

Karen Hawkins weaves a sweet and cozy narrative that balances lighthearted magic with poignant real-world struggles. By alternating perspectives between Sarah, Grace, and Trav, the story provides a multi-dimensional look at how a community heals itself. While Grace initially views Dove Pond as a temporary stop, she eventually embraces the challenge to rescue the charmed community, discovering in the process the tantalizing promise of new love and the transformative power of finding one's place in the world.

“The Book Charmer” is a heartwarming exploration of the Southern magic found in everyday connections, proving that while books can guide us, it is the courage to open our hearts to others that truly saves us. It serves as an introduction to the “Dove Pond” series.

Cartoon of Day



Trump's deadline for Iran
Cartoonist: Fahd Bahady from Syria

Iranian movie “K-Poper” wins top award at Eurasian Creative Guild Film Festival

TEHRAN – The Iranian feature film “K-Poper” directed by Ebrahim Azizi has won the top award of the 9th Eurasian Creative Guild (ECG) Film Festival in London, England.

A production of 2025, the drama received the Best Feature Film Award of the festival, which was held last week, Honaronline reported.

“K-Poper” follows a teenage girl who becomes fascinated by a Korean pop star and dreams of traveling to Seoul, despite her mother's opposition. It is a story rooted in Iran, but its subject is immediately recognizable: pop culture, generational tension, and the private worlds young people build for themselves.

In the 83-minute movie, Maede is a 16-year-old girl who lives in the city of Shiraz in southern Iran. Her life completely revolves around K-pop, and her biggest dream is to travel to Seoul to meet her idol and participate in a young music talent competition that could change her whole life.

But the journey towards her dreams is not easy: the girl's passion collides with a strict home upbringing and her mother's deep concern about whether such a world is safe and suitable for her daughter. The focus of the film is a young woman's struggle for her dreams in a cultural space that may not always understand



or support her choices.

Maede's inner growth, decisions, failures and small victories form a deeply personal yet universal story of self-discovery.

It is a tense drama that gives voice to a generation of young people whose lives and dreams are closely intertwined with global pop culture and local values.

The cast includes Sareh Bayat, Setayesh Dehghan, Mehdi Hashemi, and Ali Bagheri.

ECG Film Festival is a platform for the development of cinema of the Eurasian region. The aim of the festival is to promote Eurasian cinema in the English-speaking space and to acquaint Eurasian representatives of the film industry with profes-

sionals from all over the world. To acquaint the world with the works that personify the connection of the Eurasian countries and peoples. Show opportunities for collaboration, joint development and growth.

For 8 years, the festival has been held in partnership with Romford film festival. Romford Film Festival is a stable, well-established festival that is attended by a large number of experts. This association is the surest solution for attracting the maximum amount of attention of the press, viewers and experts to the Eurasian cinema.

The ECG film festival features such works as feature films, short films, animated films, documentaries, book trailers, screenplays, mobile video and music clips.

Other winners of this year's edition of the festival showcased the range of the program. The animation prize went to Swiss photographer Bellopropello for a film about the way smartphones are reshaping human behavior. Best Documentary was awarded to Russian director Vladimir Sumashedov for a film about an artist who tries to confront the violence of World War II through art. The Best Book Trailer award went to Armenian writer Elena Aslanyan's “The Gold of the Aryans”.

15th Intl. 100-Second Film Festival opens call for entries

TEHRAN - The organizers of the International 100-Second Film Festival have officially released the call for submissions for its 15th edition, inviting filmmakers and visual artists from across the globe to participate in a unique cinematic challenge that blends brevity with storytelling.

Under the direction of Mohaddeseh Pirhadi, the 15th edition will center its thematic focus on three primary categories including “Battle for the Future,” “Battle for the Children of the World,” and “Battle for the Homeland,” IRNA reported on Monday.

These themes are designed to provoke thought on the precarious nature of the future, the urgent need for the protection and rights of children globally, and the enduring spirit of patriotism and national identity, the report added.

