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The blood of Minab: America's war on Iran and the world's silence

By Syeda Farheen Naqi Mossavi

HAFIZABAD, Pakistan - On February 28, 2026, the first day of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran, a Tomahawk missile struck the Shajareh Tayyebeh Elementary School in the southern city of Minab. The missile hit during class hours. Inside were young children, girls and boys between the ages of seven and twelve, sitting in their classrooms.

The first missile hit. Then came a second. Within minutes, the school was reduced to rubble. ▶ Page 5

Iran, India emphasize expansion of oil, trade cooperation

TEHRAN- Iranian Oil Minister, in a meeting with the Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, discussed the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of oil and energy.

According to Shana, Mohsen Paknejad, on the sidelines of the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers Meeting, on June 26, on the second day of his trip to Gurugram, met with Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and emphasized the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of oil and gas.

The meeting between the oil ministers of Iran and India took place while the two countries have a long history of cooperation in energy, and India was one of the largest buyers of Iranian oil before the US sanctions. After Indian refiners stopped importing Iranian oil in 2019, ▶ Page 4

Iran will never abandon Lebanon

TEHRAN - For decades, the relationship between Iran and Lebanon has been built on deep religious, historical, and political ties. Long before modern regional conflicts emerged, scholars and clerics traveled between the two lands, creating connections that have endured through generations.

Today, despite war, pressure, and political challenges, many Iranians continue to view Lebanon not merely as a friendly state but as a brotherly country.

The roots of this relationship stretch back centuries. During the Safavid era, Lebanese scholars played an important role in spreading and teaching Shiite thought in Iran. These exchanges created a bond that survived changing governments and shifting regional alliances.

The relationship entered a new phase after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. As Lebanon struggled through civil war and foreign intervention, Iran supported forces that later became major political and military actors. Over time, cooperation expanded beyond ideology and came to include political coordination, financial assistance, and regional security concerns. ▶ Page 5



The scene of a U.S.-Israeli airstrike near Ferdowsi Square in Tehran on March 2.

Iran rejects US-PGCC declaration, defends regional security doctrine

By Hossein Amiri

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Ministry on Friday strongly condemned the latest joint statement issued following the ministerial meeting between the United States and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC), describing the declaration as "interventionist, irresponsible and provocative" and accusing Washington of attempting to impose its security agenda on the region. ▶ Page 3

Iran issues fresh warnings over Israeli military activity and presence in Lebanon

TEHRAN- Iran's senior military leadership on Friday issued a series of warnings to Israel, cautioning against any renewed military activity targeting Iran through neighboring countries and demanding a full Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory.

In separate statements, the Khatam al-Anbia Central Headquarters and the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force warned that any hostile actions against Iran or the continued Israeli military presence in Lebanon would carry serious consequences.

The Khatam al-Anbia Central Headquarters warned against 'the movement of Israeli military aircraft toward Iranian airspace through neighboring countries,' characterizing such activity as a direct threat to the Islamic Republic. ▶ Page 2

Europe's Bloody Hands Revealed

NATO chief names Italy, Romania as key supporters of US-Israeli campaign against Iran

Mark Rutte reveals that Italy allowed 500 U.S. military aircraft to operate from American bases on its soil during the 40-day bombing campaign against Iran.

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN- The Islamic Republic has condemned NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte's acknowledgment of European involvement in the U.S.-Israeli military campaign against Iran, calling it a clear and damning admission of the alliance's active complicity in an unlawful war of aggression.

Rutte's remarks, made during a Fox News interview on Wednesday, directly contradicted previous denials from European capitals. He stated that Italy allowed 500 U.S. military aircraft to operate from American bases on its soil during the 40-day bombing campaign. He also named Romania as a key supporter that had restricted commercial air traffic to accommodate U.S. military operations.

The war, which began on February 28, 2026, has had a devastating impact on Iran. According to official reports, the U.S.-Israeli strikes resulted in the deaths of at least 3,375 Iranians and injured approximately 21,000 civilians. The attacks targeted civilian infrastructure across the country, including the cities of Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Bandar Abbas, with nearly 150,000 civilian facilities including schools, hospitals, and residential buildings being damaged or destroyed. In the city of Minab, a strike on an elementary school on the first day of the war killed

168 children, marking the single deadliest U.S. attack since the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Iranian officials were quick to react to Rutte's admission. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei wrote on X that the NATO chief's comments are a "flagrant violation of peremptory norms of international law and the core principles of the UN Charter".

He emphasized that both NATO and its individual member states "must be held accountable for all the consequences".

The Iranian Embassy in Italy further called on Rome and Bucharest to explain to their citizens and the world why they "chose to become accomplices to aggressors" in the commission of mass atrocities against the Iranian people. Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi also cited UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, noting that allowing a state to use another country's territory to carry out aggression constitutes an act of aggression in itself.

Despite Rutte's clear statements, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni pushed back during a Franco-Italian summit on Thursday. She dismissed Rutte's account as "oversimplified," claiming he confused authorized flights and that Italy did not participate in the war against Iran. ▶ Page 3

Trump sees himself 'most powerful man that the planet has ever known'

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN - The release of "Regime Change" by Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan in June offers a devastating autopsy of American power in the 21st century.

The book exposes a political system corrupted by spectacle and magical thinking that operates as a lawless cesspool.

World-altering decisions are made in the court of a mercurial king, revealing the war on Iran was not a strategic necessity, but the bloody expression of an imperial presidency unmoored from reality.

'Farcical' intelligence and the triumph of impulse

The recent U.S.-Israeli war on Iran was paved with delusion rather than sober intelligence. ▶ Page 5

Exclusive
 Russia's envoy tells Tehran Times:
New joint nuclear projects in discussion

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Iran mourns on Ashura as millions join nationwide commemorations

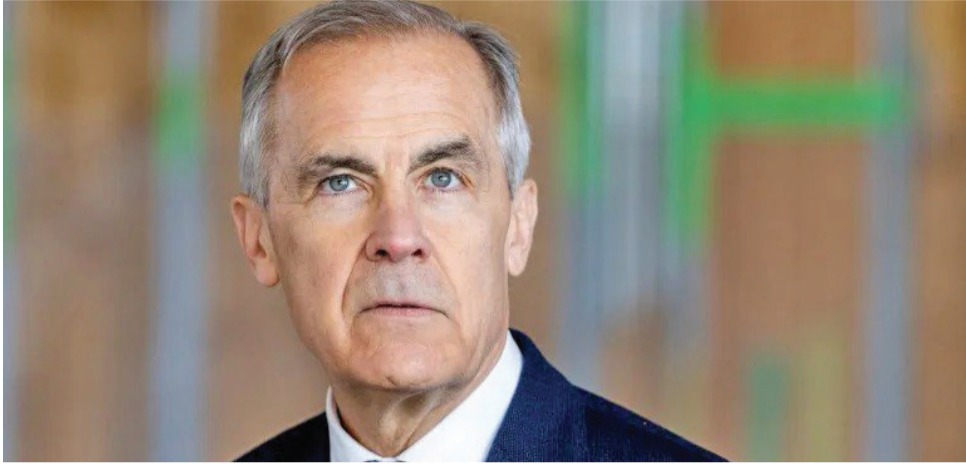
TEHRAN - On Thursday, millions of mourners across Iran gathered to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions on the Day of Ashura in the Battle of Karbala, 680 AD.

Religious processions and mourning ceremonies were held in cities, towns, and villages nationwide, reflecting the deep spiritual and cultural significance of the occasion.

From the early hours of the morning, crowds dressed in black participated in traditional mourning rituals, including elegies, chest-beating ceremonies, and recitations honoring the sacrifice of Imam Hussein and his followers. Mosques, religious centers, and public squares hosted large gatherings, while volunteers distributed food and refreshments to people as part of long-standing Ashura traditions.



Canada weighs reopening embassies in Iran, Carney says



TEHRAN— Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said on Thursday that his government is considering reopening Canada's embassies in Iran and Venezuela, arguing that the absence of diplomatic missions has limited Ottawa's ability to protect Canadian citizens and respond effectively to humanitarian crises.

Speaking to reporters, Carney stressed that diplomacy and consular services are essential instruments of statecraft.

The prime minister said Canada is at a disadvantage without diplomatic representation in countries where Canadians may require assistance, citing Venezuela as an example where Ottawa could have responded more rapidly to humanitarian needs, including recent earthquake relief efforts.

While clarifying that no final decision has been made, Carney indicated that his government believes the current policy should be reconsidered.

"Moving in that direction is, in my judgment, a decision we need to make," he said.

Canada severed diplomatic relations with Iran in 2012 under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, closing its embassy in Tehran and expelling Iranian diplomats from Ottawa amid escalating tensions over Tehran's nuclear program and the country's support for Israel.

At the time, many analysts believed Harper acted due to Israeli influence.

Three years later, following the conclusion of the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers, then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau signaled his intention to restore diplomatic relations, arguing that the prolonged closure of embassies had undermined political, economic and cultural ties between the two countries.

Iran urges UN to hold US, Israel accountable for deadly strike on Minab school

TEHRAN— Iran has called on the international community to hold the United States and Israel accountable for 'a war crime against children,' condemning the deadly strike on a primary school in the southern city of Minab during the recent US-Israeli military campaign against the country.

Speaking at the United Nations Security Council's annual open debate on Children and Armed Conflict on Thursday, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Amir Saeid Iravani, said the attack on the Minab primary school represented "one of the gravest war crimes committed against Iranian children" and urged the UN to ensure justice and accountability for those responsible.

According to Iravani, the recent US-Israeli military operations deliberately targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure across Iran, including schools and educational institutions. He said the attacks resulted in the deaths of 220 Iranian children, including 17 under the age of five, while dozens of schools and other civilian facilities were destroyed or severely damaged.

The Iranian envoy described the strike on the primary school in Minab, located in Hormozgan Province, as the deadliest incident involving children during the conflict. He said the school was struck twice by US missiles during school hours while 264 students were attending classes.

According to the Iranian delegation, the attack killed 168 schoolchildren between the ages of seven and twelve, along with teach-

ers and parents, and injured more than 96 others. Iravani told the Security Council that many victims remained trapped beneath the rubble for hours, while several bodies were so severely damaged that they could not be immediately identified.

Despite several rounds of exploratory contacts during Trudeau's tenure, diplomatic relations were never formally restored, leaving Canada without an embassy in Tehran for more than a decade.

Canada also suspended operations at its embassy in Caracas in 2019 after the government of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro declined to renew visas for Canadian diplomats.

Carney said maintaining no diplomatic representation in countries with which Canada has profound political differences ultimately limits Ottawa's ability to fulfill one of its most fundamental responsibilities—assisting Canadian citizens overseas.

"There are several countries with whom we don't see eye to eye, to put it mildly, where we don't have representation," he said. "That puts us at a disadvantage, first and foremost, in helping Canadians who are in those countries."

He added that Venezuela's continuing humanitarian challenges underscore the importance of maintaining a diplomatic presence capable of responding quickly to emergencies.

Carney also disclosed that he held a phone conversation on Wednesday with President Donald Trump, during which the two leaders discussed preparations for next month's NATO summit as well as the latest developments in Iran and the broader Middle East. According to Carney, U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and other senior American officials also participated in the call.

If approved, reopening Canada's embassies in Tehran and Caracas would mark a significant shift in Ottawa's foreign policy, restoring diplomatic channels that have remained closed for years despite periodic calls for renewed engagement.

"These were children exercising their fundamental right to education in a place that should have been safe," Iravani said, arguing that they were civilians protected under international humanitarian law.

Addressing the Security Council, the Iranian ambassador argued that the attack constituted two of the six grave violations against children identified by the United Nations—namely, the killing and maiming of children and attacks on schools. He described the strike as a war crime. He said it represented not only a tragedy for Iran but also a challenge to the credibility of the international legal system established under the UN Charter.

Iran urged the United Nations and the international community to investigate the incident and ensure full accountability for 'all those responsible, including the perpetrators, planners and commanders of the attack.'

Concluding his remarks, Iravani stressed that the protection of children "cannot be selective" and called for the equal application of international humanitarian law without political considerations.

