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Trump Spins Failure as Victory

Having failed to achieve his goals in the joint US-Israel war on Iran, Trump is now attempting to disguise the setback as a victory



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US President Donald Trump puts on his FIFA Peace Prize medal.

Iran's military leadership declares strategic victory over US-Israeli aggression, vows unwavering defense

TEHRAN-In a coordinated series of public statements, Iran's top military commanders have collectively asserted that the Islamic Republic emerged strategically strengthened from two recent wars of aggression waged by the United States and Israel, underscoring that enemy forces failed to attain any of their stated objectives and did not dare approach Iranian territorial waters. Chief Commander of the Iranian Army, Major General Amir Hatami, delivering remarks at a ceremony on Tuesday, recounted that Iran successfully repelled aggressive campaigns launched in June 2025 and again in February 2026. ► Page 2

Lebanon welcomes MoU and Hezbollah praises Tehran's role

TEHRAN — Lebanon's top political leaders have welcomed the recently concluded memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Iran and the United States, while senior officials in Tehran and Beirut have called for the full implementation of provisions aimed at ending hostilities in Lebanon and securing the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi briefed Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri on the contents of the Islamabad-mediated agreement during separate telephone conversations. He emphasized Iran's commitment to ending the war and all acts of aggression against Lebanon, stressing that the United States bears responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the memorandum and the cessation of Israeli military operations. ► Page 2

US strategic oil reserve falls to 4-decade low as war on Iran drains emergency stocks

TEHRAN- The economic consequences of Washington's military confrontation with Iran are becoming increasingly visible inside the United States itself, as the country's Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) has fallen to its lowest level in more than four decades.

According to data reported by CNN, the U.S. government released another 8.9 million barrels of crude oil from its emergency reserve during the week ending June 12. The drawdown reduced total holdings in the SPR to just 340.3 million barrels, the lowest level recorded since 1983.

The continued depletion of emergency oil reserves reflects the mounting pressure that the prolonged conflict with Iran has placed on global energy markets. Faced with rising oil prices and growing concerns about inflation, the Trump administration has increasingly relied on the SPR to shield American consumers and businesses from the economic fallout of the war.

Analysts cited by CNN acknowledged that large-scale reserve releases have played a critical role in preventing even sharper increases in crude prices. However, they also warned that the strategy is steadily eroding a key pillar of U.S. energy security. ► Page 4

Zionists may resort to aggressive policies to undercut the Iran-US MOU

By Christoph Horstel

BERLIN - After Israel's last bloody attack on the Shiite-inhabited Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh on Sunday, with three killed and 16 injured, an Iranian answer was due. But U.S. President Donald Trump, with renewed vigor of the octogenarian, strengthened by congratulatory messages to his birthday on the very same Sunday, begged Iran not to respond as announced. And the Islamic Republic graciously agreed.

That's the problem here: Trump needs a ceasefire, because the military of both countries, the Zionist entity too, does not have sufficient air defense ammunition nor inherent ability to launch a successful ground attack against Iran. Iranian missile technology, including added cyber warfare abilities, is so advanced that the principal inferiority of Usrae's air defense systems has become obvious for the whole world to see. All credible Western analysts agree here. ► Page 5

Inside Washington's meltdown over Iran and the rising chorus of imperial defeat

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN - When a sparse memorandum of understanding (MOU) is all that remains for Washington after months of imperial aggression, the political theater in the home capital becomes far more instructive than the ink on the paper.

The mid-June de-escalation framework between Iran and the U.S. has brought a halt to hostilities that the joint American and Israeli campaign of aggression started earlier this year.

Structurally, the document remains a modest, transitional framework rather than a final peace. Yet, instead of delivering a triumphant victory lap for the White House, the MOU has ignited a political civil war in Washington.

A remarkably broad domestic coalition has converged on a raw conclusion: the war of choice against Iran was an expensive failure, forcing the United States to openly concede the limits of its conventional power. ► Page 5

Tehran governor: Preparations underway for mass turnout at Ayatollah Khamenei funeral

TEHRAN - As Iran prepares to hold funeral ceremonies for Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Tehran is putting in place the infrastructure and necessary mechanisms to accommodate the anticipated large crowds bidding farewell to the martyred Leader.

The governor of Tehran Province told IRNA that the route of the funeral procession in Tehran has been finalized but has not yet been made public. Mohammad Sadeq Motamedian said the ceremony will be held at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

He added: "Given the expected large turnout for the upcoming event, planning must be based on accurate population estimates. At the central headquarters, the necessary mechanisms have been established to collect data and analyze projected attendance. This information and these estimates will be regularly provided to deployed operational units to ensure effective management of large, concentrated crowds." ► Page 3

Rangelands: Recognize. Respect. Restore.

TEHRAN - World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed on June 17 every year focusing on a specific theme; this year's theme 'Rangelands: Recognize. Respect. Restore,' highlights the need for the restoration of rangelands.

Rangelands are among the world's most extensive yet most overlooked ecosystems. Covering more than half of the Earth's land surface, they play a vital role in food security, water cycles, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. They support the lives of around two billion people worldwide, including many pastoralists and Indigenous Peoples whose knowledge and stewardship have sustained these landscapes for generations.

In 2026, Desertification and Drought Day put rangelands at the center of global attention. This year's observance calls for greater recognition of the economic, ecological. ► Page 7



Iran held by New Zealand in 2026 World Cup

TEHRAN - Iran national football team and New Zealand shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw in their 2026 FIFA World Cup opener early Tuesday.

At SoFi Stadium, Elijah Just gave New Zealand an early lead just seven minutes into the match, linking up with striker Chris Wood inside Iran's box before unleashing a powerful volley into the roof of the net.

Iran responded in the 32nd minute, when Ramin Rezaeian pounced on a loose ball in the area and stabbed it home to level the score at 1-1.

Just struck again in the 54th minute to restore New Zealand's advantage, but Mohammad Mohebbi brought Iran back on terms 10 minutes later with a header set up by Rezaeian.

Families returning to southern Lebanon witness widespread destruction

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - Some residents of southern Lebanon have begun returning to their homes following the announcement of an MOU between the U.S. and Iran, which includes ending the Zionist regime's aggression in Lebanon.

Families returning to southern Lebanese towns witnessed first-hand the widespread destruction caused by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF), which failed to achieve its war objective of degrading Hezbollah's military prowess, despite the heavy and indiscriminate aggression.

Hezbollah has urged residents returning to their homes to remain cautious and follow the guidance of local authorities, as the threat posed by the regime's continued illegal presence on Lebanese territory remains. ► Page 5

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Trump needs an agreement

Sobh-e-No: Recent weeks have shown that Donald Trump is so eager for an agreement that even during Iran's attacks on Israel last week, the US refrained from intercepting Iranian missiles. Trump has openly criticized Israel's attack on Lebanon—indicating that, contrary to his earlier claims, the unity of fronts based on the demands and logic of the Islamic Republic has been firmly established. The United States now fully understands that Iran will not accept any ceasefire or agreement unless all fronts are de-escalated, and Iran continues to firmly support Resistance groups in the region. Ultimately, the US—which before the war insisted that Iran must commit to ending support for Resistance groups—now finds itself offering a form of security guarantee for those same groups, including halting attacks on Hezbollah and Lebanese territory. Washington knows that otherwise, Iran's armed forces will find other ways to support their regional allies.

Deterrence in danger

Khorasan, in an article, addressed the lack of restraint on Israeli attacks and the resulting weakening of regional security. According to the paper, the renewed Israeli strike on Beirut's Dahiyeh—precisely on the day when talk of a new Iran-US understanding was circulating—carries a strategic message directed at Iran and the future of any regional security arrangements.

The core problem in the cases of Lebanon, Gaza, and even Iran-US negotiations has always revolved around a fundamental question: Is the United States capable of controlling Israel's behavior or not? A significant portion of Israel's military, intelligence, and political power depends on US support. If Washington truly wants an agreement, it must demonstrate the ability to restrain its strategic ally. If attacks and violations become routine in the middle of negotiations, no sustainable agreement will ever emerge. An agreement only becomes meaningful when the other side understands that the era of simultaneously exploiting negotiations and applying pressure has come to an end.

Jam-e-Jam: A challenge to the Persian Gulf security order

Jam-e-Jam analyzed the emerging challenges among Persian Gulf states after the Ramadan War. Throughout the conflict—despite heightened tensions, hostility, and reciprocal military actions—the leaders of Iran and most Arab Persian Gulf states tried to preserve political and diplomatic channels and prevent a direct, full-scale, and overt military confrontation. However, the current war has led to a serious escalation of

mistrust between the parties. This situation has had significant negative consequences for relations between Tehran and Arab capitals and may start in a new phase of negative competition, especially in military and arms-related domains, further fragmenting the Persian Gulf's security order. Still, the intensity of tensions and rivalries between Iran and Arab actors will depend on two key factors: the level of confrontation or potential agreement between Iran and the United States in the coming days and months, and the willingness and capacity of Arab leaders to strengthen multilateralism and reduce their security dependence on the US in the medium and long term.

Resalat: A breathing space

Resalat emphasized the need for full diplomatic vigilance during the 60-day ceasefire with the United States. From the newspaper's perspective, diplomatic signals indicate that Iran-US confrontation and indirect negotiations are converging toward a specific point—one whose initial aim appears to be ending wartime tensions and immediately afterward launching a 60-day marathon of nuclear talks. The undeniable reality, the paper argues, is that the country's main project must never be reduced merely to negotiations. Past decades have shown that for Washington and Tel Aviv, the negotiating table is not a path to lasting peace but a tactical tool alongside other pressure mechanisms. Thus, the upcoming talks should not be viewed as the end of the struggle. Instead, these 60 days—and any potential agreements—should be treated as a breathing space, a window of time to repair, update, and reinforce the country's military and security deterrence machinery.

Hamshahri: Why the assassination failed

Hamshahri examined why Israel's long-standing policy of targeted assassinations has failed against the Axis of Resistance. For decades, Israel has used assassination as a strategy to weaken or destroy the Resistance and its allies. However, political and military trends show that assassination, as a short-term tactic, has not only failed to deter but has produced reverse and provocative effects. Despite the assassination of commanders during the Ramadan War, the firing of multiple waves of missiles toward Israeli-occupied territories demonstrated the effectiveness and resilience of Iran's military capabilities. Assassinations did not halt the quantitative or qualitative development of Iran's missile program. The continued expansion of Iran's missile diversity and power shows that assassination may have a limited short-term impact but cannot stop Iran's long-term strategic trajectory or that of its allies.

Judiciary chief: 'Diplomacy and battlefield' move in sync

TEHRAN – Judiciary chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei has highlighted the convergence between Iran's political and military leadership, stressing that negotiations with the United States are aimed at securing the nation's rights.

"The relevant authorities categorically do not wish to negotiate in a way that involves making concessions on the rights of the Iranian people during the talks. Rather, they seek negotiations aimed at securing and restoring those rights. This means that even if an agreement is signed and the enemy breaks its commitments, Iran will retaliate and take reciprocal measures against any violation by the opposing party," the judiciary chief said.

Mohseni Ejei underscored the alignment between Iran's military response and diplomatic engagement with its adversaries, saying that the "battlefield" and "diplomacy" are working in coordination.

"We know the adversary cannot be trusted. Therefore, officials will negotiate with full vigilance and full awareness. Our diplomacy is a continuation of the struggle on the battlefield and at the grassroots level," he said.

He added that if the enemy breaks its commitments, Iran will resume military operations.



The Judiciary further said the "enemy" seeks to undermine unity and national cohesion, calling for vigilance and awareness.

Iran and the United States are set to sign a memorandum of understanding reached on Monday. The MoU will be followed by 60 days of talks aimed at bringing a permanent end to the US-Israel aggression that began on February 28.