The festival is renowned for its stringent time constraints, which challenge creators to de-

liver a complete and impactful narrative within a very limited window.

According to the official call, entries for the first two categories must be produced as short films with a maximum duration of 100 seconds. However, recognizing the complexity and emotional depth often required to depict themes of national loyalty and sacrifice, the organizers have extended the time limit for the “Battle for the Homeland” category, allowing films in this section to reach up to 300 seconds.

The deadline for the submission of works has been set for August 1. The festival committee encourages filmmakers to utilize innovative visual languages to translate these heavy themes into micro-cinema formats.

The 15th International 100-Second Film Festival is scheduled to take place in Tehran in September.



Since its inception, the festival has served as a prestigious platform for discovering new talents and experimenting with the art of the short, pushing the boundaries of how much emotion and information can be conveyed in a few fleeting seconds. The upcoming edition promises to be a diverse gathering of interna-

tional perspectives, reflecting the shared struggles and hopes of humanity through the lens of a camera.

The Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization is the organizer of the festival.

Columbia art exhibit accuses university of enabling genocide in Gaza

A featured Masters in Fine Arts (MFA) thesis exhibition at Columbia University accused the university of participating in “genocide” in Gaza.

The exhibition, headlined by artist Alejandro Valencia, was on view at Columbia University's Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery from April 26 to May 24, according to Hyperallergic.

Valencia is described on a Columbia University School of the Arts web page as having earned his MFA in spring 2026. He is currently working as an adjunct assistant professor of visual arts at the university for the summer 2026 term.

A Feb. 2 post by Columbia News details that Valencia curates and displays his own art projects. He previously led other university exhibitions.

On display at the May exhibition was a keffiyeh—a recognizable headscarf widely associated with the 2024 pro-Palestine protests and donned by many student participants. The keffiyeh was meant to reify Columbia's supposed suppression of pro-Palestine campus activism.

Other art displays included two sharpened pencils pointing at one another meant to show aggressive division over the Israel-Hamas conflict and its effects on Columbia University's campus, as well as a broken

microphone meant to signify how the university has allegedly suppressed pro-Palestinian viewpoints.

In Valencia's exhibit, another item on display was a speaker that played sounds of bombs, New York city subways, and recordings of protests; which were paired as a means to represent how Morningside Heights, where Columbia University is located in New York City, distorts campus activism.

Campus Reform has routinely monitored anti-Israel activism at Columbia University.

For example, information surfaced back in 2024 revealing several organizations linked to George Soros were paying students and organizers to start protests on campuses like Columbia.

Additionally, during the 2024 pro-Palestine protests at Columbia University, a pro-Israel organization claimed university administrators had lost control over the campus and argued at the time that the institution should lose its federal funding.

University officials also agreed to meet with protesters and organizers of the encampment after more than 100 individuals were arrested for trespassing—with some students also being suspended for their part in protests.

The ongoing situation in the Gaza Strip remains one of the direst humanitarian ca-

tastrophes of the 21st century, as the besieged enclave grapples with the devastating aftermath of over two and a half years of relentless conflict.

Since the outbreak of the genocidal war in October 2023, the death toll has climbed to a staggering 73,000 Palestinians, with over 172,000 wounded—the vast majority being women and children. Despite a fragile ceasefire agreement initially brokered in October 2025, the violence has not ceased; reports indicate that nearly 1,000 additional lives have been lost due to persistent military strikes and ceasefire violations over the past few months.

Beyond the immediate threat of bombardment, the survival of Gaza's 2.3 million residents is now jeopardized by a systematic hunger crisis. International agencies, including the World Food Program, warn that approximately 1.6 million people—roughly 77 percent of the population—are facing acute food insecurity.

The blockade by Israel has decimated local food production and left hundreds of thousands, particularly children and pregnant women, on the brink of famine. While a 60-day transitional period was proposed to allow for the entry of vital medical supplies, fuel, and food, the systematic obstruction of aid at border crossings continues to stifle recovery efforts.