"The memory of the children of Minab demands justice, accountability, and action—not silence," he told the Security Council.

Iran issues fresh warnings over Israeli military activity and presence in Lebanon

From page 1 ▶ "We consider the movement and presence of military aircraft belonging to the terrorist army of the Zionist regime in the airspace of certain neighboring countries en route to Iran as a dangerous act and a threat against the Islamic Republic of Iran," the headquarters said in a statement.

The military command added that Iran reserves the right to respond to any hostile action, warning that Tehran would not tolerate threats to its national security.

"If the United States is unable to restrain and control the Zionist regime, the Islamic Republic of Iran will not tolerate any threat against itself and considers responding to these dangerous actions its legitimate right," the statement said.

The warning comes amid continued regional tensions following recent military confrontations involving Iran, Israel, and



the United States, with Tehran repeatedly accusing Washington of supporting Israeli military operations against the country.

In a separate statement, IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Qaani called on Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory, warning that continued occupation would ultimately end in defeat.

Addressing the Israeli regime, Qaani said those inspired by the values of Ashura and the sacrifices of Imam Hussein remain committed to resisting occupation, declaring that "every day is Ashura and every land is Karbala."

He described Lebanon as "a land of resistance and steadfastness, not a playground for occupiers," and warned that Is-

raeli forces would eventually be compelled to leave.

"If the Zionist regime does not withdraw voluntarily, it will be forced to flee in humiliation and defeat," Qaani said.

The IRGC commander also referred to the late Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah and his landmark speech delivered in Bint Jbeil following Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. Qaani said the promise made by Nasrallah at that time remains valid, expressing confidence that any future confrontation would produce a similar outcome for Israel.

The statements underscore Tehran's continued support for the regional resistance front and reaffirm Iran's position that it will respond decisively to perceived threats against its sovereignty while backing resistance movements confronting Israeli military operations in the region.

Russia's envoy tells Tehran Times:

New joint nuclear projects in discussion

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – Russia is seen as one of Iran's most important allies, which naturally makes Tehran's relationship with Moscow during the recent U.S.-Israeli war against Iran especially significant. This is particularly true amid ongoing tensions with Washington and in light of the many potential challenges that may emerge in the future.

To better understand the current state of Iran-Russia relations and where the two countries may be headed, the Tehran Times interviewed Alexey Dedov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the interview, the envoy explained how trade between the two countries has continued to grow despite the recent bombardment of Iran and the difficulties associated with it. He also discussed ongoing talks on a range of economic, nuclear, and political projects, adding that relations between the two nations have the potential to grow even stronger.

Below is the full text of the interview:

Given the recent war and the ongoing tensions between Iran and the United States, have Tehran and Moscow still been able to maintain a stable relationship in the field of trade and economic cooperation, in addition to political issues? To what extent has the current crisis negatively impacted trade between Russia and Iran?

Despite the complex geopolitical conditions in the region, economic and trade cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to follow an active and growing trend. It is worth noting that according to 2025 statistics, the volume of bilateral trade reached approximately \$5.8 billion, which shows a 21% increase compared to the previous year. This positive trend has been maintained even amidst ongoing conflicts. Between January and April of 2026, despite disruptions in some logistics chains, the volume of bilateral trade still experienced a moderate growth of 2%. One of the important factors in this regard is the full implementation of the free trade agreement between the Eurasian Economic Union and Iran, which came into effect on May 15, 2025. In the first year of the implementation of this agreement, the volume of trade between Iran and the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union reached nearly \$7.3 billion, with a 22% growth. Meanwhile, Russia remains Iran's key trading partner within the framework of this union. I would also like to emphasize that the process of redirecting goods to new routes and increasing the utilization of the North-South International Transport Corridor is continuing. During the first four months of 2026, the export of goods from Russia to Iran increased by more than 56%, and the total volume of cargo transported along this route reached about 2.2 million tons, registering an 87% growth.

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Completing the necessary internal procedures in Iran to enact the May 17, 2023, inter-governmental agreement on the mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators could give further momentum and acceleration to the development of trade and economic relations between the two countries. Implementing this agreement will allow us to establish the most favorable customs conditions and formalities for both Iran and Russia. Moscow has fully met its part of the obligations in this regard since 2023.

If requested, would Russia be willing and able to assist in rebuilding Iran's damaged infrastructure after the war with the U.S. ends?

Russian industrial and construction companies, design and engineering institutes, as well as the country's scientific and technological centers possess unique technologies, capabilities, and experiences in various fields. Upon receiving official requests and proposals from Iranian partners, we are ready to begin reviewing these requests in the shortest possible time and offer specific proposals for cooperation.

Have some of the specialists from the Rosatom company returned to Iran to continue the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant units? If they have not yet returned, has a specific time been set to start the process of Russian experts returning to Iran?

Our priority has always remained unchanged, and that is to ensure the complete security of our personnel and compliance with all requirements related to nuclear and radiation safety. All decisions in this regard are made in coordination with the Iranian side, based on current conditions and existing rules and regulations. As soon as we are certain that there is no risk of military conflict resuming and no threat to the lives and health of our specialists, we will be ready to fully return Rosatom employees to Iran in the shortest possible time to continue their activities.

What is the current implementation status of other joint projects between Iran and Russia, such as the Rasht-Astara railway and the Hormoz nuclear power plant? Can it be said that these projects have come to a halt?

The construction operations of the Rasht-Astara railway are still ongoing. Currently, technical studies and surveys are being conducted at the project site. Aerial

photography of the route has been completed, and Russian and Iranian experts are also examining rivers, waterways, and other water resources located along the route within the framework of hydrometeorological studies. Regarding the Hormoz nuclear power plant, Russian and Iranian companies are continuously consulting and negotiating the contractual framework of this prospective project. In late June or early July of this year, relevant representatives and experts from the two countries will hold an in-person meeting in Moscow, and this issue is also on its agenda.

Do both parties intend to evaluate the prospects of building small-scale nuclear power plants in Iran in the near future? Furthermore, is it possible that Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, will pay a visit to Russia soon regarding this matter?

Rosatom continues to consult with the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran regarding the implementation of small-scale nuclear power plant projects. Specifically, negotiations are proceeding in parallel regarding both the contractual mechanisms of the prospective project and the drafting and coordination of the related intergovernmental protocol. This issue and other areas of bilateral cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy are regularly discussed and examined at the level of senior directors and officials of the nuclear institutions of Iran and Russia. Regarding Mr. Mohammad Eslami, it must be said that he is always welcome to visit Russia.

It was previously announced by a senior Iranian MP and Iran's ambassador to Moscow that Russia would be granted more favorable conditions for its ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz. Is it clear exactly what these privileges will entail? Do they include an exemption from transit tolls or a discount on these fees? How do you assess this approach by Iranian officials toward the Russian Federation?

Currently, our basis is the Islamabad Memorandum, according to which, for a period of 60 days, the transit of commercial ships from the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and vice versa is conducted free of charge. Our understanding is that the mechanism and transit conditions after the end of this period are still being drafted and finalized. We are also closely following the developments and the decision-making process in this regard.

Europe's bloody hands revealed

NATO chief names Italy, Romania as key supporters of US-Israeli campaign against Iran

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN - Tehran has condemned NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte's acknowledgment of European involvement in the U.S.-Israeli military campaign against Iran, calling it a clear and damning admission of the alliance's active complicity in an unlawful war of aggression.

Rutte's remarks, made during a Fox News interview on Wednesday, directly contradicted previous denials from European capitals. He stated that Italy allowed 500 U.S. military aircraft to operate from American bases on its soil during the 40-day bombing campaign. He also named Romania as a key supporter that had restricted commercial air traffic to accommodate U.S. military operations.

The war, which began on February 28, 2026, has had a devastating impact on Iran. According to official reports, the U.S.-Israeli strikes resulted in the deaths of at least 3,375 Iranians and injured approximately 21,000 civilians. The attacks targeted civilian infrastructure across the country, including the cities of Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Bandar Abbas, with nearly 150,000 civilian facilities including schools, hospitals, and residential buildings being damaged or destroyed. In the city of Minab, a strike on a girls' school on the first day of the war killed 168 children, marking the single deadliest U.S. attack since the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Iranian officials were quick to react to Rutte's admission.



NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte speaks during a meeting with US President Donald Trump in Washington, DC, on June 24, 2026.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei wrote on X that the NATO chief's comments are a "flagrant violation of peremptory norms of international law and the core principles of the UN Charter". He emphasized that both NATO and its individual member states "must be held accountable for all the consequences".

The Iranian Embassy in Italy further called on Rome and Bucharest to explain to their citizens and the world why they "chose to become accomplices to aggressors" in the commission of mass atrocities against the Iranian people. Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi also cited UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, noting that allowing a state to use another country's territory to carry out aggression constitutes an act of aggression in itself.

Despite Rutte's clear statements, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni pushed back during a Franco-Italian summit on Thursday. She dismissed Rutte's account as "oversimplified," claiming he confused authorized flights and that Italy did not participate in the war against Iran.

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani also stated that "Italy has never taken part in any military initiative and has never authorized the use of its bases for war actions against Iran," while simultaneously urging Tehran to loosen control over the Strait of Hormuz. Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto attempted to downplay the significance of the flights, claiming the number of transits during the war was lower than in previous years. Despite these remarks, Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi has insisted that Italy must issue an explicit

and official denial rather than a qualified clarification.

Another European country that appears to have assisted the U.S.-Israeli aggression against Iran is the UK. While London has publicly claimed the Iran war is "not our war," evidence suggests far deeper involvement. British Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer authorized U.S. use of British military bases on March 1, 2026, for "defensive purposes."

RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire has become the principal forward base for U.S. strategic bombers in Europe, hosting approximately 15 B-1Bs and six B-52s routinely loaded with deep strike munitions indicative of offensive, not defensive, operations. A former RAF squadron leader stated in remarks to independent media that it is "glaringly obvious" these are offensive strikes on Iran.

The apparent complicity of these European states carries severe legal consequences.

Under the UN Charter, using force against another country's territory is illegal. The U.S. campaign is an act of aggression, and under international law on state responsibility, countries that knowingly help another state commit a wrongful act are themselves legally responsible.

If their involvement in Washington's war is proven, Italy, the UK, and Romania must immediately halt their support, face prosecution for their potential war crimes, and pay reparations to Iran.

Iran rejects US-PGCC declaration, defends regional security doctrine



By Hossein Amiri

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Ministry on Friday strongly condemned the latest joint statement issued following the ministerial meeting between the United States and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC), describing the declaration as "interventionist, irresponsible and provocative" and accusing Washington of attempting to impose its security agenda on the region.

The ministry's response came after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the foreign ministers of the six PGCC member states commented on Iran's defensive missile and drone programs, its support for what they described as regional "proxy" groups, and recent developments in the Strait of Hormuz.

The joint statement also rejected any Iranian attempt to impose fees or exercise control over navigation in the strategic waterway, while reiterating support for "free, unconditional and unrestricted" maritime transit.

It further maintained that any future economic engagement with Iran would remain conditional on Tehran's compliance with the recently signed memorandum of understanding and the cessation of what Washington and its allies termed "destabilizing behavior." The remarks failed to address Washington's inability to uphold some of the MoU's articles, particularly regarding Lebanon, since the beginning.

Rejecting the declaration in its entirety, Tehran argued that the document reflected continued US interference in regional affairs rather than a genuine commitment to regional stability. The Foreign Ministry said Washington's claim of safeguarding Persian Gulf security contradicted decades of US military deployments, which it said have fueled instability, militarization and political divisions across West Asia.

The ministry also pointed to the use of American military facilities in several regional countries during the US-Israeli attacks against Iran between February 28 and April 8, arguing that those operations demonstrated Washington's disregard for both regional security and the sovereignty of its partners. Tehran called on the countries whose territory and bases were used during the conflict to reassess their security policies and reiterated that neighboring states are obligated under international law and the principle of good neighborliness to prevent their territory from being used for military aggression against other regional countries.