American officials have told US media that Washington has failed to achieve its objectives in the war, which mainly included destroying Iran's military capabilities and changing Iran's leadership in favor of Washington and Tel Aviv.

Israeli media have also said the war on Iran has been a strategic loss for Israel.

Iran's military leadership declares strategic victory over US-Israeli aggression, vows unwavering defense

From page 1 ▶ with the first conflict lasting twelve days and the second, which commenced with the assassination of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, extending to forty days. Hata-mi emphasized that in both instances, the enemy acted as the aggressor while Iran mounted a powerful defensive campaign, and he stressed that despite being subjected to deceitful attacks during active negotiations, the Iranian Armed Forces compelled the adversary to plead for a ceasefire on both occasions. He further asserted that the enemy's principal objectives, which included regime change and the subjugation of the Iranian nation, had unequivocally failed, and he praised the coordinated deployment of Army ground and naval forces alongside Islamic Revolution Guards Corps units along the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman coastlines, which effectively prevented any hostile approach to Iranian shores, with not an inch of national soil lost to aggression.

Reinforcing this narrative of resilience, the commander of the IRGC Quds Force, Brigadier General Esmail Qaani, argued in a televised interview that the Axis of Resistance has proven itself to be the sole force capable of enduring extreme pressure without withdrawing from the battlefield, maintaining that neither Washington nor Tel Aviv has succeeded in eliminating any resistance group despite unleashing unprecedented de-



struction across Palestine and Lebanon. Qaani observed that from Operation Al-Aqsa Flood to the present day, no resistance faction has abandoned the ground, a steadfastness that has profoundly alarmed adversaries, and he characterized the recent forty-day war as a pivotal moment that discredited the United States on the global stage while accelerating the internal decline of the Zionist regime. He also highlighted the strategic significance of the Bab el-Mandeb strait as a key leverage point within the broader regional posture of the Resistance Front, suggesting that additional capabilities could be activated if necessary, and he reiterated that resistance rooted in divine faith has once again achieved victory, from Revolution Square in Tehran to Freedom Square for oppressed nations.

Echoing these assessments, the spokesperson for the Ira-

nian Army, Brigadier General Mohammad Akrami-Nia, stated that the Armed Forces have emerged militarily stronger from the recent conflicts, with improved operational coordination and the deployment of advanced domestically produced missiles and next-generation drones, and he emphasized that military preparedness is being sustained in full synergy with diplomatic efforts, with all actions conducted within a unified national strategy and under the direct command of the Commander-in-Chief, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Mojtaba Khomeini. Akrami-Nia affirmed that the Armed Forces remain fully alert, with eyes open and hands on the trigger, while supporting the country's diplomatic track, and he reiterated the military's unwavering commitment to safeguarding national interests both during the implementation

of the recent memorandum of understanding and beyond any future agreement. Separately, the Commander of the Army's Ground Force, Brigadier General Ali Jahanshahi, reaffirmed Iran's uncompromising defensive posture during a commemorative ceremony in Tehran, declaring that Iran's military would spare no effort in countering any threat to the nation's sovereignty, Islam, and territorial integrity. He described the nation's martyrs as having fulfilled their covenant with God while preventing adversaries from realizing their sinister aims.

These declarations come on the heels of a Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding between Iran and the United States, which officially ended hostilities as of Sunday night, with the agreement stipulating the immediate and permanent cessation of all military operations across all fronts, including Lebanon, alongside the full and immediate lifting of the naval blockade against Iran. Iranian officials have consistently stressed, however, that while the diplomatic track is being pursued, military vigilance will remain uncompromised, and the Armed Forces will continue to act with full awareness and in coordination with strategic policies, ensuring that the nation's security and sovereignty are preserved under all circumstances and in accordance with the command of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Lebanon welcomes MoU and Hezbollah praises Tehran's role

TEHRAN — Lebanon's top political leaders have welcomed the recently concluded memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Iran and the United States, while senior officials in Tehran and Beirut have called for the full implementation of provisions aimed at ending hostilities in Lebanon and securing the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi briefed Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri on the contents of the Islamabad-mediated agreement during separate telephone conversations. He emphasized Iran's commitment to ending the war and all acts of aggression against Lebanon, stressing that the United States bears responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the memorandum and the cessation of Israeli military operations.

Aoun and Berri welcomed the provisions related to Lebanon, describing the country's stability and security as essential components of any broader regional peace effort. They also expressed appreciation for the inclusion of measures aimed at ending the conflict in Lebanon.

The memorandum, reached after weeks of indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington mediated by Pakistan with support from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, reportedly provides for an immediate and permanent cessation of military operations across all fronts, including Lebanon. The agreement is scheduled to be formally signed in Switzerland on June 19.

US, Iran discuss unfreezing Iranian assets

TEHRAN—The United States and Iran discussed the unfreezing of approximately \$24 billion in Iranian assets as part of negotiations surrounding a memorandum of understanding between the two countries, according to Majed bin Mohammed Al-Ansari, adviser to the Qatari prime minister and spokesperson for Qatar's Foreign Ministry.

Speaking at a press briefing in Doha, Al-Ansari said issues related to Iran's frozen assets were addressed during talks but declined to provide further details until the agreement is formally signed.

"What I can confirm is that all these issues were discussed within the framework of the

memorandum of understanding," he said, adding that the document will be made available to journalists once all parties have signed and officially confirmed it.

The announcement follows reports that the United States, Iran, and mediator Pakistan have agreed to a 60-day truce between Washington and Tehran. The agreement is expected to be formally signed in Geneva on June 19.

Al-Ansari also reaffirmed Pakistan's central role in the diplomatic process, describing Islamabad as the key intermediary between the United States and Iran. He praised Islamabad's contribution to advancing the negotiations and emphasized that Qatar



In a separate telephone conversation on Tuesday, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and his Lebanese counterpart Nabih Berri discussed political and security developments linked to the memorandum. The two officials stressed that the United States, guarantor parties to the agreement, and the broader international community must ensure that Israel ends its military campaign and withdraws from occupied Lebanese territory.

They also called for an immediate halt to the destruction of Lebanese villages and underscored the importance of respecting Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Qalibaf and Berri further emphasized that the continued presence of Israeli forces in occupied Lebanese areas constitutes a violation of sovereignty and must be addressed as part of the implementation process.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem praised Iran's role in the

negotiations in a formal letter addressed to the Speaker of Iran's Parliament. He described Tehran's position as instrumental in securing a halt to military operations across multiple fronts and characterized Iran's stance as a central element of the diplomatic process.

Qassem commended Iran for its longstanding support for Hezbollah, the Lebanese people, and the Resistance, stating that the Islamic Republic had remained committed despite the risks of a broader regional confrontation. He argued that Iran's actions reflected a principled approach to regional affairs and expressed appreciation for Tehran's role in advancing the agreement.

The developments come as Iran and the United States prepare to launch a new phase of negotiations following the signing of the memorandum, with both sides aiming to reach a broader and more comprehensive settlement within a 60-day timeframe.



fully supports the Pakistan-led mediation effort.

The Qatari diplomat stressed Doha's commitment to regional security, noting that recent devel-

opments have demonstrated the ability of Middle Eastern countries to cooperate in resolving regional conflicts through diplomacy and dialogue.

Trump spins failure as victory

Having failed to achieve his goals in the joint US–Israel war on Iran, Trump is now attempting to disguise the setback as a victory

TEHRAN - The nearly four-month-old war initiated by the United States and Israel against Iran has drastically exposed the limits of America's military might and the futility of its long-standing regime-change doctrine. When joint American and Israeli air-strikes commenced on February 28, the core of the strategy relied on a rapid, top-down collapse. The opening salvo succeeded in assassinating Iran's Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, alongside several high-ranking commanders in Tehran. President Donald Trump immediately capitalized on the strikes, indicating that the operation aimed at regime change and calling on the Iranian populace to overthrow the Islamic Republic.

However, the subsequent months have proved that Washington severely miscalculated the institutional depth of the Iranian state and the fierce independence of its population. Far from crumbling under leadership decapitation, Iran's political and military institutions moved in perfect sync, launching a devastatingly effective strategy of horizontal escalation. By absorbing the initial strikes and responding with a torrent of precision ballistic missiles and thousands of drones against regional US bases and Israeli targets, Tehran fundamentally shifted the economic and military cost of the war onto its aggressors.

Throughout the conflict, Trump repeatedly claimed to the American public that allied forces had successfully dismantled Iran's defensive infrastructure. Yet, assessments from independent media and US defense officials tell a completely different story. While allied strikes caused severe localized damage, US media outlets eventually acknowledged that the vast majority of Iran's strategic military assets remained entirely intact. Meanwhile, Iran dealt severe blows to American military installations across West Asia, rendering highly sophisticated satellite, radar, and air defense frameworks inoperable.

The primary geopolitical leverage shifted when Iran asserted control over the global economy's vital choke point: the Strait of Hormuz. By enforcing a restrictive maritime blockade, Tehran triggered a massive global fuel crisis. The resulting economic shockwaves hit the United States directly, driving up domestic inflation and sending energy prices soaring. With a mounting wartime bill worth tens of thousands of dollars and the Pentagon requesting hundreds of billions more, the domestic political survival of the Trump administration ahead of crucial congressional elections was directly endangered.

Faced with an unsustainable war of attrition, Trump was forced into a diplomatic re-



reat. On Monday, the United States and Iran reached a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). It is set to be formally signed in Geneva.

The terms of this MoU represent an extraordinary validation of Iran's battlefield resilience. Under the agreement, the United States has agreed to conditions that Trump had previously dismissed out of hand. These concessions include the immediate recognition of Iran's sovereign rights, the total lifting of the US naval blockade on Iranian ports, and the full release of billions of dollars in frozen Iranian financial assets. Furthermore, the framework for upcoming permanent peace talks protects Iran's core national security parameters. Discussions over the next two months will guarantee Iran's nuclear rights and its absolute sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz, while completely excluding Iran's indigenous ballistic missile program from the diplomatic agenda.

This drastic shift in Washington's stance forced a rhetorical about-face from the US president. Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, on the sidelines of the G7 summit in France, Trump flatly contradicted his administration's initial wartime declarations.

"You talk about regime change. I never cared about regime change. It was never a part," Trump asserted to the press. "I don't believe in regime change. And I've watched regime changes for years. They never work. It has to just happen naturally."

To justify this retreat to domestic voters and craft a fabricated sense of victory, Trump claimed that Iran now possesses a "rational leadership," insidiously suggesting that the officials assassinated in the initial February 28 strikes were the sole impediments to peace.

The assassination of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei—whose formal state funeral was delayed due to active wartime security concerns—completely failed to achieve the fragmentation the West anticipated. Instead of fostering an internal uprising, the foreign aggression unified the country's state apparatus and fueled deep nationalist and religious resolve. Across Iranian cities, citizens have held sustained, nightly gatherings to denounce US bullying and demonstrate solidarity with the Islamic Republic's defensive stance.

Ultimately, the Geneva MoU proves that Iran's dual strategy of military defiance on the battlefield and unyielding principles in the diplomatic arena forced the world's primary superpower to abandon its aggressive designs. By maintaining its military capabilities intact, securing its sovereign rights, and forcing the US to renounce the language of regime change, Tehran has emerged from the conflict as an unassailable regional power.

In short, this historic agreement shows that the United States has suffered a crushing strategic defeat at the hands of Iran. Now, Trump is actively trying to alter reality by spinning an upside-down narrative to gloss over his massive failure. Despite launching the war with the explicit goal of enforcing regime change and crushing Iran's sovereignty, his administration was completely humbled by Iran's military resilience and tactical superiority. Unable to break Iran's resolve or sustain the devastating economic and domestic political fallout of the conflict, Trump has been forced to halt his military aggression, lift the naval blockade, and fully surrender to Tehran's terms—all while desperately pretending that this retreat was his intended plan all along.

LATEST NEWS

■ Pezeshkian praises Leader's role in safeguarding national interests in MoU

President Masoud Pezeshkian has praised the role of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, in ensuring the inclusion of provisions safeguarding Iran's national interests in the memorandum of understanding (MoU).

In a post on his X account, Pezeshkian said that following extensive discussions, an overwhelming majority of members of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) supported the text of the memorandum, allowing the United States' commitment to respecting the rights of the Iranian people to be tested in practice.

The president added that the Leader's guidance played the most significant role in incorporating clauses designed to protect Iran's national interests, expressing gratitude for his leadership and direction throughout the process.

■ Iran says European sanctions relief is no concession

Iran's Embassy in Vienna dismissed a statement by Britain, France, Germany, and Italy expressing readiness to lift sanctions on Tehran, arguing that such a move would not constitute a concession because the sanctions were "illegitimate" from the outset.

In a post on X, the embassy said removing the measures would merely represent a return to lawful conduct. It also rejected European calls regarding the Strait of Hormuz, stressing that Iran alone is responsible for decisions concerning the strategic waterway and warning that any foreign action related to the strait would be viewed as an infringement on Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

■ Qalibaf says Iran has taken major step toward victory

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said Iran has taken a "great step toward final victory" following an agreement with the United States expected to culminate in the signing of a memorandum of understanding in Switzerland.

In a message addressed to the Iranian nation and the efforts of its armed forces, saying attempts to weaken or force Iran into submission had failed. He expressed confidence that Iran would ultimately prevail, describing the agreement as a significant achievement resulting from the nation's resilience.

■ China calls for stronger int'l support for US–Iran talks

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called for greater international support for ongoing US–Iran negotiations during a phone conversation with Pakistani Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday.

Wang said the upcoming second phase of talks is expected to be more challenging, stressing that diplomacy remains the only viable path forward. He warned against any return to military confrontation and urged the international community to help sustain momentum toward a lasting agreement and regional peace.

■ Pezeshkian: MoU marks step toward ending war, not final agreement

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the U.S. represents an important step toward ending the war and launching negotiations, stressing that a final agreement has not yet been achieved.

In a post on X, Pezeshkian said the Islamic Republic is prepared for all possible scenar-

ios and emphasized that the government's primary focus is serving the people.

He added that the Iranian nation has learned from its "martyred Imam" never to submit to humiliation, reaffirming Tehran's commitment to preserving its dignity and national interests during the ongoing diplomatic process.

■ NYT editorial says Trump weakened US through Iran war

The Editorial Board of The New York Times Editorial Board argued that former US President Donald Trump made a strategic mistake by launching a war against Iran, leaving the United States weaker militarily, diplomatically, and economically. The editorial said Trump failed to achieve key objectives, including regime change and ending Iran's nuclear activities, while Iran remained intact and entered new negotiations. It concluded that Iran emerged as the strategic winner and that Washington's global standing and deterrence capabilities suffered significant damage.

■ CBI governor visits Moscow to expand Iran–Russia banking cooperation

Iranian Central Bank Governor Abolnasser Hemmati departed for Moscow on Tuesday to discuss strengthening monetary and banking cooperation between Iran and Russia.

During the visit, officials are expected to explore ways to facilitate financial transactions, deepen cooperation between the two countries' central banks, and develop new mechanisms for expanding bilateral trade. The talks come as Tehran and Moscow continue efforts to reduce reliance on the US dollar by increasing national-currency settlements, linking banking networks, and enhancing alternative payment systems amid ongoing Western sanctions.

Tehran governor: Preparations underway for mass turnout at Ayatollah Khamenei funeral



TEHRAN - As Iran prepares to hold funeral ceremonies for Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Tehran is putting in place the infrastructure and necessary mechanisms to accommodate the anticipated large crowds bidding farewell to the martyred Leader.

The governor of Tehran Province told IRNA that the route of the funeral procession in Tehran has been finalized but has not yet been made public. Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian said the ceremony will be held at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

He added: "Given the expected large turnout for the upcoming event, planning must be based on accurate population estimates. At the central headquarters, the necessary mechanisms have been established to collect data and analyze projected attendance. This information and these estimates will be regularly provided to deployed operational units to ensure effective management of large, concentrated crowds."

He also said: "Since the initial parts of the program will be held in Tehran and extensive domestic and international media coverage is expected, coordination must be carried out with greater speed and precision. In this regard, all responsible agencies are on standby, and coordination meetings are being held on

a continuous basis."

Last week, the office responsible for preserving and publishing the works of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei announced that the funeral and burial ceremonies of the martyred Leader would be held in the holy city of Mashhad on July 9. It said the late Leader would be laid to rest at the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS).

According to the statement, farewell ceremonies will be held in Tehran on July 4 and 5, corresponding to the 19th and 20th days of Muharram. A funeral procession in Tehran will take place on July 6, followed by another procession in the holy city of Qom the following day.

The organizers invited "all noble and dear people, the free people of the world, followers of the school of Islam, and those interested in Iran" to participate in the ceremonies and bid farewell to the martyred Leader.

Ayatollah Khamenei was martyred on the first day of the joint US–Israeli attack on February 28 in his office in Tehran.

Many of his family members, including his daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, and grandchild, were also killed. Several senior military commanders were also assassinated in the same strike.

Qalibaf, Vance to represent Iran and US at Switzerland signing of MoU



TEHRAN — Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and US Vice President J.D. Vance are expected to represent their respective countries at the signing ceremony of the Iran–US memorandum of understanding (MoU) scheduled to take place in Switzerland on June 19, according to Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht Ravanchi.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a meeting between Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and foreign ambassadors in Tehran on Tuesday, Takht Ravanchi said the gathering served to brief diplomats on the contents of the agreement and its broader regional implications.

He said the memorandum includes provisions related to ending the conflict and occupation in Lebanon, reconstruction efforts, compensation for war-related damages, the unfreezing of Iranian assets, and issues concerning the Strait of Hormuz and the easing of maritime restrictions.

According to the deputy foreign minister, one of the key provisions of the agreement calls for the cessation of military operations across all fronts, including Lebanon,

with Washington undertaking responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the arrangement.

Takht Ravanchi said negotiations aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement will begin immediately after the memorandum is signed. He noted that future talks will focus on nuclear-related issues, including uranium enrichment, nuclear stockpiles, and Iran's long-term civilian nuclear requirements.

While confirming that Switzerland will host the signing ceremony, he said final details regarding the venue and format of the event, including the possibility of electronic participation, were still under discussion.

Separately, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) confirmed that the signing is scheduled to take place on June 19 at Burgenstock in the canton of Nidwalden.

FDFA spokesperson Pierre-Alain Eltschinger said Switzerland has been in close contact with Iran, the United States, Pakistan, and Qatar regarding the arrangements. He noted that Burgenstock was proposed by the Pakistani and Qatari mediators, as well as by Tehran and Washington.

"Switzerland is acting as a facilitator in this process, creating the practical and diplomatic conditions necessary for this meeting to take place on Swiss territory," Eltschinger said.

The memorandum follows months of indirect negotiations and is expected to pave the way for a new phase of talks aimed at achieving a broader agreement between Iran and the United States.

How domestic production prevents collapse of Iran's economy during war

TEHRAN- The third imposed war and the U.S. military attack on Iran served as a serious test of the country's economic resilience. Despite damage to certain infrastructures, a maritime blockade, and the continuation of sanctions pressure, the wheels of production and the supply of essential goods did not stop turning. The experience once again demonstrated a crucial reality: in today's world, security is not built solely behind defense systems, it is also produced in factories.

The recent imposed war was not merely a military confrontation; it was a test of Iran's real economic capacity under simultaneous security, sanctions-related, and psychological pressures. Many foreign analysts, particularly decision-makers in the White House, believed that if critical infrastructure, supply routes, and segments of Iran's economic network came under pressure, the country's economy would suffer severe disruption. What actually occurred, however, painted a different picture.

Despite attacks on certain infrastructure, external pressures, and ongoing sanctions, Iran's production sector did not come to a halt, the market for essential goods did not collapse, and the economy did not descend into bankruptcy. This experience highlighted an important reality once again: in modern warfare, every defense capability relies on an economy that can continue producing, supplying, and sustaining itself even under the most difficult circumstances.

Today's wars are no longer like the conventional conflicts of the past. If military outcomes were once determined solely on battlefields, behind trenches, or in the skies, the equation has changed. In modern conflicts, factories, refineries, ports, transportation networks, financial systems, and supply chains have become part of the battlefield as well.

For years, military and economic experts have emphasized a key principle: a country without a resilient economy will suffer attrition in any prolonged confrontation, even if it possesses significant military power. Recent regional developments once again put this proposition to the test in Iran. The central question was whether Iran's economy—after years of sanctions, banking restrictions, trade limitations, and attacks on some infrastructure, could withstand a major shock. At least in the recent experience, the answer was clear. Like any economy, Iran faced pressure and incurred costs, but it did not collapse. This may be the most important economic lesson of the recent war.

War cannot be sustained by military equipment alone

Modern conflicts are not fought solely with missiles and military hardware. Any prolonged military operation requires continuous economic support. Armies cannot move without fuel. Industries cannot operate without energy. Societies cannot endure without food, medicine, and essential goods.

This reality has given rise to a concept that has gained increasing global attention: defense economics. Simply put, defense economics refers to an economic system capable of maintaining its core functions during crises, wars, or external pressures. It is not merely about military budgets; it encompasses production capacity, supply networks, storage, transportation, and overall economic stability. The recent war demonstrated that Iran possesses greater resilience in this area than many had assumed.

Sanctions forced economy to adapt

There is no doubt that years of sanctions have imposed significant costs on Iran's economy—from banking restrictions and difficulties importing equipment to reduced foreign investment and pressure on external trade. Yet sanctions also delivered an important message: the greater the dependence, the greater the vulnerability.

As access to many foreign markets and suppliers became restricted, portions of Iran's industrial sector were compelled to pursue a different path, greater reliance on domestic capabilities. While this transition was neither quick nor cost-free, it gradually created capacities whose benefits are visible today. Much of Iran's current strength in industries such as pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, steel production, technical equipment manufactur-



ing, and even certain advanced technologies emerged from this necessity.

Attacks on infrastructure: The real test

One of the most common strategies in modern warfare is targeting an opponent's economic infrastructure. The logic is straightforward: if rapid military superiority cannot be achieved, economic systems become targets. Power plants, energy facilities, transmission lines, industrial centers, warehouses, logistics hubs, ports, and supply routes are therefore considered highly sensitive assets.

In the recent conflict, some of Iran's critical infrastructure came under attack. Many outside observers expected these pressures to trigger severe domestic disruptions, including shortages of goods, energy crises, or production shutdowns. Fortunately, this did not occur. There were certainly costs, pressures, and temporary disruptions, but what did not happen was the collapse of the economic system.

Why didn't Iran's economy collapse?

This question has become a central topic in many analyses. Several factors help explain the outcome.

First, Iran's economy had already endured numerous shocks over the years, including severe sanctions, currency volatility, and trade restrictions. These experiences encouraged the development of adaptive mechanisms.

Second, unlike some regional economies, Iran is not merely a consumer economy. It possesses substantial industrial foundations and maintains domestic production capacity in key sectors, including energy, steel, cement, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, and food production.

Third, despite significant pressures, the country's domestic distribution network continued to function. Together, these factors prevented the shock from developing into a structural collapse.

Domestic production as a strategic asset

During times of crisis, public attention often focuses on military developments. Yet one of the unsung heroes of any crisis is the production sector. Every factory that continues operating under pressure contributes to national security. Every production line that remains active, every shipment that reaches the market, and every essential commodity that avoids shortage strengthens the country's resilience.