Addressing the nuclear issue, Iran rejected renewed accusations concerning its peaceful nuclear program, describing them as "fabricated allegations" promoted by the United States and Israel. Instead, Tehran urged PGCC member states to support its longstanding proposal for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free West Asia, arguing that regional security cannot be achieved while Israel maintains an undeclared nuclear arsenal.

The ministry further dismissed references in the US-PGCC statement to Iran's ballistic missile capabilities, drones and support for regional resistance movements. It argued that portraying Iran as the principal source of instability serves as a political justification for preserving the American military presence and expanding arms sales across the Persian Gulf. Tehran also rejected the characterization of Palestinian and Lebanese resistance groups as Iranian proxies, maintaining

that their struggle against occupation is legitimate under international law.

A significant portion of Iran's response focused on the Strait of Hormuz, where maritime security has again become a central point of dispute. The Foreign Ministry maintained that the United States, Israel and those regional states that supported recent military operations against Iran bear direct responsibility for instability in the strategic waterway. It reiterated that the Strait lies within the territorial waters of Iran and Oman and argued that the navigation arrangements contained in Paragraph 5 of the memorandum ending the recent conflict (Islamabad MoU) provide the operational framework for managing shipping in the area.

Meanwhile, international attention has focused on maritime security after an attack on a commercial vessel near Oman prompted renewed debate over navigation arrangements and the implementation of the recently concluded US-Iran memorandum. Iran has maintained that, as a littoral state, it possesses legitimate rights regarding the management of maritime traffic in coordination with Oman and has warned against foreign attempts to dictate security arrangements in the waterway.

Concluding its statement, Tehran urged PGCC member states to reconsider "their alignment with Washington's regional policies," insisting that sustainable peace and collective security can only emerge through cooperation among regional countries without foreign military intervention. The ministry reaffirmed that the Islamic Republic would not compromise on its sovereignty, territorial integrity or national defense capabilities and would continue to safeguard its strategic interests in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

Despite the diplomatic dispute, shipping activity through the Strait of Hormuz has continued under Iran's recently announced navigation arrangements. Iranian officials have repeatedly stressed that Tehran has not sought to halt commercial shipping but rather to regulate maritime traffic in coordination with Oman under the framework of the memorandum ending the recent conflict. According to maritime tracking data, commercial vessels have continued to transit the waterway, although at a slower pace than before the latest incident.

Shipping data over the past two days indicate that dozens of merchant vessels have continued to navigate the Strait, carrying millions of barrels of crude oil and petroleum products to international markets. Reuters reported that a tanker carrying approximately 2 million barrels of crude departed the Strait on Thursday, while Saudi Arabia resumed crude loadings at its Ras Tanura export terminal after nearly four months. Maritime intelligence also showed that 13 tankers transited the Strait on Friday, compared with 24 on Thursday, reflecting heightened caution following the attack on a commercial vessel rather than a closure of the waterway. Earlier this week, the US Central Command said 55 merchant vessels carrying more than 17 million barrels of crude oil had successfully transited the Strait in a single day, underscoring that energy exports from the Gulf have continued despite elevated regional tensions.

South Korea to develop domestic version of Iran's Shahed-136 drone

TEHRAN - South Korea has announced plans to develop and deploy domestically produced loitering munitions based on Iran's Shahed-136 unmanned aerial vehicle, according to the country's Ministry of Defense.

The ministry confirmed that the indigenous drones are being developed through reverse-engineering of the Iranian platform and are expected to enter operational service under a broader initiative to expand South Korea's unmanned aerial capabilities. The program is part of a larger procurement plan that includes the acquisition of more than 20,000 low-cost drones, encompassing short-range reconnaissance UAVs and loitering munitions.

The Shahed-136, developed by Iran several years ago, is a delta-wing loitering munition with an operational range of approximately

1,800 to 2,500 kilometers. It carries a warhead of 30 to 50 kilograms and is powered by a four-cylinder piston engine driving a pusher propeller. Guidance is provided by an inertial navigation system supplemented by GPS, and the drone is typically launched from rail-equipped vehicles. Its relatively low production cost—estimated between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per unit—has made it a key asset in Iran's asymmetric warfare strategy. The drone has been used extensively during Iran's military operations against the U.S. and Israel in the past two years.

The United States has also pursued development of similar low-cost loitering munitions following analysis of Shahed-136. In 2023, the U.S. Army awarded contracts for long-range loitering munition projects, and the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory initiated a program codenamed "Cheap Jack,"

which features a delta-wing design, a piston engine, and GPS/INS guidance, with a target unit cost of approximately \$30,000. The U.S. version reportedly uses a similar engine type and launch rail system. Test flights have been conducted at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, though production volumes remain significantly below Iran's estimated output. Some reports suggest the U.S. may have used its version of Shahed-136 for false flag attacks against certain regional countries during its recent aggression against Iran.

South Korea's decision to reverse-engineer the Shahed-136 follows a pattern of global interest in the platform's cost-to-performance ratio, as several nations seek to acquire affordable long-range strike capabilities without relying on more expensive missile systems.

LATEST NEWS

Iran criticizes US over hunger, mocks end of food insecurity reports

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei criticized the United States over domestic hunger, accusing Washington of ignoring its own food insecurity while criticizing other countries.

In a post on X, Baqaei cited reports indicating that more than 47 million Americans, including one in five children, face food insecurity. He mocked the US decision to discontinue its annual household food insecurity report in 2024, saying Washington had effectively "solved" the problem by stopping its official reporting.

"Charity begins at home—and it is desperately needed there," Baqaei said, arguing that the United States should address its own humanitarian challenges before lecturing other nations on hunger.

Persian Gulf states owed to Iran's management of Hormuz Strait: Velayati

Senior adviser to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ali Akbar Velayati, has said that the Persian Gulf Arab states are indebted to Iran's age-old and longstanding management of the Strait of Hormuz.

In a post on his X account on Friday, he wrote, "The stability of Persian Gulf Arab states is indebted to Iran's century-long management of the Strait of Hormuz."

The West has brought nothing to the region but plunder and violence, he emphasized.

Iran rejects ban on 'slogans against US terrorism' as fake news

Iran's Judiciary has dismissed as "completely false and fabricated" the claims circulating on social media about the prohibition on chanting slogans against the terrorist US government and burning of its flag during rallies.

In a statement released on Thursday, the Judiciary said its "investigations show that the source of the false news is hostile and counter-revolutionary pseudo-media."

Pakistan says Iranian crew members seized by US have been released

Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has said 22 Iranian crew members from the vessel Lenore/Davina, which was seized by US authorities amid a blockade on Iran's sea trade, have arrived in the Pakistani city of Karachi.

"Arrangements are now being finalized in close collaboration with the Iranian Missions in Pakistan to facilitate their earliest and safe return to their homeland," Dar said.

Oman says Strait of Hormuz will not return to pre-war status: Bloomberg

Oman has informed European officials that the Strait of Hormuz is unlikely to return to its pre-war operating conditions, Bloomberg reported, citing a source familiar with the talks. The report said Muscat remains committed to international maritime law but may introduce fees for services such as vessel pilotage and environmental protection.

IMO chief: More than 600 ships remain stranded in Strait of Hormuz

The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) said more than 600 vessels remain stranded in the Strait of Hormuz, as international efforts continue to ensure the safe evacuation of ships and crews amid heightened regional tensions.

Speaking on Friday, the IMO chief said the organization had successfully facilitated the evacuation of 115 vessels carrying around 2,500 seafarers over the past three days through coordinated negotiations with regional authorities.

He said two maritime transit routes are currently being used for ships leaving the Strait of Hormuz—one under Iranian control and another coordinated by the United States and Oman—adding that the majority of commercial vessels are choosing the northern route administered by Iran.

The IMO also confirmed it has launched an investigation into the attack on a commercial vessel that occurred after the ship transited the Strait of Hormuz via the southern corridor on Thursday.

Japan pledges \$15m in aid to Iran, Lebanon, and West Bank

Japan has announced an emergency grant of \$15m to support worsening humanitarian conditions in Iran, Lebanon, and the occupied West Bank, its Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Iran, India emphasize expansion of oil, trade cooperation

TEHRAN- Iranian Oil Minister, in a meeting with the Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, discussed the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of oil and energy.

According to Shana, Mohsen Paknejad, on the sidelines of the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers Meeting, on June 26, on the second day of his trip to Gurugram, met with Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and emphasized the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of oil and gas.

The meeting between the oil ministers of Iran and India took place while the two countries have a long history of cooperation in energy, and India was one of the largest buyers of Iranian oil before the US sanctions. After Indian refiners stopped importing Iranian oil in 2019, the level of oil cooperation decreased, but the two countries have so far discussed the development of cooperation in the energy sector and the use of related capacities, including the Chabahar port.

It is worth noting that upon his arrival at Gurugram airport on June 25 to participate in the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers Meeting, the Oil Minister had said, emphasizing that Iran and India have had long-term historical relations with each other for centuries: "We are ready to develop relations with India in all fields, especially the energy sector."

Tehran, New Delhi take serious steps to develop ties

The Oil Minister, in a meeting with India's Minister of Power, Housing, and Urban Affairs, discussed the development of bilateral cooperation in the energy sector. According to Shana, Mohsen Paknejad, who left Tehran for India, on June 25, to participate in the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers Meeting, met and held talks with Shri Manohar Lal, India's Minister of Power, Housing, and Urban Affairs, on the first day of his trip.

Upon his arrival at the airport, he had stated: "We are ready to develop relations with India in all fields, especially the energy sector." The 11th BRICS Energy Ministers Meeting was held on June 25 and 26 in Gurugram, India. The BRICS group brings together 11 major emerging markets and developing countries of the world, including Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile, in mid-June, Iran's Minister of Agriculture, referring to India's achievements in meeting the food needs of its population of over one billion people, praised India's successful experiences in agriculture and rural development, and called for expanding joint cooperation between the two countries in agricultural research, water resource management, modern technologies, mechanization, seed production, food industries, and agricultural trade.

According to IRNA from the Ministry of Agriculture, Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleji and India's Minister of Agriculture, in a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting, while reviewing global challenges of food security, emphasized the development of strategic cooperation between the two countries in agriculture, food security, technology, and sustainable development.

Nouri, in his meeting with Shivraj Singh Chouhan, India's Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, while appreciating the proper hospitality of the Indian government and people at the BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting, emphasized the importance of this meeting in strengthening cooperation among developing countries.

In this meeting, the Minister of Agriculture referred to the sensitive situation in the region and the consequences of recent aggressions and tensions, stating: Food security is one of the most important pillars of stability for countries and societies, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite existing pressures and challenges, has been able to maintain the country's food security at a desirable level through careful planning and the efforts of operators, producers, and those active in the agricultural sector.

Nouri, emphasizing the historical, cultural, and civilizational commonalities between the two countries, stated: The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to begin a new chapter of agri-



cultural cooperation with India, and holding a joint agricultural committee in Tehran can be a turning point in the development of bilateral relations.

Necessity of expanding Iran-India agricultural cooperation

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, India's Minister of Agriculture, in this meeting also expressed satisfaction with the presence of the Islamic Republic of Iran's delegation at the BRICS meeting, described the relations between the two countries as deep-rooted and strategic, and said: India attaches special importance to expanding cooperation with Iran in agriculture, modern technologies, scientific research, and sustainable development.

Referring to the abundant capacities of the two countries in agriculture and food security, he emphasized the necessity of using existing opportunities to enhance the level of cooperation and announced his country's readiness to pursue joint agreements and develop operational cooperation.

In this meeting, the two sides emphasized continuing dialogues, accelerating the implementation of past agreements, and utilizing BRICS capacities to expand South-South cooperation in agriculture and food security.

Meanwhile on June 7, Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Atabak, in a meeting with the Minister of Heavy Industries of India, emphasized the expansion of economic, trade, and investment cooperation between the two countries.

In this meeting, the two sides, referring to the extensive capacities existing in the economic relations between Iran and India, examined solutions for developing bilateral cooperation and removing obstacles facing economic activists.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, in this meeting while emphasizing the importance of strengthening mechanisms for joint cooperation, called for holding the meeting of the joint trade working group of the two countries as soon as possible, and considered this meeting as a suitable platform for following up on agreements, identifying new cooperation opportunities, and increasing the volume of economic exchanges.

He also stressed the need to facilitate the issuance of business visas for economic activists of the two countries and said that facilitating the movement of traders and investors can play an important role in developing economic relations and increasing private sector interactions.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade further, referring to the importance of joint investments, emphasized the need to accelerate the implementation of the Indian side's investment commitments in Iran and called for utilizing available capacities for implementing joint projects and developing long-term economic cooperation.

In another part of this meeting, the development of a direct flight network between major cities of Iran and India was emphasized. The two sides believed that increasing direct flights and creating balance in the aviation relations of the two countries can pave the way for the development of tourism, facilitation of business travel, and expansion of economic and cultural cooperation.

The two sides also emphasized the continuation of consultations and strengthening of joint cooperation in various economic and trade fields, and agreed to make maximum use of available capacities to enhance the level of relations between Iran and India.

As previously reported, at a conference on commercial opportunities between Iran and India, held on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2025, in May 2025, officials and business representatives from both countries emphasized the need to diversify trade and familiarize Iranian businesses with international trade models.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Oil minister stresses BRICS cooperation to achieve energy security

TEHRAN- Iran's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad, on Thursday, attending the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers Meeting in Gurugram, India, emphasized the necessity of convergence among BRICS members and announced the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran for active and constructive participation with BRICS members to achieve the goals of secure and affordable energy, Shana reported.

The full text of the Oil Minister's speech at this meeting is as follows:

Once again, I seize this opportunity and extend my gratitude to the government and people of India for hosting this important meeting and their warm hospitality.

I come from a proud Iran, which over the past months has powerfully defended itself against the attacks of the Zionist regime and the United States, and in doing so, has endured significant material and spiritual damages, particularly the martyrdom of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, scientific and military figures, and a number of innocent people, including 168 students from the Shajareh Tayyebeh school in Minab.

Furthermore, the repeated attacks by aggressors on Iran's oil, gas, refining, and petrochemical infrastructure during this period were not merely an attack on a country's basic facilities, but a blind war against the world's energy security. These attacks also caused damage to facilities, the martyrdom and injury of a number of oil industry employees, extensive environmental consequences, disruption in the production of raw materials and the supply chain of essen-



tial goods needed for the lives of the Iranian people, and the loss of income and employment for thousands of families in the Persian Gulf region. We now see that the consequences of such aggressions have led to an energy crisis, a rise in global prices of raw materials and manufactured products, economic pressure, and increased living costs for many civilians. These aggressive actions constitute a flagrant violation of international law, particularly the United Nations Charter, and must be condemned at every level.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as it has repeatedly declared, believes that the only way to achieve stability and security in West Asia, which supplies a major portion of the world's energy, is the withdrawal of foreigners from the region, the dismantling of American bases, and entrusting the security of this strategic region to the regional countries themselves.

Today, the global energy system faces more challenges and growing uncertainties than ever before, and ensuring sustainable energy has become a primary concern for statesmen and pol-

iticians in most countries. Rising energy demand, geopolitical risks, unpredictable market fluctuations, global warming, investment constraints, and the urgent need to ensure universal access to affordable energy are among the global challenges that cannot be addressed by just one or two countries alone, but require international cooperation and the adoption of pragmatic and realistic policy approaches at a global level.

In recent years, we have seen the "energy transition approach" through the rapid elimination of fossil fuels from the energy system being raised in international climate change negotiations as a definitive way to combat global warming. However, while emphasizing the need for collective action to mitigate climate change, this warning must also be taken seriously: that adopting unilateral and eliminatory policies in the energy system jeopardizes "global energy security" and deepens energy poverty in many disadvantaged communities and regions of the world. This is while, to prevent such risks, all energy sources and technologies should play a role in meeting growing energy demand.

Realistic scenarios of global energy outlooks, including the "OPEC World Oil Outlook 2026" report published last week, predict that oil and gas will still constitute over 53% of the world's energy needs by 2050, and no peak in global oil demand is observed on the horizon of 2050. Furthermore, despite the development of renewables in recent years, the share of fossil fuels in global electricity generation remains significant, currently around 57%, and this share will be around 34% by 2050. Oil remains the backbone of the world's transport and industrial sectors, while natural gas, with its cleaner fuel, flexible application, and growing infrastructure, plays a pivotal role in the energy transition.

Given these realities, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that within the framework of a fair, orderly, and inclusive energy transition, to achieve sustainable conditions in energy supply and combat global warming, global investment in the oil and gas industry and decarbonization technologies must be rapidly increased.

In this regard, the BRICS platform undoubtedly possesses exceptional capacity for cooperation in the energy sector. Our countries together form a significant share of the world's energy production, consumption, reserves, and innovation capacity. We can utilize this collective power in advancing the development of various energy fields, including oil and gas, renewables, power grids, hydrogen, energy efficiency, artificial intelligence, and the digitalization of the energy sector.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, Asia-Pacific willing to expand cooperation, exchange of experience in smart customs

TEHRAN- The Head of Iran's Customs and the Head of the Asia-Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building met and held talks on the sidelines of the World Customs Organization Council Session on the topic of smart customs and digital transformation.

According to IRNA from the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs, Foroud Asgari, Deputy Minister of Economy and Head of Iran's Customs, met with Jun Tajima, Head of the Asia-Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building, and announced Iran's Customs readiness to increase cooperation in the field of training and experience exchange.

Asgari said in this meeting: Iran's Customs

is interested in developing its cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building in areas such as smart customs, digital transformation, risk management, coordinated border management, and the Time Release Study (TRS).

Asgari, noting that Iran's Customs is implementing modernization and electronic transformation programs, stated: In this regard, we welcome providing more opportunities for the presence of Iran's customs experts in workshops, training courses, and regional professional development programs. He also emphasized holding virtual training courses and online capacity-building programs for

Iran's customs staff with the aim of enabling a greater number of colleagues to benefit from the content of the training courses.

The Head of Iran's Customs appreciated the role of the Asia-Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building in supporting customs administrations in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in the fields of capacity building, training, and developing regional cooperation.

In this meeting, the Head of the Asia-Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building also announced his readiness for further cooperation with Iran's Customs in holding related training courses.

Iran, Armenia determined to open new trade, transit routes

TEHRAN- A specialized meeting between the Head of Iran's Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization and the Deputy Minister of Economy of the Republic of Armenia was held at the Ministry of Economy in Yerevan, focusing on facilitating trade and transit and reducing international transportation barriers between the two countries.

According to IRNA from the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization, during this meeting, the Head of the organization, referring to Iran's strategic position in the North-South and East-West international corridors, emphasized the need for the full activation of transit and logistics capacities on both sides.

Reza Akbari stated: The Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the region's main transit routes, has always welcomed the development of transportation cooperation with its neighbors, and Armenia, due to its special geographical location and cultural and historical ties, is considered a key partner on these routes.

The Deputy Minister of Economy of Armenia, while appre-

ciating the active presence of the Iranian delegation and the accompaniment of the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran and diplomatic representatives, announced that his country is determined to remove road transportation barriers and reduce transit costs.

Emphasizing that Armenia is seeking mechanisms to make the movement of transport fleets between the two countries smoother and more economical, he added: Adjusting border tolls and coordinating customs procedures are among our main priorities.

The Deputy Minister of Economy of Armenia added: The presence of senior customs and transit officials from both sides in this meeting demonstrates a serious determination to implement the agreements.

In this meeting, five main axes were discussed and exchanged with an operational approach and the active participation of the Iranian and Armenian delegation members.

The two sides agreed on reducing border tolls, deciding

to form a joint working group under the direct supervision of customs managers to review the cost structure of crossing shared borders and plan for their gradual reduction.

The expansion of truck and cargo fleet traffic was also placed on the agenda, and it was decided that, in addition to increasing the traffic quota, smart systems for reserving crossing times and controlling traffic at the borders should be launched to prevent the formation of long queues.

Activating transit and logistics capacities was another important axis of this meeting, based on which both sides emphasized the full utilization of logistics terminals on both sides of the border and the creation of joint centers with private sector cooperation.

Also, the development of border crossing infrastructure and access routes, including improving roads leading to common border crossings and examining the construction of a new bridge at the zero border point, was prioritized in the joint commission.

Reducing international trans-

portation barriers was also raised as another axis, and in this regard, eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic formalities, standardizing transit permit documents, and coordinating the implementation of international transport conventions were welcomed by both sides.

The Director General of the Organizational Commercialization Office of the Road Maintenance Organization emphasized the need to facilitate trade procedures and coordinate with relevant bodies.

The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Armenia, while welcoming the positive atmosphere of the negotiations, emphasized full support for implementing these agreements within the framework of economic diplomacy.

At the end of this meeting, both sides emphasized their determination to become regional transit hubs and make maximum use of the communication corridors between Asia and Europe, and it was decided that the next meeting would be held as soon as possible to finalize the executive details of the agreements.

Trump sees himself 'most powerful man that the planet has ever known'

Regime Change by Haberman and Swan exposes a Washington where spectacle, sycophancy, and magical thinking have replaced governance

From page 1 ▶ The authors reconstruct closed-door deliberations, illustrating that Trump "had effectively made up his mind for an attack weeks earlier."

This conviction persisted despite brutal intelligence assessments of the Israeli regime-change plan presented by Netanyahu and his cronies. CIA Director John Ratcliffe reportedly used one word to describe the scenario: "farfical." Marco Rubio cut in, adding, "In other words, it's bulls**t."

Yet the machine lurched forward. Trump went to war based on "a good feeling" and the decision was made on impulse, supported by aides who viewed his "adamant refusal to accept reality" as a "mental disorder."

When casualties mounted, the White House remained obsessed with narrative control.

Another noteworthy narrative in the book describes the aftermath of the American attack against Iranian nuclear facilities during the 12-day war in June 2025.

Trump vented at Vance when the vice president refused to completely copy the exact wording of his boss, who demanded everyone repeat a specific word despite the Pentagon leaking the inaccuracy of it: "Everyone needs to say f**king 'obliterated'... That's the word. Everyone just needs to copy what I say."

The indispensable partner and the 'gold-plated pager'

A staggering contradiction that the book alleges is Trump's private disgust for Benjamin Netanyahu, contrasted with his submission to



the Israeli agenda.

According to the book, Trump called Netanyahu a "con man" who "has no f**king judgment."

The contempt reportedly exploded in a September 2025 phone call after Israel bombed Qatar. "I've done everything to protect you. You better fu**ing go along with this. It's been going on for too fu**ing long. Everybody's sick of you, Bibi," Trump shouted, according to the book.

Despite this supposed humiliation, Netanyahu received everything he demanded. When Netanyahu gifted Trump a "gold-plated pager" to celebrate an attack that killed and maimed thousands of Lebanese, the American elite joked about it.

"Don't push the button," Trump said as he pulled the pager from his desk and handed it over to his guests at the White House. One of the guests, Elon Musk, "was transfixed by the device, staring at it intently, silently working it between his fingers like a Rubik's Cube," according to the book.

Governance through public humiliation

The book portrays a Washington where meetings function as public humiliation rituals.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick was berated by Trump: "You used to be a killer, Howard. I remember when you were 35, you were a killer. And now, you've got your beautiful wife, and your big house, and you're just soft. And you're a pu**y."

The sycophantic environment forced Lutnick to eventually respond after he wanted to get credit for the added tariff revenue. "I'm your 25-billion-dollar-a-month pu**y."

This toxic culture is shielded by a subservient press corps, even though it may appear that the current U.S. regime is hostile to the press.

This book is a great example of how weaponized press access ensures quotes are given merely for self-protection. Courtiers leak information to shape the historical record favorably while preserving their standing.

'Because it always is'

A chilling exchange captures the severe moral hazard of the Amer-

ican empire.

Tucker Carlson warned Trump that a war with Iran would wreck his presidency. "I know you're worried about it, but it's going to be okay," Trump responded.