The recent conflict once again demonstrated that domestic production is no longer merely an economic growth issue—it is a component of national power. A country unable to meet its basic needs from within during a crisis risks turning external dependence into its greatest vulnerability. In this test, Iran showed that it possesses significant capacity for endurance in many key sectors.

From pharmaceuticals to steel: Strategic industries under pressure

Not all industries carry equal importance during wartime. Certain sectors are directly linked to national stability. Iran's strategic industries include oil and gas, refining and petrochemicals, electricity generation, steel, cement, pharmaceuticals, food production, transportation, and telecommunications.

Recent events underscored the importance of maintaining stability in these sectors. In pharmaceuticals, the value of domestic production became more apparent than ever. In energy, the connection between network stability and national security was clearly demonstrated. In steel and petrochemicals, uninterrupted production played a major role in sustaining economic activity. These examples show that defense economics is not merely a theoretical concept—it takes shape within factories and industrial facilities.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

US strategic oil reserve falls to 4-decade low as war on Iran drains emergency stocks

TEHRAN- The economic consequences of Washington's military confrontation with Iran are becoming increasingly visible inside the United States itself, as the country's Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) has fallen to its lowest level in more than four decades.

According to data reported by CNN, the U.S. government released another 8.9 million barrels of crude oil from its emergency reserve during the week ending June 12. The drawdown reduced total holdings in the SPR to just 340.3 million barrels, the lowest level recorded since 1983.

The continued depletion of emergency oil reserves reflects the mounting pressure that the prolonged conflict with Iran has placed on global energy markets. Faced with rising oil prices and growing concerns about inflation, the Trump administration has increasingly relied on the SPR to shield American



consumers and businesses from the economic fallout of the war.

Analysts cited by CNN acknowledged that large-scale reserve releases have played a critical role in preventing even sharper increases in crude prices. However, they also warned that the strategy is steadily eroding a key pillar of U.S. energy security.

Since the outbreak of the war with Iran in late February, the reserve has reportedly declined by approximately 75 million barrels on an 18 percent reduction. Critics note that while President Donald Trump previously condemned the use of emergency reserves during the Biden administration, his government is now drawing down the SPR

at an even faster pace.

Energy experts have expressed growing concern over the shrinking buffer. With the reserve now less than half full, some warn that the United States could face significant risks if another major disruption strikes energy supplies. The danger is particularly acute as the Atlantic hurricane season intensifies, raising the possibility of production outages in the Gulf of Mexico.

The sharp decline in the SPR highlights a broader reality: beyond the human and geopolitical costs of war, the U.S.-led conflict with Iran is generating substantial economic burdens that are increasingly being felt within the United States itself. As emergency reserves dwindle, questions are mounting about the long-term sustainability of Washington's approach and the price American consumers may ultimately pay.

Central Bank of Iran hosts ACU technical committee permanent meeting

TEHRAN- The permanent meeting of the Technical Committee of the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) was hosted by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), focusing on the use of member countries' national currencies within the ACU framework, upgrading the Union's infrastructure for exchanging financial messages, and expanding the ACU's capacity through enhanced knowledge-sharing.

According to IRNA, citing the Central Bank, the permanent meeting of the Technical Committee of the Asian Clearing Union was held virtually on June 15, 2026, hosted by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Representatives of the member central banks of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, the Maldives, Belarus, and Bhutan participated in the meeting.

The key topics discussed included the use of members' national currencies within the ACU mechanism for settling payments related to imports and exports among member states; enhancement of the ACU's infrastructure for financial messaging and payment-system connectivity; the application of central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) of member countries to facilitate cross-border payments; and the expansion of the Union's capacity through greater

exchange of knowledge and experience among members.

The proposals approved by the committee will be submitted to the Board of Directors of the Asian Clearing Union for approval and implementation. The Board is scheduled to meet later this year in Nepal.

In 2025, more than \$22 billion worth of import and export transactions in goods and services among member countries were settled through the Asian Clearing Union mechanism. According to the Union's Secretariat, these transactions were processed smoothly, on time, and without interruption.

The Asian Clearing Union (ACU) is a regional payment arrangement established in 1974 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Its primary objective is to facilitate payments for international trade among member countries while reducing dependence on external reserve currencies and lowering transaction costs.

The ACU operates as a multilateral clearing mechanism through which member central banks settle payments arising from trade and other current-account transactions. Instead of settling each transaction individually through

correspondent banking networks, participating countries can offset payment obligations against each other and settle only the net balances at designated intervals. This system helps conserve foreign exchange reserves, improves payment efficiency, and supports regional economic cooperation.

Current members include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Belarus, India, Iran, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Over the years, the Union has expanded its services and explored new initiatives to strengthen financial connectivity among its members.

In recent years, the ACU has examined the use of national currencies in cross-border settlements to reduce exposure to exchange-rate volatility and external financial shocks. The organization has also discussed upgrading its financial messaging infrastructure, improving payment-system interoperability, and exploring the potential use of central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) for international transactions.

By promoting more efficient regional payments and deeper financial cooperation, the ACU continues to play an important role in supporting trade and economic integration across Asia.

Government-private sector dialogue council holds 136th meeting

TEHRAN- At the latest meeting of the Government-Private Sector Dialogue Council, participants discussed the launch of a government-led process, in cooperation with the private sector, to identify and revise regulations that hinder production and trade.

Economic stakeholders also stressed the need for continued government support for businesses until the end of the emergency period.

During the 136th meeting of the Council, participants examined measures that could strengthen the resilience of the national economy, particularly under difficult circumstances, and emphasized the importance of maintaining support for businesses throughout the emergency period.

According to the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, the process of identifying and reforming regulations that obstruct production and trade has been placed on the government's agenda.

At the beginning of the meeting, Samad Hassanzadeh, Head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCI-MA) and Secretary of the Dialogue Council, reflected on the conditions experienced since the outbreak of the war.

He stated that the nation and the government had worked together, relying on shared policies and ideals, making significant sacrifices to reach the present stage.

He emphasized that the end of the war would mark the beginning of a new chapter of national prosperity and that the private sector would continue to pursue development accordingly.

Economic war has begun

Ali Madanizadeh, Minister of Economy and Chairman of the Council, honored the memory of those who lost their lives during the Ramadan War and noted that over the past three months the government had sought to minimize the war's impact on Iran's economy and remove obstacles facing production and businesses.

He stated that although the military conflict may have ended with the recent agreement, an economic war has only just begun, and the government intends to continue its efforts with this perspective in mind.

Madanizadeh also expressed hope that the stock market would remain strong and continue its positive performance.

Five-party agreement to improve business environment

Keyvan Kashfi, a member of the Iran Chamber's Board of Directors and Deputy Secretary of the Dialogue Council, stressed the importance of holding regular and, when necessary, extraordinary meetings.

He announced that a five-party memorandum of understanding (MoU) had been prepared to improve coordination among institutions involved in economic regulations and thereby facilitate the business environment.

According to Kashfi, the draft MoU has been prepared by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, the Presidential Legal Affairs Office, the Ministry of Interior, the Government Board Office, and the Iran Chamber of Commerce. The document is currently undergoing review, approval, and

signature procedures.

He said the agreement would strengthen coordination, coherence, and cooperation in efforts to improve the business climate and is expected to be signed at an upcoming Council meeting.

Settlement of importers' claims

The meeting also revisited demands raised by importers of essential goods. Morteza Zamanian, Deputy Minister of Economy, outlined the agreements and actions already taken regarding these claims.

He explained that determining the mechanism for settling the debts, conducting final reviews, and examining relevant regulations had delayed payments. However, he stated that settlement would take place in the near future.

Private-sector representatives emphasized the urgent need to settle outstanding claims, warning that delays were undermining confidence and motivation among economic actors.

In response, the Minister of Economy said the obligations would be settled as soon as possible and noted that the President had already issued the necessary instructions. He added that state-owned banks would be instructed not to take action against individuals on the relevant list until their claims were resolved, and discussions would also be held with the Central Bank regarding private banks.

Trade and import challenges

Kashfi also highlighted continuing challenges in importing goods through southern ports despite efforts to develop northern routes

and new trade corridors.

Ahmadreza Farschchian, Chairman of the Iran Chamber's Import Management Committee, identified two major issues: financing transportation cost differentials for essential goods and securing acceptance of these resources by the Tax Administration. It was agreed that the matter would be followed up by Customs authorities.

Madanizadeh further announced the launch of a process to identify and reform regulations and directives that hinder production and trade, inviting the Iran Chamber to contribute its views.

He also noted that a direct-transport project was under consideration to reduce trade and shipping times.

Evaluating wartime support policies

Another major topic was the effectiveness of government support measures during and after the war.

Kashfi reported that surveys of private-sector satisfaction with support policies revealed very low levels of approval. Subsequent analysis identified several weaknesses, including poor coordination between policy issuance and implementation, inadequate communication with provincial authorities, weak monitoring systems, confidentiality surrounding some measures, shortcomings in digital systems, and an excessive focus on industrial producers while neglecting sectors such as information and communication technology, distribution networks, and logistics services.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Inside Washington's meltdown over Iran and the rising chorus of imperial defeat

From page 1 ▶

The chorus and the fallout

The defining feature of this domestic fallout is the sheer breadth of the admission that the military campaign collapsed without achieving its maximalist objectives.

Across ideological lines, the unifying phrase reverberating through the American capital is that Iran won and the United States lost.

Former Vice President Kamala Harris delivered a mathematically precise indictment of the war, framing it as a self-indulgent war of choice that directly penalized working-class families.

During an interview on June 16 in Vienna, Harris illustrated this structural failure by contrasting the \$500 war tax levied at the gas pump against a well-known economic baseline: the reality that the average American household sits a mere \$400 away from bankruptcy when faced with an unexpected emergency.

By pushing millions of financially insecure citizens over the economic edge for a campaign that yielded no strategic victory, the White House converted military escalation into direct domestic trauma.

"We will end up where we were after the JCPOA and [Trump] will call that a victory; the JCPOA he withdrew from," Harris explained.

This sense of self-inflicted damage has been echoed sharply by anti-war realists who have dismantled the circular logic of the administration's victory narrative.

The popular nationalist streamer Nick Fuentes said that the U.S. "has officially lost the Iran war; ask yourself, what are we getting? Nothing."

Anti-war journalist Mark Ames captured the dynamic: the Israel lobby and its proxies were in meltdown, not because the deal was terrible, but because it threatened their war project.

Former Obama administration spokesman and Pod Save America host Tommy Vietor pointed out the fundamental absurdity of celebrating the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, observing that returning to the pre-war baseline after absorbing immense military costs represents a monumental failure of strategy.

Reopening a shipping lane is hardly a conquest when Washington's own aggression caused the closure in the first place.

From the academic establishment, intellectual Francis Fukuyama wrote in an article on June 15 that "Trump has capitulated to Iran" and the MOU "places no limits on Iran's nuclear capabilities," and makes no commitments about Iran's regional allies.

Fukuyama also pointed out that the "feckless and ignorant" U.S. president "has had few cards to play to get further Iranian concessions."

Zionists may resort to aggressive policies to undercut the Iran-US MOU

From page 1 ▶ USrael's next big problem is their proven lack of trustworthiness. The main Western analysts agree on this, too.

Both protagonists face an election; however, the situation in Israel is much tougher for Netanyahu than for Trump in the U.S. The worst-case scenario is that Trump may face impeachment if the midterm election makes him lose the majority in Congress – House and Senate – but Netanyahu might end up in prison for no less than four cases of criminal conduct. That nobody even ponders the idea that he could spend time behind bars for genocide is a strong lesson to all observers ready to swallow it.