When asked how he knew, Trump replied, "Because it always is." In the evil cesspool called Washington, D.C., he is tragically right. No matter how many innocents are killed, wounded, or forced to suffer, he has gotten away with it.

Trump discarded global norms with a single sentence: "I don't need international law."

The authors say that in their White House interview, Trump brandished a document claiming "Donald Trump is, without question, the most powerful man that the planet has ever known."

He presented it as written by a historian, but it was actually written by the longtime caddy of professional golfer Gary Player.

The document compared Trump favorably to Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Stalin, Mao, and Hitler. Trump had no moral qualms about the list and clearly saw himself in their company as "the most powerful" of all.

Ultimately, the title of the book is also revealing, as the regime that has truly changed is not Tehran's. It is Washington's, and the world has to live with the wreckage long after the sycophants rewrite their roles.

The illusion of invulnerability persists among D.C.'s corrupt political elite, yet the long-term consequences of this delusion will be impossible to ignore.

The blood of Minab: America's war on Iran and the world's silence

From page 1 ▶ According to Iranian officials, 168 students were killed in the attack. The death toll rose to 168, including 120 students, 26 teachers, seven parents, and a school bus driver. Among the dead was a teacher who was six months pregnant. The remains of at least one child, the seven-year-old Makan Nasiri, were never found despite weeks of searching.

This was not a battlefield. This was a school.

A "mistake" that cost 168 futures

When asked about the Minab strike at the G7 summit, U.S. President Donald Trump called it "a mistake." "Mistakes are made," he said. "War is nasty."

But Amnesty International's investigation tells a different story. The rights group concluded that a U.S.-made precision-guided Tomahawk missile used exclusively by U.S. forces directly struck the school. The school was adjacent to an IRGC base, raising serious concerns that U.S. forces either relied on outdated intelligence or failed to take necessary precautions to avoid civilian harm. Either way, international humanitarian law was violated.

Calling it a "mistake" does not bring the children back. It does not heal the agonies of the families who identified their loved ones not by their faces, but by their clothing, their fingernails, or the shape of their eyes.

The war without end: The Minab massacre was just the beginning. Since February, the United States has continued to threaten and strike Iran. On June 21, Trump warned that

America would "hit Iran very hard again" if Tehran did not curb its allies in Lebanon. Trump framed Lebanon as

a brotherly nation to Iran and a central pillar in ongoing MOU and peace deal negotiations, though Israel is trying to sabotage the negotiations. The threat came while Vice President Vance was attending talks with Iranian officials in Switzerland. The Iranian delegation walked out in

protest.

Just days earlier, Trump had retracted a threat to bomb Iran for a third consecutive night and seize Kharg Island, Iran's main oil export hub. The pattern is clear: threaten, negotiate, threaten again.

Amidst the heat of the illegal war on Iran, Trump threatened on April 7 that "a whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again." To many around the world, it sounds like a joke. He comes across as a madman, mentally unstable, and psychologically unfit for such serious responsibilities.

Yet even as the White House continues its military posturing, the U.S. Senate passed a war powers resolution on June 24, restricting Trump from launching further military operations against Iran without congressional approval. The resolution was passed by a narrow vote of 50 to 48. It was a symbolic rebuke, but it showed that even within America, there is growing unease about this war.

While Iranian officials have commemorat-

ed the Minab victims at the United Nations in Geneva, the international response has been largely silent. Iran's mission to the UN called the loss of 168 students "168 stolen futures, 168 silenced dreams, and an enduring wound carried by families, a community, and a nation."

The silence is deafening

Iranian football players have worn pins with "#168" on their blazers at the World Cup. Fans have displayed banners in the stands. A handwritten note was left in the team's dressing room in Los Angeles, reading: "From the ancient Persia thousands of years ago to the civilized Iran of today,

the spirit of Iran remains alive and steadfast."

But gestures alone are not enough. The world must hold the perpetrators accountable.

A call for justice

The attack on Minab was not an accident of war. It was a preventable tragedy that claimed the lives of innocent children. The United States cannot simply dismiss it as a "mistake" and move on.

As Amnesty International has stated, those responsible for planning and executing this unlawful attack must be held accountable. The victims and their families have the right to truth and justice.

We remember the children of Minab. We remember their stolen futures. And we demand that the world stop looking away. Their names must never fade from our conscience.

Iran will never abandon Lebanon

From page 1 ▶ During the past three decades, Iran's language regarding Lebanon has evolved. Earlier discussions focused heavily on revolutionary ideals and broader Islamic unity. Today, Iranian and Lebanese leaders more often speak of partnership, solidarity, and strategic cooperation. While the terminology has changed, the importance of Lebanon in Iran's regional outlook has remained constant.

At present, Lebanon faces one of the most difficult periods in its modern history. Military tensions continue along its southern border, and many Lebanese civilians live under the shadow of uncertainty. At the same time, diplomatic efforts aimed at reducing regional tensions have struggled to gain momentum.

Israel's continued military operations in Lebanon risk undermining opportunities for dialogue and de-escalation. Supporters of ne-

gotiations argue that lasting stability cannot be achieved through air strikes and military pressure alone. They maintain that diplomacy remains the only path capable of preventing a wider regional confrontation.

Iran and Lebanon stand united in the face of ongoing Israeli attacks on Lebanese territory. The continued strikes have caused civilian casualties, destruction, and heightened tensions across the region, deepening the humanitarian crisis. Despite ceasefire efforts, violence has persisted, raising concerns about regional stability and the safety of innocent people. Many in Iran and Lebanon view resistance, solidarity, and diplomacy as essential to protecting sovereignty and achieving lasting peace.

For Iran, the situation in Lebanon is not simply a foreign policy issue. It is connected to decades of political, religious, and strate-

gic relations. This is why Tehran continues to emphasize support for Lebanon's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity despite mounting regional pressures.

The Middle East has witnessed enough destruction. The people of Lebanon deserve peace, security, and the opportunity to rebuild their country without fear of war. Dialogue, not escalation, offers the best hope for achieving that goal.

History has shown that alliances can face challenges, governments can change, and regional circumstances can shift. Yet some relationships endure because they are rooted in shared experiences and mutual support. For many in Iran, the relationship is deep-rooted.

Iran will never abandon Lebanon, a brother country.

A deformed photo that badly ruins Israel's image

TEHRAN - A single shocking photograph of Mujahed Bani Mufleh is enough to bring shame upon Israel before the entire world, portraying it as a regime willing to resort to inhumane acts to silence every Palestinian voice that cries out for justice.

The contrast between two photographs of Bani Mufleh—a journalist from the West Bank—one taken before his imprisonment and the other after his release, speaks volumes about Israel's disregard for Palestinian lives.

The latter image, showing his severe physical deterioration, bears stark witness to what Bani Mufleh endured during his detention. It should also prompt countries, organizations, lobbyists, and individuals who have supported Israel's treatment of Palestinians to reassess their perception of the country—if they retain even a shred of conscience.

The following section includes Bani Mufleh's account of his experience in prison, along with comments from journalists and other observers posted on Middle East Eye:

Before-and-after photos of a Palestinian journalist released from Israeli detention have sparked anger on social media and calls for accountability from journalists and rights organizations, describing the Israeli prison system as a "tool for both the slow and direct killing" of detainees.

Mujahed Bani Mufleh shared a photograph of his shocking physical state after eight months in Israeli prison on his Instagram page on Wednesday.

The 36-year-old was held in administrative detention - imprisonment without charge or trial - and eventually released from Israeli prison in January. He found out just two days later that he had suffered a severe brain hemorrhage due to prison conditions and medical neglect. He required emergency surgeries and continues to face a long road to recovery, the Palestinian Prisoners' Society said in a statement.

The father of three from the town of Beita, in Nablus in the occupied West Bank, described the nights in Israeli prison in a statement accompanying the images: "You lie awake between physical suffering and heavy thoughts, counting the hours and waiting for dawn as if it were salvation."

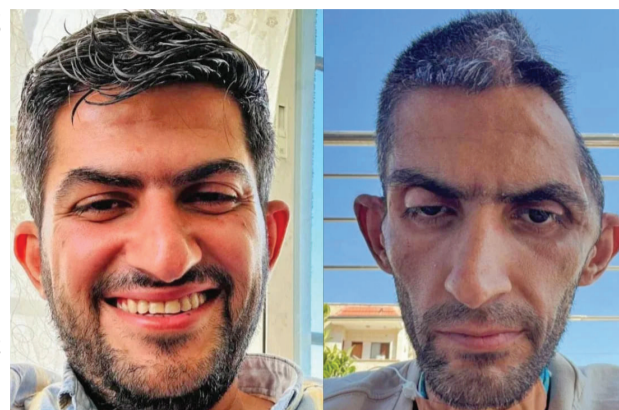
He wrote: "I learned humiliation when every part of your day is controlled by someone else... When even your privacy and dignity are no longer yours."

"During that time, I learned how to be grateful and understood the true meaning of hunger; when you wait for a morsel that isn't enough, you go to sleep with a stomach ache, and wake up with the same feeling. I learned how a loaf of bread can become a dream, and how a sip of cold water can feel like a blessing from heaven..."

"Fourteen months taught me that blessings aren't as vast as we thought; rather, they are these small details we took for granted."

'System to break Palestinian bodies'

The photos sent shockwaves across social



media, with journalists, activists and ordinary social media users highlighting Bani Mufleh's case, slamming Israeli authorities and demanding accountability.

This is the "the face of a tortured man who has barely survived an emergency procedure... whose quality of life has been reduced to almost zero forever," wrote one doctor on X.

Kuwaiti-American journalist Ahmed Eldin said on Instagram: "The images speak to a system designed to break Palestinian bodies as much as silence Palestinian voices: starvation, abuse, humiliation, and imprisonment without accountability."

Another X user wrote that Israeli administrative detention purposefully "destroys bodies" of Palestinians before releasing them "to collapse outside, where liability disappears."

'Not an exception'

Bani Mufleh's physical state is a reflection of the harsh treatment of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons, and demonstrates the "true meaning of Israel's exterminatory prison system, which has become a tool of both slow and direct killing of prisoners", the Palestinian Prisoners' Society said.

"[His] case is not an exception, but rather one of thousands of cases that have faced - and continue to face - systematic crimes within the Israeli prison system, through torture, starvation, total denial of medical treatment, and physical and psychological abuse at all levels, in addition to a continuous policy of psychological terror practiced against prisoners around the clock," the organization continued.

It added that there have been "hundreds of cases" of Palestinian prisoners who emerged from Israeli detention in "extremely serious physical and psychological conditions" but that the cases are often not publicized due to the "fear, shock, and terror experienced by former prisoners and their families, who worry about being re-arrested."

Reports of torture and deaths in Israeli prisons - referred to as "torture camps" by Israeli rights group B'tselem - have surged since the start of Israel's war on Gaza in October 2023.

At least 245 Palestinian journalists have been arrested by Israel since the start of the genocide in the Palestinian enclave, according to the Prisoners' Society.

At least 9,500 Palestinians are reported to be in Israeli prisons, though the actual number is believed to be higher, as Israeli authorities withhold information on hundreds of people seized in Gaza.

Hezbollah foiled the Israeli project with Iranian support: Sheikh Naim Qassem

TEHRAN - The Hezbollah secretary-general declared on Thursday that the Lebanese resistance, with Iran's backing, has entered a new phase of "breaking the Israeli project".

"What we see from the Resistance has astounded the world," Sheikh Naim Qassem said as he addressed Ashura mourners in Beirut's southern suburbs.

The cleric secretary-general was referring to the resistance movement's 15-month policy of "strategic patience" - a deliberate strategy of restraint adopted after the November 2024 ceasefire.

During the period, Israel continued airstrikes, assassinations and military incursions across Lebanese territory, claiming approximately 500 lives and committing more than 10,000 land, sea and air violations. Hezbollah largely refrained from major retaliation to avoid being accused of obstructing diplomatic efforts.

"When you watch the world, they say: What's wrong with these people, why are they doing this, and how did they do this? It

is unbelievable. Why? Because they are not accustomed to seeing this kind of patience that changes the equations," Qassem said, Press TV reported.

"Our patience builds the future, our patience flips the equations, our patience leads to consolidating the project, our patience breaks the arrogance of the tyrant," he added.

Qassem declared that Lebanon and its resistance movement have entered "a new phase called breaking the Israeli project".

"The project that sought over the past years to eliminate Hezbollah militarily, politically, culturally, and socially has failed," he stated.

"We can say that after all the attempts by the Israeli entity over the past two or three years, we have reached a stage where the project has been broken."

The Hezbollah chief was referring to Israel's stated goal of dismantling the group's military capabilities and influence.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, Egypt set for high-stakes in Group G: 2026 World Cup

TEHRAN - Iran and Egypt meet in one of the most significant Group G fixtures of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with both nations still firmly in contention for a place in the Round of 32.

The clash promises to be a tense, tactical affair as qualification hangs in the balance after an intriguing opening two rounds of group-stage action.

Egypt head into the contest in a strong position after collecting four points from their first two matches. The Pharaohs opened their campaign with a commendable 1-1 draw against Belgium before producing an impressive 3-1 victory over New Zealand. Those results have placed Hossam Hassan's side at the top of Group G, meaning a draw could be enough to secure a historic place in the knockout rounds.

Iran, meanwhile, remain unbeaten but are still searching for their first victory. Team Melli drew 2-2 with New Zealand in their opening game before frustrating Belgium in a disciplined goalless draw. Amir Ghalenoei's side has shown defensive resilience but will likely need all three points against Egypt to maximize their chances of progressing.

Much of Egypt's attacking threat revolves around captain Mohamed Salah, whose experience, movement, and creativity continue to make him one of the tournament's standout players. Supported by the pace and energy of Omar Marmoush, Egypt possess the quality to punish opponents on the counterattack while remaining compact without the ball.

Iran will once again look to experienced striker Mehdi Taremi to provide the cutting edge in attack. The Asian side have traditionally been difficult to break down, relying on a well-organized defensive structure and quick transitions. Their ability to remain disciplined against Belgium demonstrated they are capable of competing with top-quality opposition.

Tactically, the match could develop into a fascinating battle between Egypt's attacking flair and Iran's defensive organization. Egypt may enjoy more possession, while Iran are expected to sit deep before looking to exploit spaces on the break. Set pieces could also prove decisive in what is expected to be a closely contested encounter.

With Belgium also battling for qualification elsewhere in the group, every goal and every point could have major implications. Egypt know avoiding defeat may be enough, while Iran are likely to approach the contest with greater urgency from the opening whistle.

Expect a competitive, hard-fought contest featuring two experienced international sides determined to extend their World Cup journey. With knockout football within touching distance, the stakes could hardly be higher.

The head-to-head record between these two nations is essentially a blank page at competitive level. The only recorded meeting on file is a friendly played in June 2000, which ended 1-1. There is no World Cup history between them, no continental competition overlap, and no meaningful modern rivalry to draw on. Saturday's Group G clash in Seattle is effectively a new chapter, with both nations writing their own records at this tournament as they stand.

Mexican ambassador in Tehran honored for hosting Iran football team

TEHRAN - Players from Iranian football clubs Esteghlal, Persepolis, and Zob Ahan expressed their appreciation to Guillermo Alejandro Puente Ordorica, the Ambassa-

dor of the United Mexican States to Iran, for Mexico's generous hospitality toward Iran's national football team during the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The ambassador, accompanied by his family and members of the diplomatic corps, joined Iranian fans in Tehran to watch the Group G World Cup match between Iran and Belgium.

In a symbolic gesture of gratitude, Aref Gholami (Esteghlal), Mohammad Khodabandelu (Persepolis), and Shayan Mosleh, captain of Zob Ahan, presented the ambassador with a signed No. 10 Iran national team jersey in recognition of the warm welcome and generous support extended by the Mexican government and people to Team Melli throughout the tournament.

The gathering, held at Hadish Mall in Tehran, brought together sports figures, cultural personalities, and Iranian football supporters in a friendly atmosphere. Ambassador Puente Ordorica attended the event as the guest of honor and in his capacity as Dean of the Latin American Ambassadors' Group.

Also in attendance were José Rafael Silva Aponte, Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and Ramón Alberto Moncada Colindres, Ambassador of the Republic of Nicaragua, along with members of their diplomatic missions in Tehran. The diplomats enthusiastically watched the entertaining match between Iran and Belgium before spending several hours after the final whistle interacting with Iranian fans.

The event celebrated Iran's impressive performance against Belgium and highlighted the role of sport in strengthening international friendship and cultural exchange.

Szymon Marciniak appointed referee for Iran-Egypt clash

TEHRAN - FIFA has appointed Polish referee Szymon Marciniak to officiate the 2026 FIFA World Cup Group G match between Iran and Egypt.

Marciniak, who refereed the 2022 FIFA World Cup final, will be assisted by his fellow countrymen Tomasz Listkiewicz and Adam Kupsik.

The highly anticipated encounter between Iran and Egypt is scheduled to kick off at 6:30 a.m. (Iran time) on Saturday, June 27, at Lumen Field in Seattle, United States.

The match is expected to play a crucial role in determining the final standings in Group G and the teams' chances of advancing to the knockout stage.

Iran beat Kyrgyzstan at CAFA Women's Futsal Championship 2026

TEHRAN - Iran cruised to a commanding 5-0 victory over Kyrgyzstan on Thursday in the CAFA Women's Futsal Championship 2026.

Fereshte Karimi and Zahra Kiani each scored twice, while Maryam Seyed added the fifth goal as Team Melli produced a dominant display in Dushanbe.

Iran will next face hosts Tajikistan on Saturday in their second match of the tournament.

Earlier, the Central Asian Football Association (CAFA) announced that Turkmenistan's women's futsal team had withdrawn from the competition due to unforeseen circumstances.

As a result, the tournament is being contested by three national teams: Iran, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.

The 2026 CAFA Women's Futsal Championship is taking place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

Gonabad, an emerging destination for religious tourism

TEHRAN - Gonabad, a historic city in Khorasan Razavi province, is an emerging destination for religious tourism after registering the highest number of Ashura-related events in Iran's national tourism calendar, a local cultural heritage official said.

Hamidreza Mahmoudi, head of Gonabad's office of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts, said the city has 13 Ashura rituals registered in Iran's national tourism calendar and nine additional Muharram ceremonies listed as elements of the country's intangible cultural heritage.

The registrations place Gonabad first in Razavi Khorasan province in both categories and make it the leading city nationwide with a total of 24 tourism events included in the national tourism calendar, Mahmoudi told ISNA on Thursday.

He said the registered ceremonies reflect the historical and religious identity of the people of Gonabad, where Muharram traditions have been preserved through community participation and passed from one generation to another.

"What distinguishes Gonabad today is the continuity of rituals that have been transmitted across generations and are still observed while preserving their cultural identity," Mahmoudi said.

Among the city's registered Ashura ceremonies are the Nouqab passion play and reenactment of Karbala events, the Alam procession of religious groups, Nakhil processions in Nouqab, Riab, Qasabeh and Rahm villages, the raising of ceremonial flags, the Qatlgah ritual and Ta'zieh performances in Hajjiabad village,



the Hajjiabad Qatlgah mourning ceremony, the Hassan-Hossein mourning ritual in Bidokht, the Bibi Golo ceremony in Nouqab, Sham-e Ghariban commemorations, and the elegy recitation in Mend village.

Mahmoudi said each ceremony represents a living element of the city's cultural heritage with religious, anthropological, artistic, social and tourism value.

He said religious tourism has become an important branch of cultural tourism in recent years and that Gonabad's preserved Muharram traditions provide visitors with an opportunity to experience local mourning customs and learn about regional religious culture.

"Religious tourism in Gonabad is not merely about observing ceremonies," Mahmoudi said. "It is an encounter with the history, beliefs, traditions and identity of the local community."

He added that visitors experience a setting where religion, culture, art and community life intersect, creating interest among both domestic

and international tourists.

Mahmoudi said the inclusion of the city's ceremonies in national heritage and tourism registers has increased the responsibility of public institutions to preserve, document and promote them.

He called for the expansion of tourism infrastructure, stronger promotion, documentation of ceremonies, training of local guides, support for religious organizations and the production of cultural content to strengthen Gonabad's position as a destination for religious tourism.

"If these programs are implemented in a coordinated manner, the capacity of Ashura rituals can be used to introduce Gonabad more effectively at both the national and international levels," he said.

Mahmoudi said religious tourism could also contribute to the local economy alongside its cultural significance.

He attributed the survival of the ceremonies to the participation of

local residents, saying the rituals remain an integral part of the community's social and religious life rather than symbolic events.

"The voluntary participation of the people has been the most important factor in preserving these traditions and maintaining their original identity," he said.

Mahmoudi said safeguarding the ceremonies requires cooperation among residents, religious organizations, cultural institutions, media outlets and government agencies to ensure they are passed on to future generations.

Located about 270 kilometers south of Mashhad, Gonabad is one of Iran's oldest cities. The city is also home to the UNESCO-listed Qasabeh Qanat, regarded as one of the world's oldest and deepest underground water systems.

For Muslims worldwide, particularly Shia Muslims, Muharram is one of the most significant months of the Islamic calendar. During the month, mourners commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (A.S.), the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and his companions, who were martyred at the Battle of Karbala in present-day Iraq in 680 CE.

The largest commemorations take place on Ashura, the tenth day of Muharram, when mourners gather in public ceremonies to honor Imam Hussain's sacrifice and reaffirm the principles associated with his stand against the Umayyad ruler Yazid.

Iran hosts thousands of Muharram ceremonies every year, many of which incorporate local customs that have evolved over centuries.

Genetic tests underway on remains found in Ilkhanid royal cemetery

TEHRAN - Iranian archaeologists have begun genetic analysis of human remains uncovered in newly excavated Ilkhanid-era royal tombs near the UNESCO-listed Dome of Soltaniyeh in northwestern Iran, as researchers seek to identify members of the ruling dynasty buried at the site, officials said.

The latest archaeological season at the historic Soltaniyeh complex in Zanjan province uncovered two burial chambers within the Ilkhanid royal cemetery adjacent to the Mausoleum of Oljaytu, one of Iran's most significant medieval monuments.

According to Hamed Zeyfar, deputy director of the archaeological excavations at the Soltaniyeh royal tombs, the newly discovered chambers contained numerous human remains that preliminary evidence suggests belonged to members of a single royal family.

Excavations are continuing as archaeologists investigate the relationship between the newly identified tombs and other sections of the royal cemetery, Zeyfar told the Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA).

He said bone samples had been collected for genetic testing, which could provide information about the family relationships and ancestry of those buried at the site.

"Modern technologies make it possible to reconstruct part of the kinship and genetic origins of the individuals buried in these tombs, even after seven centuries," Zeyfar said.

While laboratory studies are ongoing, archaeological evidence has already confirmed that the tombs date to the Ilkhanid period,

which ruled much of Iran during the 13th and 14th centuries.

Researchers said pottery recovered from the burial layers has provided the initial basis for dating the tombs. Additional scientific analyses, including radiocarbon dating, are planned to establish a more precise chronology.

Archaeologists said one of the most significant findings was the disturbed condition of the burials. The remains of both adults and children were discovered with their original burial arrangements disrupted and skeletal elements scattered throughout the tombs.

According to Zeyfar, evidence of historical looting was found throughout the burial chambers. He said even the stone flooring of the tombs had been removed, indicating that looters dismantled the structures while searching for valuable objects.

Researchers believe the royal burials originally contained funerary objects, jewelry, metal vessels and ritual items, a conclusion supported by evidence from previous excavations at Soltaniyeh that documented metal artifacts in some graves.

Zeyfar said much of the looting likely occurred after the collapse of the Ilkhanid dynasty, possibly during the Timurid period. Historical sources also refer to damage inflicted on parts of the Soltaniyeh complex in later centuries, he said.

He added that alterations made to parts of the archaeological site during the Qajar period also resulted in the destruction of some historic structures.