This is the crossroads where this murderous duo is to wave goodbye: Trump needs a peaceful solution, but Netanyahu may ponder a nuclear option against Iran. His Armageddon clique of crazies correctly assumes that a ceasefire now and continued losses of support from the American population may kill their Great Israel dreams altogether. The problem with such a hyper-aggressive concept is not that it most likely requires nuclear weapons for realization, as 90 million Arabs appear not much inclined to readily bow down to Zionist rule willingly. The prob-

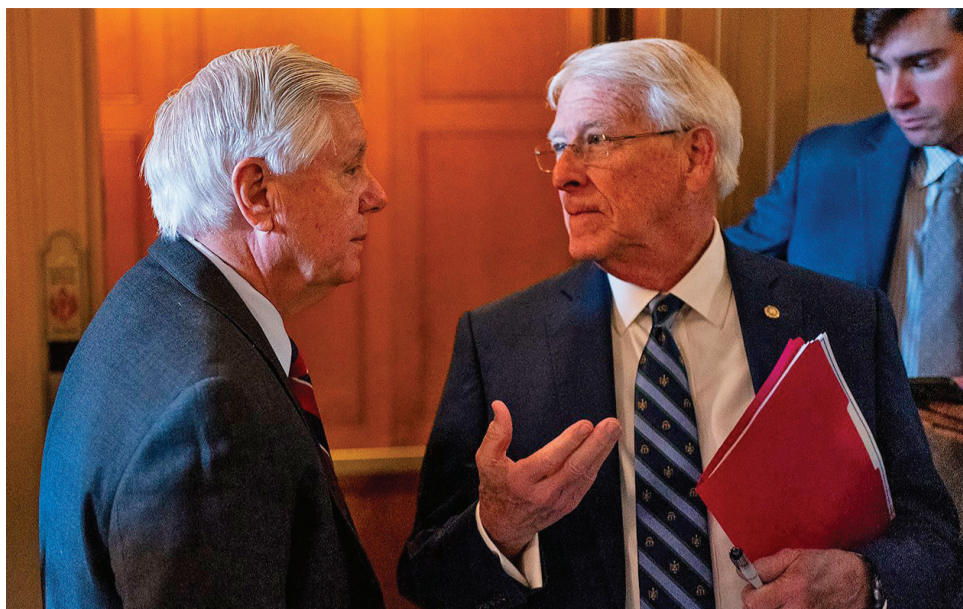
lem is that a "final solution" in a huge catastrophe is a central part of this murderous ideology, to which Netanyahu, his family and friends adhere faithfully. There is an inborn readiness to accept mass killing on a scale that, in modern history, has been exemplified only by the United States in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

U.S.-Iran deal excludes missiles, support for resistance groups

The Iranian media reported that the memorandum of understanding includes a permanent cease-fire in Lebanon, the release of all frozen Iranian assets, and a plan for the reconstruction of Iran, worth approximately \$300 billion, presented by the U.S. and mediators.

And that is anathema to a vast majority of the Zionist population, with its proven tolerance for genocide. Additional facts or viewpoints coming to light little by little do not muster support for the memorandum of understanding among Zionists.

At present, the world faces a historical window plus an opportunity perception for those belligerent forces in USrael, who conclude that the "Hezbollah problem" will end with the overthrow of the Islamic Republic.



Democratic critics, including Senator Richard Blumenthal and other party figures, have lambasted the entire conflict as a reckless, unauthorized "war of choice," framing the administration's subsequent diplomatic maneuvering as the byproduct of a fundamentally incoherent and chaotic strategy.

The ultra-Zionist Democratic Senator John Fetterman continued his obsession with Israel and stated that, regardless of the deal's final text, he disagrees with "the public criticism of Netanyahu."

Concurrently, hardline hawks such as Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Roger Wicker denounced the framework as a "disaster," warning that a ceasefire would mean "everything accomplished by Operation Epic Fury would be for naught."

Senator Lindsey Graham expressed deep unease over the terms, arguing that ending the war under these conditions amounts to conceding that there is no military solution to defeating Iran.

A range of hawkish lawmakers, former administration officials, and conservative analysts have separately warned that the emerging terms represent a major concession, expressing fierce opposition out of fear that Washington's premature diplomatic pivot will leave Iran's long-term position entirely intact.

Ultra-Zionist commentator John Podhoretz targeted the administration's abrupt shift from hardline military rhetoric to frantic diplomacy, questioning why Washington was actively seeking a diplomatic "escape route" from its own military path instead of forcing a total defeat.

The secrecy crisis and the lobby's sabotage

This pervasive failure is webbed with an acute transparency crisis. By hiding the memorandum text, the executive branch has fueled deep institutional suspicion.

Senior Republicans have broken ranks, with Leader John Thune admitting a lack of clarity

and Senator Thom Tillis questioning how a secret deal can be taken seriously without formal review.

This resistance follows a prior bipartisan House vote of 215–208 to halt the funding of the war. Lawmakers view this opacity as a desperate cover-up to hide just how few concessions were secured after months of intense brinkmanship.

A central pillar of the current geopolitical landscape is the reported rift between Washington and the Israeli apparatus.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was reportedly locked out of the final phases of the negotiations. This reported isolation provoked an immediate political convulsion within Israel, where opposition leaders weaponized the deal as a historic failure that left Tel Aviv completely stranded while its primary superpower patron negotiated over its head.

To back this defiance, the Israel lobby and Zionist networks in the U.S. have launched a two-pronged strategy of military friction and political warfare to sabotage the implementation phase.

On the ground, Netanyahu has reportedly ordered forces to maintain their occupation of southern Lebanon, keeping the northern front hot to provoke an asymmetric response that could shatter the truce.

Iranian officials have reiterated that the Lebanon front and the halting of Israeli aggression in South Lebanon are undeniable parts of the MOU.

Groups and voices aligned with the pro-Israel hard right are already pushing Congress to tighten review, with legal pressure campaigns aimed at slowing implementation or making sanctions relief politically toxic.

Despite these desperate attempts at political warfare, the MOU stands as a stark monument to the limits of Western aggression, proving that the U.S.-Israeli war project failed to break the spine of Iranian resistance.



This, plus the inherent readiness to break agreements in both countries, even going against all rules of negotiations, powers which killed basically peaceful Ismail Haniya and Hassan Nasrallah; the latter had just submitted a profound and complete peace plan to Beirut and Washington, three days before his assassination: prospects for peace with these two countries are not well founded in their past, nor in their inherent need for further conquests: U.S. bankruptcy.

The uninterrupted wave of Zionist violations of laws and rules in the West Bank has stirred unrest even in European countries, including Germany. Colonialist settler gangs, set up by the Zionist entity, attack native Palestinians on orders and encouragement from terrorist-minded ministers in the Zionist regime's cabinet. There is zero plan to dis-

mantle the devils.

Israel does not accept the validity of the actual MOU due to its own aggressive policies. That is the basic idea of the majority of its population.

But even if all is fine from now on, the bitter question will remain for every single day ever after: for how long? Where and what are the guarantees?

1. Western countries have never kept their word with Iran, by far not in Obama's JCPOA, not under Trump, who even took up arms.

2. Israel has stopped being accessible for the same reason they had organized their nuclear armament in the sixties, on the dead body of heroic John F. Kennedy.

These two issues must be solved before trust can find a foothold.

Families returning to southern Lebanon witness widespread destruction

TEHRAN – Some residents of southern Lebanon have begun returning to their homes following the announcement of an MOU between the U.S. and Iran, which includes ending the Zionist regime's aggression in Lebanon.

Families returning to southern Lebanese towns witnessed first-hand the widespread destruction caused by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF), which failed to achieve its war objective of degrading Hezbollah's military prowess, despite the heavy and indiscriminate aggression.

Hezbollah has urged residents returning to their homes to remain cautious and follow the guidance of local authorities, as the threat posed by the regime's continued illegal presence on Lebanese territory remains.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's spokesperson has said there had been fewer clashes between Hezbollah and the IOF.

According to Stephane Dujarric, UN peacekeepers reported on Monday that from midnight to 4 pm local time, they saw a decrease in violence and exchanges of fire, "recording 133 trajectories of projectiles and two airstrikes attributed to the IDF (the Israeli Occupation Forces)."

"No trajectories from Hezbollah were reported during that time," Dujarric stated in reference to Hezbollah strikes on northern settlements.

An agreement was reached on an MOU between Iran and the United States, mediated by Pakistan. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that "the two sides announced an immediate and permanent halt to military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon."

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei, while discussing several provisions included in the memorandum, confirmed that ending the aggression in Lebanon is an integral part of this understanding.

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam has credited the memorandum of understanding as positive while avoiding direct praise of Iran or, according to reports, even mentioning it by name. The Prime Minister's government has insisted on continuing its engagement in U.S.-sponsored direct talks with the Zionist regime aimed at halting the U.S.-backed aggression in Lebanon. This strategy has been condemned by critics who argue that it has instead emboldened the regime to further expand its aggression.

In a statement, the Lebanese resistance movement congratulated "the Islamic Republic of Iran, its leadership and people, on the great achievement of reaching the Memorandum of Understanding with the United States of America, which has resulted in a comprehensive ceasefire on all fronts, including Lebanon."

It emphasized that the Zionist regime "must understand that there will be no return to the situation that existed before the 2nd of March, and that the Resistance, which has always been and remains the vigilant guardian of the homeland and its people, will never accept any aggression that violates the sovereignty of its country or sheds the blood of its people."

Zionist lobby groups, which hold significant influence on U.S. decision-making in Washington, have been strongly advocating for Lebanon to stay out of the MOU between Iran and the United States, which reports indicate will be signed on Friday. AIPAC in particular has been notably outspoken, stating that the MOU should preserve the Zionist regime's ability to carry out its aggression in Lebanon.

However, Hezbollah has warned that "the Resistance will remain committed to Lebanon's legitimate and unwavering right to defend its land, people, and sovereignty until full withdrawal is achieved and the prisoners return."

Staying true to its promise, Hezbollah confronted the occupying forces that the IOF had regrouped in the crossing area on the outskirts of the southern town of Kafr Tibnit. The force consisted of five Merkava tanks and four armored vehicles.

The Lebanese resistance movement attacked the force with rocket barrages and artillery shells, amid sustained clashes.

Hezbollah resistance fighters also con-



fronted an IOF unit comprising a bulldozer and two Merkava tanks after detecting them advancing from the Hima Arnoun – Al-Kammasheh area toward the crossing zone on the outskirts of Kafr Tibnit. In this confrontation, the Lebanese resistance fighters used guided missiles and loitering Ababil drones, which forced the IOF to retreat.

The resistance movement clarified that this operation is in defense of Lebanon and its people, based on the legitimate right to resist occupation and liberate land, and in response to the IOF's violation of the ceasefire. Hezbollah's military media released footage documenting its targeting of an IOF Merkava tank on the southern outskirts of the eastern town of Zawtar, south of Lebanon, using a FPV Ababil drone.

Through midnight between Monday and Tuesday, the Zionist regime's health ministry stated in its daily statistical report that the total number of casualties admitted to hospitals since the beginning of the unprovoked joint war with the United States against Iran on February 28 had reached 9,209.

It also noted that 1,310 casualties among IOF soldiers had been recorded in hospitals from the "northern front" alone, after the ceasefire with Iran took effect.

The number of casualties recorded since the so-called "ceasefire" with Lebanon came into effect on April 16 has reached 892 IOF soldiers. The data does not differentiate between occupying troops sustaining casualties in Lebanon or northern settlements.

Reports and video documentation indicate the vast majority of these casualties resulted from attacks carried out by Hezbollah against the IOF in southern Lebanon, in response to violations of the ceasefire from the first day, including shelling southern villages and towns and attempting to force residents to evacuate.