French Iranologist Charles-Henri De Fouchécour dies at 100

TEHRAN - Charles-Henri de Fouchécour, a French Iranologist,

scholar of Persian literature and translator of the Divan of Hafez into French, died on June 19 at the age of 100, IRNA reported on Friday.

De Fouchécour was widely recognized for his contribution to Persian literary studies in Europe through his academic work, translations and research spanning several decades.

Born in France, he pursued a career in Iranian studies after experiences that included living in Morocco and serving during World War Two. He later held academic positions at Sorbonne University and the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INAL-

CO) in Paris.

His best-known work was a complete French translation of the Divan of Hafez, one of the most influential collections of Persian poetry. According to IRNA, the project took about 20 years to complete and included more than 1,200 pages of commentary intended to explain the historical, literary and philosophical context of the poems.

De Fouchécour said on several occasions that studying Hafez had become a lifelong commitment because of the complexity and depth of the poet's work. He worked closely with Iranian scholars specializing in Hafez during the translation process.

In addition to his translation of Hafez, de Fouchécour authored several studies on Persian literature and ethics. His research included Moralia, a study of moral concepts in Persian literature, and a book examining the influence of Imam Ali on wisdom literature in Islamic civilization and Persian literary traditions.

He also played a role in the establishment of Abstracta Iranica, an academic journal dedicated to Iranian studies that continues to serve researchers in the field.

According to IRNA, de Fouchécour's work focused on the ethical, philosophical and spiritual dimensions of Persian literature

as well as its literary characteristics. His publications introduced French-speaking audiences to classical Persian texts and contributed to the study of Iranian culture in Western academic institutions.

His translation of Hafez is regarded by many scholars as one of the most comprehensive French editions of the Persian poet's work.

Hafez, who lived in the 14th century in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz, remains one of the best-known figures in Persian literature. His poetry has been translated into numerous languages and continues to influence readers, scholars and writers around the world.

Welfare Organization, WHO discuss ways to address future of care for elderly

TEHRAN – The head of the Welfare Organization, Mohammad-Javad Hosseini, and the World Health Organization representative, Jean Jabbour, at a capacity-building session have discussed the urgent actions needed for health and social systems to adapt to meet the requirements of a significantly older population.

Hosted by the State Welfare Organization (SWO) on June 22, the session focused on integrated care for older people (ICOPE), and taking proactive steps to address the future of care for older people, WHO website announced in a press release on June 24.

The global population aged 60 years and above is growing rapidly, and the Islamic Republic of Iran is no exception. By 2050, nearly 30 percent of the Iranian population is projected to be over the age of 60, a demographic shift that brings a host of challenges.

ICOPE is grounded in the concept of healthy ageing, with a focus on developing and maintaining the functional abilities that enable well-being in older age. It promotes a community-based approach that reorients care away from a narrow focus on diseases towards an integrated, person-centered system.

During the session, Jabbour drew attention to the second edition of the ICOPE care handbook which streamlines the care pathway into four essential phases – basic assessment in the community, in-depth assessment in primary care, development of a personalized care plan and continuous monitoring.

For his part, Hosseini stressed how the Islamic Republic of Iran's rapid demographic transition requires urgent action to strengthen health and social care systems for older people. SWO, he announced, plans to pilot ICOPE in four areas covered by the Community-Based Rehabilitation Program, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and other partners, and with technical support from WHO.

For the strategy to succeed, health cannot be treated as an



isolated sector: successful implementation, said Jabbour, relies on intersectoral collaboration, linking health services with social welfare, housing, transport and community support to enable older people to age in place, safely and comfortably. He underlined that community participation is central to the strategy: engaging older people as active decision-makers in their own care and empowering family caregivers through training can help build a care system that is both humane and sustainable.

Team Lead for Healthier Populations at the WHO Country Office, Rahim Taqizadeh-Asl, presented the strategic foundations for integrated care, emphasizing the need to transform fragmented services into a capacity- and person-centered ecosystem.

He highlighted the importance of maximizing functional ability through multidisciplinary coordination, community-based care pathways and digital enablement to help ensure that older people can age with dignity while maintaining independence.

Acknowledging the challenges, including service fragmentation, Jabbour expressed confidence in the country's existing capacities and the strong commitment of its care providers to bridge any gaps. He reaffirmed WHO's commitment to providing technical support, including through training health workers and adapting digital self-management tools to local contexts.

The session concluded with a shared commitment to ensure that every older person is seen

not as a set of symptoms but as an individual with a lifetime of experience who deserves to age with dignity, independence and respect.

Welfare Organization services to the elderly

The Welfare Organization is planning to train consultants on aging or aging life care professionals.

It has launched community-based rehabilitation (CBR) projects in less privileged and remote areas where access to welfare services is limited. Social workers receive a 20-hour training to start their jobs as facilitators in these centers.

The project has so far covered 95 percent of the rural areas, and is planned to cover 30 percent of urban areas, as well.

According to Hosseini, the Welfare Organization has validated some 300 elderly day-care centers in cooperation with the national standard organization, and it is planning to establish new elderly service centers such as the elderly villages and elderly social health towns, behzisti.ir reported.

Prevention of disability in old age, home rehabilitation, home care services, and livelihood assistance for the elderly with severe disabilities are among other programs of the organization. The financial assistance has increased by 80 percent for nursing and 100 percent for home visit services.

The Welfare Organization has started to implement a forty-day training program for old people

to improve their quality of life.

The program includes 240 different educational subjects such as health, life skills, arts, communication skills, digital and entrepreneurship, music, sports, games, and other leisure activities.

It was planned to be implemented as a pilot program in Tehran. Each individual registers to participate in the program for forty days within the three-month duration.

Participants are divided into two groups to attend the sessions either on odd or even days, with educational programs provided daily in two different parts. The first 15 minutes is dedicated to physical workout, the next 45 minutes focus on specialized training, and 90 minutes is allocated to recreational programs. During the educational courses, each person receives detailed training essential for self-care and improving their quality of life. Last year, over 200 older people received training.

So far, 19 cities in the country have taken necessary measures to develop age-friendly communities. These cities are located in different provinces, including Tehran, Gilan, Yazd, Isfahan, East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Lorestan, Hamedan, Khuzestan, and Bushehr.

Age-friendly communities are places where age is not a barrier to living well and where the environment, activities, and services support and enable older people to have opportunities to enjoy life and feel well.

Flamingo population rises as 36,000 chicks recorded in Shadegan Wetland

TEHRAN – Ongoing conservation efforts and favorable ecological conditions have led to an increase in the population of flamingo chicks in Shadegan Wetland, southwestern Khuzestan Province.

The wetland, the largest breeding habitat for flamingos in the province, is home to six active breeding colonies. These colonies are monitored, surveyed, and protected on a regular basis each year.

Last year's census recorded approximately 35,000 flamingo chicks, while this year's survey counted around 36,000 chicks, reflecting a continued upward trend in the population of this valuable species at the wetland.

The wetland covers an area of over 500,000 hectares. Registered as one of the largest wetlands in the Ramsar Convention, Shadegan is a wetland of national and international importance due to its vast area and rich biodiversity.

The wetland is known as one of the most important flamingos breeding habitats in the country, hosting six flamingos breeding colonies which are continuously monitored by the experts of the provincial Department of Environment (DOE), IRIB quoted Mohammad-Javad Ashrafi, an official with DOE, as saying.

During the winter census of aquatic and waterside birds, around 7,500 adult flamingos were recorded in the wetland, the official noted.

The majority of these birds fly from Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, and Southern Africa to Shadegan Wetland, Ashrafi added.

A ringed flamingo from Italy and two rare lesser flamingoes are among the valuable species that have been spotted here, he fur-

ther noted.

Over the past few years, Shadegan wetland faced severe water shortage because of heavy water withdrawal and reduced river flows. Water level dropped sharply in some parts, posing serious threats to the wetland's vegetation and animal species.

However, the recent increase in precipitation in southwestern Khuzestan province has restored 92 percent of the Shadegan wetland, which is thriving as an ecosystem benefiting flora and fauna, as well as local communities, IRNA quoted Mosa Modhaji, an official with the DOE, as saying in May.

Shadegan is one of the most valuable wetlands of the country, which plays an integral role in the ecological sustainability of the region, he noted.

"The wetland's revival has also brought great joy to the local community whose livelihoods have long depended on fishing, reed harvesting, livestock farming, and tourism. Some 100,000 people rely on the wetland for their livelihood.

Currently, the water level of the wetland is close to its optimal level. The natural flow of water has contributed to the restoration of some habitats in the central and southern parts of the wetland," he added.

Healthy, restored wetlands hosting migratory birds

Improved environmental conditions in western Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province and northwestern West Azarbaijan province have brought many birds back to wetlands and lakes to nest and breed.

According to the provincial head of the



Department of Environment (DOE) in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, Ruhollah Asgari, this year around 35,000 aquatic and waterside birds have nested to breed in Gandoman and Choghakhor wetlands.

Over 30 bird species, including ferruginous duck, common pochard (Aythya ferina), purple heron, great grebe, little grebe, black-necked grebe, spoonbill, and tern, are inhabiting in the wetlands.

Favorable habitat conditions, diverse vegetation, and rich food resources have established the wetlands as primary breeding centers for birds, he added.

Thanks to an 18-fold increase in the volume of water in Lake Urmia, reaching 4.28 billion cubic meters now, and the restoration of the food resources in this ecosystem, a large number of flamingos have returned to the lake.

With the improved water conditions, over 6,000 flamingos are expected to fly to Lake Urmia and its satellite wetlands.

Filed surveys have shown the birds nesting and breeding in the southern parts of the lake.

Iranian girls grab medals at OpenGeo 2026

TEHRAN – Four Iranian female students attended the Open International Geography Olympiad (OpenGeo) 2026, winning four medals, including a silver medal and three bronze medals for the first time.

Artina Heidari won the silver medal; Seta-yesh Haqazari, Sana Karbalaei Vali, and Helia Khodabandelou received the bronze medals, IRIB reported.

The achievement showcased the Iranian students' comprehensive expertise in geography and serves as a significant step in preparing students for successful participation in the International Geography Olympiad (IGO).

The OpenGeo aims to promote interest in geography among secondary school students worldwide; develop geographical thinking, analytical, and practical skills among school students and future geographers; and support international connections between young geographers.

Organized by the Faculty of Geography, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow State University High School, and Primakov School, the competition was held online on June 20 and 21, with competitors from 27 countries attending the contest.

The participants were students aged between 14 and 19 years old enrolled in secondary school or graduating in 2026.

The competition consisted of a Written Response Test (WRT) taking 2.5 hours, a Practical and Mapping Exercise (PME) taking 2.5 hours, and a Multimedia Test (MMT) taking one hour.

Iran among top eight countries in intl. Olympiads

Iran ranks eighth worldwide in international Olympiads as the country stood respectively third, seventh, and eighth in mathematics, computer, and physics Olympiads last year, IRNA quoted Reza Hosseini, the head of the Young Scholars Club, as saying in February.

Many countries, such as China and the U.S., as well as world's big technological companies are directly in touch with the club to attract Iranian Olympiad winners, he added.

He went on to say that the country allocates specific facilities to these gifted students. The gold winners can major in their specialized fields in Iranian universities without participating in the university entrance exam.

Students who have grabbed gold at the International Biology Olympiad can study medical sciences, and those who won gold medals at the International Mathematical Olympiad or the International Physics Olympiad can major in technical and engineering fields.

The club aims to improve the country's ranking in international Olympiads, Hosseini stressed.

Achievements in Olympiads

The Iranian team, comprising four high school students, grabbed two silver medals and two bronze medals at the International Olympiad in Artificial Intelligence (IOAI), held from August 2 to 9, 2025, in Beijing, China.

Arash Yousefnejad and Ali Shayan claimed the silver medals, while Parsa Golestani and Radin Rahmani-Nodehi won the bronze medals, IRIB reported.

Iran won two silver medals and two bronze medals at the Eighth International Economics Olympiad (IEO) 2025, held from July 20 to 29, 2025, in Baku, Azerbaijan, with 68 countries in attendance.