Hezbollah emphasized that what has been achieved is "a prelude to completing the full liberation of our land, the return of our prisoners to their homeland and families, the return of all residents, especially those from front-line confrontation villages, to their towns and homes, and the reconstruction of what the aggression destroyed."

Since March 2, 2026, Hezbollah has been waging retaliatory operations against the IOF in southern Lebanon and against IOF targets in occupied territories, inflicting human and material losses on the occupation regime, notably using FPV explosive-laden drones for which the IOF has found no effective solution.

A senior Israeli official admitted to Hebrew news outlet i24 that if the regime had known that the unprovoked "war would end this way, from a political standpoint, it certainly might not have been worth fighting."

Meanwhile, the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth revealed that "the recent attack on Beirut's southern suburb was carried out on the orders of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz," despite warnings from the regime's military leaders about the possibility of an Iranian ballistic missile response.

In a sign of infighting between the regime's military and political leaders, the newspaper, further citing informed sources, said several senior military officials proposed delaying the attack by a day or two.

The paper said the military officials hoped that a U.S.-Iranian agreement might materialize during that time, potentially making the attack impossible, or that "Katz and Netanyahu would calm down." The sources indicated that the objections of senior military officials were related to the timing, as the region was awaiting the signing of a U.S.-Iranian agreement as well as Iran's retaliation.

Iran coach Ghalenoei hits out at travel restrictions

TEHRAN - Iran head coach Amir Ghalenoei criticized FIFA the U.S. government after being told they needed to leave Los Angeles immediately after 2-2 draw against New Zealand in the World Cup.

He says they are the "most oppressed" team at the World Cup.

Ghalenoei said they had expected to stay in Los Angeles overnight and have a recovery session the following day but were told after the final whistle to immediately return to their training base in Mexico.

Iran were originally due to be based in Tucson, Arizona, for the duration of the World Cup but moved their camp to Tijuana, Mexico in late May after encountering logistical and visa issues.

"After the game they said to us, 'you have to leave immediately. We've been asked to get on a plane and return to our camp in Tijuana and we are really troubled by that,'" Ghalenoei said.

"They are forcing us to go back early. They are making the situation more and more difficult, more hurdles, but we're not going to let that stop us from doing our best."

Iran will return to Los Angeles for their meeting with Belgium (21 June, 20:00 BST), with their final Group G game against Egypt in Seattle (27 June, 04:00).

"We don't know why they're returning us, to be honest. I think it's very strange. It seems like other are doing the planning for us," Ghalenoei added.

"We were supposed to arrive two nights before the game but they didn't permit [it]. We were supposed to stay here tonight to recover and return tomorrow lunchtime.

"I think our team is the most oppressed one in the whole World Cup. Our federation isn't here, our media isn't here, our management isn't here," Team Melli coach concluded.

Mohebi explains why he did 'gun' celebration

TEHRAN - Iran began their World Cup 2026 campaign with a 2-2 draw against New Zealand in a politically charged match.

Mohebi's goal celebration during Iran's World Cup opener against New Zealand has sparked widespread debate, with many interpreting the gesture as a political statement.

He scored an equalizer for Iran in the 64th minute.

Mohebi's goal celebration, which appeared to be a 'finger gun' gesture, sparked outrage among some on social media.

The player later defended his actions, stating it was merely a celebration for the fans. He said: "The celebration came to mind, and I do this [gestures] for all of the fans, just a celebration, you know."

Iran striker Mehdi Taremi blasts travel curbs

TEHRAN - Iran football team captain Mehdi Taremi labelled his side's situation a "disaster".

Iran and New Zealand shared the spoils in a 2-2 draw in Group D at SoFi Stadium.

Although he praised FIFA's Infantino for visiting the team dressing room and allowing them to express their concerns, he urged the governing body to do more to support the national side.

"It's not good for us. It's not good for the football, because in a World Cup, you have to prepare good for the next game, because it is a lot of stress for the players and staff and everyone," said Taremi.

"But we don't have that support, and I think FIFA have to help us more than this."

FIFA president Infantino lauds Mahdavia

TEHRAN - FIFA President Gianni Infantino lauded Iranian football legend Mehdi Mahdavia.

Infantino attended the match between Iran and New Zealand in Group G of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, where the match ended in a 2-2 draw.

"It was really special to have the company of @mahdavia_mehdi for IR Iran's opening game at this FIFA World Cup," Infantino posted on his Instagram account.

"Mehdi knows what it means to represent his country on the world stage and we fondly recalled his goal from the 1998 tournament as we saw Iran scored two wonderful goals to begin their 2026 campaign," he added.

Battling beyond the pitch: Iran show character in difficult conditions

TEHRAN - Iran's 2-2 draw against New Zealand in their opening 2026 FIFA World Cup match leaves Team Melli with mixed emotions.

On paper, sharing the points with the tournament's lowest-ranked team was not the result Amir Ghalenoei's side had hoped for. Ranked 85th in the world and making only their third World Cup appearance, New Zealand appeared to be Iran's most manageable opponent in a group that also includes Belgium and Egypt.

From a footballing perspective, Iran showed both resilience and vulnerability. The positive takeaway was their ability to fight back twice after falling behind. Ramin Rezaeian delivered a historic performance, becoming the first Iranian player to score and assist in the same World Cup match, while also becoming the first Iranian to score in two different World Cups. Iran created enough chances to win, with Mehdi Taremi striking the woodwork and several other promising opportunities going unfinished.

However, defensive weaknesses were difficult to ignore. New Zealand scored from two remarkably similar attacking moves, exposing lapses in organization and concentration that stronger opponents such as Belgium and Egypt are likely to punish more severely.

Addressing those issues will be essential if Iran are to progress beyond the group stage.

Yet any assessment of Iran's performance must also consider the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the team. Unlike the other 47 nations at the tournament, Team Melli have faced a series of logistical and administrative challenges. Their training base was moved from the United States to Mexico, forcing players and staff into repeated cross-border travel. Ahead of the New Zealand match, the team were reportedly denied permission to arrive in Los Angeles as early as planned, while immediately after the final whistle they were instructed to leave the United States and return to Tijuana rather than remain overnight for recovery.

Head coach Amir Ghalenoei described Iran as "the most oppressed team" at the World Cup, while captain Mehdi Taremi summarized the situation by saying that "everything is like disaster" for the squad. Their comments reflected growing frustration over arrangements that appear inconsistent with the preparation conditions enjoyed by other participating teams.

Despite an interrupted domestic league season, limited warm-up matches, and a turbulent World Cup camp, Iran remain firmly in contention. With Belgium and Egypt also drawing their opening match, Group G remains completely open. If Team Melli can tighten up defensively and finally enjoy some stability off the pitch, they may yet achieve a historic first qualification for the World Cup knockout rounds.

Tourism minister says Western perceptions of Iran are often inaccurate

TEHRAN - Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, has criticized what he described as inaccurate and exaggerated portrayals of Iran in Western media, arguing that many Europeans have a distorted understanding of the country's realities.

Speaking in an interview with the Spanish newspaper LA RAZÓN during his visit to Spain, Salehi-Amiri said there is a significant gap between international perceptions of Iran and the realities experienced by its people. The minister was in Toledo to participate in the 126th session of the Executive Council of UN Tourism, where he promoted what he called "cultural diplomacy against Iranophobia."

"In the Western mindset, in Europe, there exists an unreal and inaccurate image of what Iran's reality is," Salehi-Amiri said. "Take the issue of women, for example: how much inaccurate information and how many unrealistic narratives exist about women in Iran."

The minister invited foreign visitors to travel to Iran and engage directly with its people



rather than relying solely on media reports. He encouraged international observers to visit universities, markets and public spaces and speak with women, young people and ordinary citizens to gain a firsthand understanding of the country.

"We do not want to deny certain realities that exist, just as Spain and all of Europe also face challenges," he said. "Do you know of any member state of the United Nations that has no challenges?"

Salehi-Amiri emphasized that Iran is a dynamic society undergoing continuous change and

development. He noted that more than half of Iran's population is young, describing the country's youth as a driving force behind social transformation and progress.

The minister also criticized what he sees as a double standard in international coverage of Iran. According to Salehi-Amiri, developments in Iran are often amplified and scrutinized more intensely than events in other countries.

"The realities of Iran are presented to the world in an exaggerated way, while the realities of other countries are concealed," he

said. "When it comes to reporting on Iran, there is an attempt to greatly exaggerate what happens there."

He added that issues affecting other nations frequently receive less attention from international media and public opinion.

Beyond political and social issues, the interview also touched on sports. Asked about the prospects of Iran's national football team at the current FIFA World Cup, Salehi-Amiri expressed optimism.

"Football analysts in Iran believe that we will qualify for the next round," he said.

The minister also revealed a surprising preference among many young Iranians, noting that a considerable number would like Spain to win the tournament.

"Many of our young people would like Spain to become world champions at this year's World Cup," Salehi-Amiri said.

His remarks came as Iran continues efforts to strengthen cultural and tourism ties with international partners and promote a broader understanding of the country.

Photo exhibit on Minab's handicrafts and cultural heritage opens in Tehran

TEHRAN - A photo exhibition highlighting the handicrafts, cultural heritage and social resilience of the southern Iranian city of Minab opened at Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts this week as part of National Handicrafts Week celebrations.

The exhibition, titled "Minab: The Warp and Weft of Resistance, the Patterns of Authenticity," is being held at the ministry's headquarters in Tehran and will remain open to visitors, researchers, artists and cultural activists until Aug. 19, according to the ministry.

The exhibition features documentary and artistic photographs depicting handicrafts and aspects of cultural life in Minab, a city in Hormozgan province. The displayed works focus on traditional crafts, local knowledge and cultural practices that have been passed down through generations.

According to organizers, the exhibition seeks to

examine the relationship between art, collective memory and cultural identity. Images of woven mats, traditional textiles, pottery and other local handicrafts are presented as reflections of the region's cultural heritage and historical continuity.

The ministry said the exhibition also highlights the role of handicrafts in preserving cultural knowledge and transmitting community traditions to future generations.

Organizers linked the exhibition to the historical memory of Minab, describing the city as both a cultural center and a place associated with recent tragedy.

The exhibition includes references to the deaths of schoolchildren in Minab during the opening phase of the conflict involving Iran, the United States and Israel earlier this year.

The Shajarah Tayyebeh girls' elementary school

in Minab was struck on Feb. 28, resulting in the deaths of 168 people and injuries to at least 95 others. The school was hit on early hours of a recent war jointly launched by the United States and Israeli regime against Iran.

The exhibition also presents handicrafts and cultural production as elements of social continuity in the aftermath of hardship, according to the ministry. It states that local communities have maintained traditional skills and cultural practices despite challenges faced by the region.

Organizers said the exhibition serves as a tribute to Minab's residents and their efforts to preserve cultural identity through artistic expression and craftsmanship.

Minab, known for its handicrafts and traditional arts, is presented in the exhibition as a symbol of cultural continuity and identity within Iran's broader heritage landscape.

Iran plans heritage education program in schools

TEHRAN - Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts is planning to introduce a nationwide "Heritage and Museum Bell" program in schools as part of efforts to strengthen students' awareness of the country's cultural heritage.

The proposal was discussed during a meeting between officials from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of Education, Mehr news agency reported on Tuesday.

Ali Saeidi, an official with the cultural heritage ministry, said the two ministries were working toward signing a comprehensive cooperation agreement to expand heritage-related educational programs across the country.

"Our main and strategic decision is to conclude a comprehensive memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage," Saeidi said, adding that a joint working group would be needed to prepare the agreement.

The planned initiatives are aimed at increasing students' knowledge of Iran's cultural heritage, promoting the protection of historical assets and transferring civilizational and cultural awareness to future generations, according to officials.

The proposed "Heritage and Museum Bell" program would be implemented in schools nationwide. The initiative is intended to institutionalize awareness of cultural heritage and strengthen cultural identity among students.

Saeidi also emphasized the importance of reinforcing Iranian-Islamic identity and referred to another proposed program, "One School, One Museum." Under the plan, schools with the capacity to establish museums would be identified through guidelines to be developed by the relevant authorities.

Officials also discussed organizing targeted educational excursions focused on cultural heritage themes. The visits would include tours of museums and historical sites as part of student field trips.

Other proposals raised during the meeting included expanding virtual museum visits through the Shad student network, Iran's online educational platform, and incorporating educational materials produced by the Cultural Heritage Ministry's research institute into school textbooks.

The ministry also proposed using students as "heritage and museum ambassadors" to help promote awareness of cultural preservation among their peers and communities.

According to participants, the final cooperation agreement is expected to include provisions covering museum visits, heritage education programs, digital learning initiatives and student engagement projects.

Officials further discussed adding content on Iran's cultural heritage to school textbooks and increasing organized visits by students to museums and cultural-historical sites across the country.

AUCTION SJSCO. D140504

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 25,000 tons DIRECT REDUCED 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.

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AUCTION SJSCO. B140504

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Iran leads regional countries in Scopus-indexed journals 2026

TEHRAN – With 464 journals indexed by the Scopus database from 2011 to 2026, Iran ranks first among regional countries.

Turkey, with 344 Scopus-indexed journals, is placed second, IRNA reported.

The number of Iranian journals has experienced a sustained upward trend, increasing from 95 journals in 2011 to 464 journals in 2026, the report added.

According to the Iranian Research Institute for Information Science and Technology, known as Irandoc, the main challenges that highlight the necessity to review support policies include disparities in subject distribution, particularly the 17-percent share of human and social sciences, and the fact that out of the whole indexed journals around 70 percent is in the third and fourth quartile (Q3 and Q4), nine percent in the Q1, and 20 percent in Q2.

The strategic priority of the country's research system in 2026 focuses on not just increasing the number of journals, but also improving the quality of works, which requires enhancing standards in evaluation processes, recruiting international reviewers and authors, and adhering to publication ethics to elevate Iran's scientific standing on a global scale.

Iran ranks third among Islamic countries for scientific publications

According to the recent ranking published by SCImago (SIR) 2025, Iran, with 77,197 scientific articles, ranks third among Islamic nations.

The SIR is a classification of academic and research-related institutions ranked by a compos-



ite indicator that combines three sets of indicators: research performance, innovation outputs, and societal impact, measured by their web visibility.

The country ranked 18th globally. Compared to 75,990 works in 2024, the country has published 1,207 more articles in 2025, indicating a 1.6 percent increase; however, Iran's ranking has dropped one spot compared to 2024.

Turkey (with 99,588 articles) and Saudi Arabia (with 79,919 articles) are placed first and second in the region, 13th and 16th in the world.

The country ranked 17th in the world and second in the region in 2024. Turkey and Saudi Arabia ranked first and third, respectively, back then.

A review of Scopus data from 2014 to 2022 shows that Iran has always been the first among the countries in the region in terms of the number of publications and has been able to maintain this position.

In 2017, Iran ranked 17th in this index and maintained this rank

until 2019. In 2020, Iran's rank increased by two places to 15, but in the last two years, this rank was lost, and in 2022 it returned to 17.

This is the third consecutive year that the country's ranking for scientific publications has experienced a downward trend, falling from 15 in 2023, to 17 in 2024, and 18 in 2025.

According to the seventh national development plan (2023-2027), Iran plans to elevate the country's ranking in scientific production to 12 by 2027, which seems difficult given the current situation.

Shahin Akhounzadeh, an official with the health ministry, said that due to sanctions, economic restrictions, and limitations on Iranian scholars' ability to publish papers, particularly over the last three years, Iran's ranking in scientific production has declined from 15 in 2023 to 17 in 2024.

The country's advancement in science production requires compensating for the regression in research and technology through providing funds, facil-

tating research, and promoting meritocracy, which will reduce young elites' migration, as well, the health ministry's website quoted Akhounzadeh as saying.

In 2025, China, with 1,352,563 articles, ranks first in the world, experiencing a 9.6 percent increase. The US (with 749,969 articles) is placed second; the number of published articles has dropped by 0.5 percent compared to 2024, though.

India (with 381,524 articles), England (with 260,524 works), and Germany (with 209,302 articles) ranked third to fifth.

The SCImago Institutions Rankings (SIR) 2026 has ranked 166 Iranian universities among the top institutions in the world, up from 164 in 2025.

SIR Ranking analyzes institutions in five sectors, including government, health, universities, companies, and non-profit.

For the SIR Ranking 2026 edition, the Altmetrics indicator has been replaced by the new Media Mentions metric. This indicator quantifies institutional exposure across high-authority media outlets indexed in the SCImago Media Rankings (SMR).

A total of 61 universities in the SIR 2026 edition have been flagged for high rates of self-citation (over 25 percent) and self-referencing (over 15 percent). These factors can severely affect ranking positions and, as a result, these universities may be removed from the SIR in subsequent editions.

In the latest ranking, Tehran University of Medical Sciences and University of Tehran are placed among the top ten institutions in West Asia, ranking 5th and 10th, respectively.

WHO oversees national vaccination coverage among mothers, children in 2 provinces

TEHRAN – To assess the implementation of the national Maternal and Child Immunization Coverage Survey, the World Health Organization office in the country, in cooperation with the Center for Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, has conducted field visits to Fars and Zanjan provinces.

The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to ensure the quality and reliability of national immunization data and generate up-to-date, evidence-based insights into vaccination coverage among mothers and children across the country, the WHO website announced in a press release on June 16.

The survey is being implemented by Kerman University of Medical Sciences, with technical support from the WHO and financial support from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI Alliance). Its findings will play a critical role in strengthening national immunization programs and informing evidence-based policy and program decisions.

Field visits in Fars and Zanjan provinces

During the monitoring visits, the WHO communicable diseases team visited selected urban and rural clusters to observe survey implementation and engage directly with field teams responsible for data collection.

In Fars province, visits were conducted in the urban Bar Aftab Saadi neighbourhood, Bajgah village, and Noorabad county, while in Zanjan province, the team visited the urban Karmandan and Bisim neighbourhoods, as well as Morvarid village, reflecting the diversity of settings included in the survey.

The monitoring focused on

key operational aspects of the survey process, including household selection, interview techniques, data recording accuracy, interviewer performance, and adherence to standardized survey protocols in both urban and rural contexts. These observations provided WHO and national counterparts with first-hand insight into the strengths and challenges of survey implementation at the field level.

The findings from these monitoring visits will contribute to ensuring the quality and credibility of the final survey data. Reliable results are essential for identifying gaps in immunization coverage, guiding targeted interventions, and supporting continuous improvement of immunization strategies within the national health system.

Strengthening immunization program

Supported by the WHO and GAVI Alliance, Kerman University of Medical Sciences played host to a 3-day regional workshop on vaccination and vaccine-preventable diseases in October 2025.

Held from October 10 and 12, the event gathered Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) officers and managers from 34 medical universities, the majority from eastern and south-eastern Iran, to bolster national immunization capacities, focusing on planning, surveillance, and tackling vaccine hesitancy.

The workshop received technical support from the WHO Country Office in the Islamic Republic of Iran and financial backing from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. The training focused on strengthening immunization planning, providing updates to national guidelines, enhancing



cold chain management, improving surveillance of adverse events following immunization, and fostering effective community engagement.

High-level officials from the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MOHME) addressed key priorities. Dr Ghobad Moradi, Director of the Centre for Communicable Diseases Control, emphasized vaccination's critical public health role and addressed cutting-edge topics, including the targeted use of artificial intelligence in immunization programmes and strategies to boost coverage among migrant populations.

Dr Mohsen Zahraei, National EPI Manager at MOHME, reviewed 50 years of EPI achievements in the Islamic Republic of Iran and outlined plans, including "supplying influenza vaccines to key groups, organizing national and regional meetings, and advancing measles elimination, polio eradication, and central cold storage expansion".

The workshop provided a platform for interactive discussions and practical problem-solving.

ICRC, German Red Cross deliver second batch of emergency relief to Iran



TEHRAN – The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ICRC), in cooperation with the German Red Cross, has dispatched the second humanitarian shipment to the country.

The consignment consists of 10 trucks carrying 18 tons of essential goods and sanitary packages like first-aid kits, trauma kits, as well as items for dealing with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incidents, to improve resilience, and support the operational capacity of the ICRC, as well as enhance their capacity to respond to emergencies.

Lauding the international support following the outbreak of the 40-day imposed US-Israeli war against Iran, Babak Mahmoudi, an official with the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), said humanitarian assistance helps strengthen rescuers' spirit and community resilience, particularly those affected, IRNA reported.

The first consignment of humanitarian relief items from ICRC was delivered in April.

The shipment included 171 tons of essential items such as blankets, water containers, kitchen sets, tarpaulin cloths, hygiene parcels, solar lamps, buckets, and mattresses that were delivered by five trucks, IRNA reported.

Moreover, 200 generators and 100 water pumps, purchased from the country's market, were donated to the ICRC.

The two shipments will provide for the basic needs of 25,000 families.

The ICRC representative to Iran, Vincent Cassard, hoped the consignment would help alleviate part of the suffering and pain of the Iranian people caused by the destructive measures of the US and Israel during the war.

IRCS helps boost ICRC operational capacity

The IRCS and the ICRC have held a workshop on safety equipment and personal protection

in chemical incidents for 50 selected members of rapid response and primary medical care teams of the ICRC.

The five-day training course was held in Tehran from June 7 to 21, targeting basic health care unit (BHCU) team leaders from five high-risk provinces, namely Tehran, Qom, Markazi, Isfahan, and Bushehr, as well as passive defense trainers, IRNA reported.

At the opening ceremony, Morteza Moradipour, Director General for Passive Defense of the Red Crescent Society, referring to the last two periods of escalation of conflicts in Iran, said "This course provides the participants with the opportunity to learn how to use safety equipment related to chemical incidents prepared in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and chemical defense training in cooperation with Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences." He also said that the course will continue to be held for other ICRC employees, the ICRC website reported.

The course was held in two theoretical and practical modules. The participants learned about different types of chemicals, how to use safety equipment, how to provide assistance to the affected population, how to decontaminate people affected by chemicals, and how to provide relief and rescue to the population affected by chemical agents during war.

The ICRC helps people around the world affected by armed conflict and other violence, doing everything to protect their lives and dignity and to relieve their suffering, often with its Red Cross and Red Crescent partners.

ICRC also seeks to prevent hardship by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and championing universal humanitarian principles. People know they can count on us to carry out a range of life-saving activities in conflict zones and to work closely with the communities there to understand and meet their needs. Our experience and expertise enable us to respond quickly and effectively, without taking sides.

Rangelands: Recognize. Respect. Restore.

TEHRAN – World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed on June 17 every year focusing on a specific theme; this year's theme 'Rangelands: Recognize. Respect. Restore,' highlights the need for the restoration of rangelands.

Rangelands are among the world's most extensive yet most overlooked ecosystems. Covering more than half of the Earth's land surface, they play a vital role in food security, water cycles, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. They support the lives of around two billion people worldwide, including many pastoralists and Indigenous Peoples whose knowledge and stewardship have sustained these landscapes for generations.

In 2026, Desertification and Drought Day put rangelands at the center of global attention. This year's observance calls for greater recognition of the economic, ecological, and cultural value of rangelands, respect for their traditional stewards, and stronger investment in restoring degraded rangelands.

Up to half of the world's rangelands are degraded or at risk, with serious consequences for food and water security, biodiversity, climate resilience and rural livelihoods. Yet viable pathways for action already exist. Investing in sustainable land and water management, improved drought preparedness

and community-led restoration can help secure these landscapes and the people who depend on them.

Under the country's Seventh National Development Plan (2023-2027), the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization has set a target of restoring 23 million hectares of rangelands.

So far, the organization has managed to restore more than seven million hectares, IRIB quoted Hassan Vahid, an official with the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, as saying.

"Some 14 million hectares of the country's land are susceptible to wind erosion. To address the problem, the country has established 1.4 million hectares of man-made forests, and implemented mulching," he said.

Referring to transboundary sand and dust storms, the official highlighted the significance of regional diplomacy to combat eight active dust hotspots in neighboring countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kuwait, and Qatar.

The official went on to say that overexploitation of nature, excessive water consumption, and the implementation of some development projects are among the main factors that exacerbate desertification.



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JUNE 17, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Recommended prayers cannot attain the pleasures of Allah for you when obligatory prayers are left unattended.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:05 Evening: 19:44 Dawn: 3:02 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:48 (tomorrow)

Tehran cultural center to review "Hokum"

TEHRAN- "Hokum," a 2026 supernatural horror film directed by Irish filmmaker Damian McCarthy, will be reviewed at the Arasbaran Cultural Center in Tehran on Wednesday evening.

Film critic Kourosh Jahed is set to attend a screening of the film followed by a review session.

"Hokum" is a haunting exploration of guilt, folklore, and the thin veil between reality and the afterlife. Starring Adam Scott, the film follows Ohm Bauman, a cynical American author of the successful "Conquistador" trilogy. Struggling with writer's block and the lingering trauma of his mother's death, Ohm travels to the remote Bilberry Woods Hotel in Ireland—the site of his parents' honeymoon—to scatter their ashes. However, his journey toward closure quickly descends into a waking nightmare.

However, his arrival is marked by his own abrasive personality and a blatant disregard for the hotel's staff, including the enigmatic owner Cob (Peter Coonan) and the seemingly helpful bartender Fiona (Florence Ordesh).

McCarthy masterfully builds tension by grounding the supernatural elements in local Irish mythology. The legend of the Cailleach, a witch who drags shackled souls through the underworld, serves as a grim omen for Ohm's arrival.

Initially abrasive and dismissive of the hotel staff, Ohm's skepticism is shattered after a near-death experience. Following a suicide attempt triggered by his internal demons, he is saved by the bartender, Fiona. Upon his return from the hospital, he discovers Fiona has vanished, and the hotel is thick with a sense of impending doom.

The plot thickens as Ohm teams up with Jerry (Austin Amelio), a local eccentric who consumes magic-mushroom-laced milk to communicate with the dead. Together, they uncover the hotel's darkest secrets. The horror is revealed to be both spiritual and human: Mal, the hotel

clerk, had drugged and murdered a pregnant Fiona, hiding her body in a dumbwaiter to protect his family's reputation. As Ohm explores the forbidden honeymoon suite, he is forced to confront the repressed memory of accidentally killing his mother as a child—a revelation that mirrors the supernatural entrapment he faces.

The film's climax is a visceral descent into terror. As Mal attempts to burn the hotel to hide his crimes, the Cailleach herself emerges, chaining Mal and dragging him into the underworld. Ohm, however, finds a path to redemption. By making peace with his mother's spirit, he manages to break his metaphorical and literal chains, escaping the inferno just as the structure collapses.

The resolution adds a final layer of psychological intrigue. In the hospital, the bellhop Alby admits to vengefully spiking Ohm's whiskey with Jerry's mushroom powder, suggesting that Ohm's supernatural odyssey may have been induced—or at least amplified—by the drugs. Yet, the physical bruises on Ohm's wrists remain as evidence of his ordeal. Ultimately, the experience allows Ohm to finish his trilogy with a newfound sense of hope, finally unshackled from his past.

Financially, "Hokum" was a resounding success. It grossed \$24 million worldwide against a modest \$5 million budget. It debuted to a strong \$6.4 million in its opening weekend, finishing fifth at the domestic box office.

Critical reception was overwhelmingly positive. On Rotten Tomatoes, the film holds a 90 percent approval rating, with critics praising it as a "classic haunted house story enriched with atmospheric folklore." Metacritic assigned it a score of 76, indicating generally favorable reviews, while audiences gave it a solid "B" CinemaScore. With "Hokum," Damian McCarthy has solidified his position as a modern master of the horror genre, delivering a film that is as emotionally resonant as it is terrifying.

New Valiasr Square mural honors Muharram, Martyred Leader

TEHRAN- A new mural was unveiled at Tehran's Valiasr Square on Monday to mark the arrival of Muharram, the month of mourning for Imam Hossein (AS), while also paying tribute to the Martyred Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The mural's theme reflects the dual atmosphere of mourning for the Imam Hossein (AS) and his companions and the profound grief over the loss of the Martyred Leader, Mehr reported.

The artwork, titled "The Greatest Affliction", depicts the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution in a state of mourning. In the background, the iconic phrase "There is no day like your day, O Aba 'Abdillah" is inscribed, connecting the contemporary loss to the epic tragedy of Ashura, the report added.

Designed by graphic artist Seyyed Mohammad Seyyed-Ofogh, the mural serves as a powerful visual representation of the nation's spiritual resilience and its devotion to the values of justice and sacrifice.

The month of Muharram has commenced across Iran, transforming the national landscape into a display of devotion and remembrance. Cities and villages are adorned with black banners and flags as the nation prepares to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hossein (AS), the third Shia Imam. Tekyehs and mourning stations are being established



in every neighborhood, where devotees gather to participate in traditional elegies and rituals that honor the timeless values of justice, sacrifice, and resistance against oppression.

In a separate but deeply intertwined atmosphere of mourning, the nation continues to honor the legacy of the late Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, following his martyrdom in a coordinated US-Israeli aggression. His loss has cast a profound shadow over this year's mourning ceremonies, with citizens across the country reflecting on his decades of leadership and spiritual guidance. Tributes have poured in from both national and international fig-

ures, emphasizing his unwavering commitment to the principles of the Islamic Revolution and his role as a symbol of national resilience.

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

Having served for decades as the preeminent symbol of resistance against global hegemony, his loss in a targeted US strike sparked a wave of unprecedented

grief and spiritual awakening across the Islamic world. Far from demoralizing the public, his martyrdom has been viewed by millions as the ultimate sacrifice for the country's sovereignty, further delegitimizing the actions of the aggressors and solidifying the national identity around the principles of steadfastness.

This transition of leadership has acted as a catalyst for national mobilization. The Iranian people have transformed their collective mourning into a powerful movement of national resolve, signaling to the international community that the revolutionary framework remains unshakable.

Iranian Documentary "Iran in the Hermitage" honored at Cal Film Festival



TEHRAN- The Iranian documentary "Iran in the Hermitage," directed by Behrouz Sebt Rasoul, has been honored at the main section of the Cal Film Festival in California, the US.

The film was named the Best Documentary Short by the jury of the Los Angeles-based festival, the organizers announced on Sunday.

The jury praised the film for its meditative and poetic quality, noting that it creates a pro-

found dialogue between the viewer and history. "Through meticulous cinematography, the film transforms static objects into a living narrative of justice, art, and cultural endurance," the festival statement read.

"Iran in the Hermitage" offers a poetic and scholarly voyage through the ancient Iranian history. The narrative arc begins in the Paleolithic era and unfolds through the centuries, concluding with the grandeur of the Safavid period. A silent and contemplative work, the documentary distinguishes itself through intricate visual storytelling, weaving historical milestones with the vast collection of Persian artifacts at the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. Without the use of dialogue, it invites viewers to experience the echoes of Iran's past as they emerge naturally among the museum's masterpieces.

Sebt Rasoul's previous feature film, "Melody," was Tajikistan's official entry for the Best International Feature Film at the 2025 Academy Awards. "Iran in the Hermitage" serves as a thematic extension of his latest research-driven project, the documentary series "A Journey to the Hermitage," produced by Iranian universal TV network Sahar.

In this latest documentary, Sebt Rasoul continues his exploration of Iranian identity and its global footprint. Through breathtaking cinematography and historical rigor, the film invites viewers to rediscover the treasures of the Persian Empire through the lens of a foreign institution, highlighting the universal value of Iran's civilizational contributions.

The Cal Film Festival is an international platform dedicated to short films and scripts across all genres, including both fiction and non-fiction, known for its rigorous selection process and its history of honoring industry luminaries. The festival maintains an inclusive approach, welcoming non-English speaking projects, low-budget productions, and works from countries traditionally underrepresented in the global film industry.

With a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion, the festival boasts a prestigious list of past winners. This includes Academy Award nominee Paul Raci, BAFTA nominees Bella Ramsey and Logan Marshall-Green, and Emmy nominees Brendan Scannell and Bret Green, alongside industry veterans such as Academy member Arthur Roberts.

Cartoon of Day



Failed Trump
 Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

38th ICFF to dedicate special section to war-affected children

TEHRAN- The Farabi Cinema Foundation has officially released the call for entries for the 38th International Film Festival for Children and Youth (ICFF), featuring a new special category dedicated to Minab's martyred students.

The upcoming edition of the festival will include both competitive and non-competitive sections, Mehr reported.

The event is set to showcase a diverse range of productions, including feature films, short stories, documentaries, animations, and notably, works created using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the field of children's and youth cinema.

In the main competition, Iranian and international entries will vie for the prestigious Golden Butterfly awards in various categories. As per tradition, a dedicated jury of children and teenagers will also select their top favorite films.

The 38th edition introduces a "Minab Special Section," which focuses on children and the hardships caused by the recent imposed war. Furthermore, the

"Mirror of Child and Youth Cinema" section will review and evaluate selected works previously aired on television or released through domestic VOD platforms.

Filmmakers and producers can register and submit their review copies from June 20 to August 23. The final deadline for submitting the finished versions of the accepted films is set for September 22.

The festival's history, spanning over 37 editions since its inception in 1982, demonstrates its importance as a cultural institution. With 22 editions held in Isfahan, six in Tehran, five in Hamedan, and one in Kerman, it has served as a platform for showcasing Iranian and international children's cinema.

The 33rd and 34th editions were held simultaneously in Tehran and Isfahan and were conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also led to adjustments in screening formats, with only feature films shown in dedicated venues while observing health protocols. Over the years, the festival has mostly

been held in October, with occasional editions in other months.

On February 28, the Shajarah Tayyebeh girls' elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan province, became the site of a devastating massacre as the United States and Israel initiated their strikes against Iran.

While dozens of girls and boys aged between 7 and 12 were beginning their lessons, the school was targeted by a missile strike that caused the building to collapse, trapping children and teachers beneath the rubble. Iranian authorities confirmed a final death toll of 168 people, with at least 95 others wounded, marking one of the most harrowing incidents of the conflict's opening day.

Despite attempts by US and Israeli authorities to distance themselves from the carnage as images of the tragedy spread across social media, detailed forensic and digital investigations have painted a starkly different picture.

An analysis by Al Jazeera's digital investigations unit, utilizing over a decade of satellite imagery

and recent video clips, revealed that the school was a clearly distinct civilian facility, separated from any adjacent military sites for at least ten years. Furthermore, witness accounts and satellite-based analyses confirmed that the school was triple tapped by three separate, deliberate strikes, leaving no doubt about the nature of the attack.

The international community has faced mounting evidence regarding the responsibility for this atrocity, with investigations from major global outlets including The New York Times, BBC Verify, CBC, and NPR all concluding that the United States was responsible for the strike.

These findings have raised fundamental questions about the intelligence used to justify the bombing, as the patterns of the strike suggest a direct targeting of a civilian educational institution. The Minab school tragedy now stands as a somber testament to the immense human cost of the aggression and a focal point for those demanding international accountability.