Four Iranian students clinched three gold medals and a silver medal at the 36th International Biology Olympiad (IBO 2025), held from July 19 to 27, 2025, in Quezon City, Philippines, ranking second among 81 countries, up from third in 2024.

Five Iranian students secured silver medals at the 55th International Physics Olympiad, ranking 11th globally.

Held from July 18 to 24 in Paris, the IPHO 2025 brought together 440 candidates from over 90 countries.

Iran secured two gold medals, three silver medals, and a bronze medal at the 66th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO 2025), held from July 10 to 20 in Australia. The event drew more than 600 high school students from 112 countries.

At the second International Mathematics Olympiad for high school students in Turkmenistan, Iranian students won seven bronze medals. The event was held from April 21 to 26, 2025.

More than 230 talented students from 15 countries, including Russia, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Iran, Armenia, Bulgaria, Nepal, China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Vietnam, Qatar, and Turkmenistan, took part in the competition.

IRCS ready to dispatch rescue, relief aid to quake-hit Venezuela

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has announced readiness to send rescue forces to assist people impacted by the earthquake in Venezuela.

"The Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran extends its respectful greetings to you, your colleagues, and the dedicated volunteers of the Venezuelan Red Cross Society," IRCS head, Pirhossein Kolivand, wrote in a message to his Venezuelan counterpart, Luis Manuel Farias Villanueva, on Thursday.

"It is with great sorrow that we have learned about the strong earthquakes in Venezuela, which have unfortunately resulted in the loss of dozens of lives and injuries to more than hundreds of people, as well as extensive damage to homes and infrastructure across the states of La Guaira, Carabobo, Miranda, Aragua, and Falcón, and the cities of Caracas, Valencia, Maracay, and Morón. We are deeply affected and saddened by the tragic disaster and the suffering it has brought upon the people of Venezuela.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran stands with you in these difficult moments, expressing sincere sympathy to Your Excellency and the Venezuelan Red Cross Society, as well as condolences to the bereaved families and those affected by this tragic disaster. We hereby declare readiness to dispatch relief and medical teams.

We sincerely wish you and your colleagues continued strength, health, and success in your noble humanitarian efforts."

On June 24, two devastating earthquakes (measured 7.2 and 7.5 magnitude) struck north-central Venezuela, among the strongest in over a century. Buildings collapsed in Caracas and surrounding states, power and

hospitals were disrupted, and a state of emergency was declared. Search and rescue is underway; official casualty and damage figures are still being assessed.

The earthquakes were felt across much of the country, including Caracas, La Guaira, Aragua, Carabobo, and neighbouring states. Therefore, the national government of Venezuela declared the state of emergency.

According to the country's health minister, at least 235 people have been killed and 4,300 others wounded, with most casualties recorded in the northern coastal region of La Guaira.

President Masoud Pezeshkian, in a message to Venezuela's acting president, Delcy Rodríguez, expressed deep sympathy over the loss of life and injuries following the dual earthquakes.

The official highlighted that Iran stands with Venezuela in this difficult time and announced the country's readiness to dispatch emergency relief, medical equipment, and humanitarian aid to help those affected by the quakes.

In this line, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote in his X account: "Deeply saddened by the earthquake in Venezuela. We extend our condolences to the government and people of Venezuela, especially the families of the victims, and wish a swift recovery to the injured. The Islamic Republic of Iran stands in solidarity with Venezuelans and is ready to offer full assistance."

Also, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei, in a statement on Thursday, expressed Iran's sympathy and solidarity with the government and people of Venezuela, announcing the country's readiness to assist in relief and rescue operations.



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**

Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601

Email: info@tehrantimes.com

Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430

Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 43051505

Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430



No. 18, Moghadasi Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.O. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

JUNE 27, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you fail to attain your desire, do not blame others, and accept your fate in any case.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:07 Evening: 19:45 Dawn: 3:04 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:51 (tomorrow)

New edition of "The Writer's Journey" available in Persian

TEHRAN – Hermes Publication in Tehran has released the Persian translation of the book "The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers," a popular writing textbook by Christopher Vogler and translated by Mohammad Gozarabadi.

The book focuses on the theory that most stories can be boiled down to a series of narrative structures and character archetypes, described through mythological allegory, Mehr reported.

Originally published in 1992, the book was very well received upon its release, and is often featured in recommended reading lists for student screenwriters.

Vogler revised the book for the second release in 1998. The third edition, published in 2007, included a new introduction, new artwork, and analysis of recent, popular motion pictures. In July 2020, the 25th Anniversary Edition was published, which includes new sections and topics. The recent release by Hermes Publication is the translation of the latest edition of the book.

The book has two major sections: Mapping the Journey, which discusses the archetypes we will encounter, and Stages of the Journey, which takes us through the major plot points.

Vogler doesn't attempt to define All Stories, instead focusing specifically on mythic and epic structure, which is much more manageable and sensible.

The subsets of stories he has chosen — myths and epics — are grand by nature. The Middle Ages artwork at the start of each chapter feels like it belongs.

Vogler is quick to allow and even encourage exceptions to his rules. He doesn't seem threatened

by films that don't follow his structure, but instead is happy to tackle difficult stories and show how they fit. He offers "Pulp Fiction" as a case study, demonstrating it fits even with its non-linear storytelling, and he does so convincingly. Then he applauds its untraditional nature.

Vogler provides a universally applicable way of thinking without trapping himself into calling it the only way of thinking. He manages to be all encompassing without being suffocating; grand enough to be valuable without being so grand it's ridiculous.

Christopher Vogler, 77, is a Hollywood development executive, screenwriter, author and educator, best known for working with Disney and his screenwriting guide.

He made documentary films as an Air Force officer before studying film production at the University of Southern California, where he encountered the ideas of mythologist Joseph Campbell and observed how they influenced the story design of the first "Star Wars" movie.

He worked as a story consultant in the development departments of 20th Century Fox, Walt Disney Pictures and Animation, and Paramount Pictures, and wrote an influential memo on Campbell's "Hero's Journey" concept that led to his involvement in Disney's "Aladdin," "The Lion King," and "Hercules."

After the publication of "The Writer's Journey," he had a hand in developing the stories of many productions, including Disney's remake of "101 Dalmatians," Fox's "Fight Club," "Courage Under Fire," "Volcano," "The Thin Red Line," and many others.

Cartoon of Day



Still Gaza

Cartoonist: Muzaffar Yulchiboev from Uzbekistan

Ruholamin unveils new Ashura-themed painting "Iron and Moonlight"

TEHRAN – Renowned Iranian artist Hassan Ruholamin has unveiled his latest Ashura-themed artwork titled "Iron and Moonlight," depicting the martyrdom of Hazrat Abbas (AS), the brother of Imam Hussein (AS) and the standard-bearer of the Imam's group during the battle of Ashura in 680, during which the Imam and his companions were martyred.

Ruholamin has continued his annual tradition of creating artworks as an act of devotion to Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions, Mehr reported on Friday.

The painting was officially unveiled in Karbala on Wednesday, the eve of Tasua, the report added.

The artist has dedicated this particular piece to the memory of Hazrat Umm al-Banin (SA), the mother of Hazrat Abbas (AS).

The artwork is an oil-on-canvas painting measuring 270 by 380 centimeters.

Hazrat Abbas (AS), the son of Imam Ali (AS) and brother of Imam Hussein (AS), is revered as a timeless symbol of absolute loyalty, courage, and selfless devotion. He was known for his immense strength and unwavering faith. His martyrdom is one of the most poignant chapters of Ashura, centered around his heroic yet heart-breaking attempt to fetch water from the Euphrates River for the thirsty children of the camp.

In a profound act of sacrifice, he famously refused to drink water himself while his brother's family suffered from thirst. His eventual martyrdom, marked by the loss of both his arms and his life while



fighting to protect the water skin, remains a powerful testament to the bonds of brotherhood and the pinnacle of spiritual devotion.

Ruholamin, who is best known for his paintings on early Islamic historical events, has created a captivating collection of artworks dedicated to the theme of Ashura over the years.

One of the works of the collection is "Daddy" depicting the Imam

in his final farewell to his three-year-old daughter Roqayyeh (SA).

The 110 X 130-centimeter oil painting shows the Imam embracing Roqayyeh before going to the battlefield while his horse, named "Zuljinah," and the enemy forces can be seen in the background.

The collection also includes "The Sky Fell Down," "The Farewell," "After Abbas (AS)," "Are You My Brother?," "Monastery of the Monk" and

"Beginning of Silence".

"The Sky Fell Down", featuring the last moments of the life of Imam Hussein (AS), is a highlight of the collection.

The painting depicts the Imam on his horse, severely injured by arrows, while the enemy is waiting to bring down the Imam.

Ruholamin spent nine months doing the painting, which was unveiled at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art in November 2018.

"Monastery of the Monk" is another artwork from his Ashura collection.

The painting depicts the meeting of a monk with Khawli ibn Yazid al-Asbahi, a member of Umar ibn Sad's army, when he was taking the head of Imam Hussein (AS) to Yazid ibn Muawiyah, the second caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, after the Ashura event.

Another work of artist on Ashura is a digital painting entitled "The Bravery of Hussein", which portrays Imam Hussein (AS)'s courageous battle with the army of Yazid ibn Muawiyah on the 10th day of the month of Muharram in the year 61 AH of the Islamic calendar (680 CE).

The painting depicts the remarkable battle of Imam Hussein (AS) on the day of Ashura amidst a sea of arrows, spears, and swords and this awe-inspiring display of courage has since become an enduring symbol of bravery.

The artist has also blended modern events and with stories from Islamic history in some of his works.

Pop singer Mohsen Chavoshi releases "Sun-Wounded" as tribute to Imam Hussein (AS)

TEHRAN – Prominent Iranian pop singer and composer Mohsen Chavoshi has released his latest single, "Sun-Wounded", marking the mourning month of Muharram and the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS).

The track, featuring lyrics by Omid Roozbeh and composed and performed by Chavoshi, was released on Tuesday evening, coinciding with the eve of Tasua, IRNA reported.

The work is dedicated as an act of devotion to Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions, the report added.

The production of the piece included Reza Foadian as the arranger, Mehdi Karimi for mixing and mastering, and Hamed Talkhabi as the cover artist.

Chavoshi, a leading figure in Iranian pop music, has consistently dedicated a portion of his artistic career to themes of Ashura and

the tragedy of Karbala.

Back in April, he was named the Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year for 1404 (2025-2026) during the closing ceremony of the 12th edition of the Islamic Revolution Art Week.

Chavoshi received the prestigious title for his acclaimed tracks "Alaj" and "Hasbi Allah," which have resonated deeply with the public during the period of the US-Israeli war imposed on the country.

40th Cinema Ritrovato Festival presenting movies by late Iranian filmmakers

TEHRAN – The 40th Cinema Ritrovato (Rediscovered) Festival in Bologna, Italy, which is dedicated to screening restored, rediscovered, and lesser-seen films from cinema history, is hosting films by late Iranian filmmakers Abbas Kiarostami, Dariush Mehrjui, and Ebrahim Golestan.

Having launched on June 20, this year's festival held a tribute to Kiarostami, screening four of his short films including "Bread and Alley" (1970), "Breaktime" (1972), "Two Solutions for One Problem" (1975), and "The Chorus" (1982), Honaronline reported.

"The Cycle" (1975) directed by Dariush Mehrjui and "The Secrets of the Treasure of the Jinn Valley" by Ebrahim Golestan are other Iranian films screened at the festival.

Mehrjui was a central figure of the Iranian New Wave. In "The Cycle," he confronted the underground blood trade with stark realism, transforming the body into a site of social conflict.

The film was restored in 4K in 2025 by La Cinéma-thèque française, from a 35mm positive print, in collaboration with the family of Mehrjui.

In the late director's harrowing tale of moral and social destitution, a young man named Ali brings his elderly and ailing father to the city for treatment. Unable to secure admission to a hospital, they are forced into life on the streets, where Ali encounters a rogue hospital driver, a nurse, and the head

of a blood-dealing operation. He eventually ends up working for the latter, buying blood from junkies and the poor.

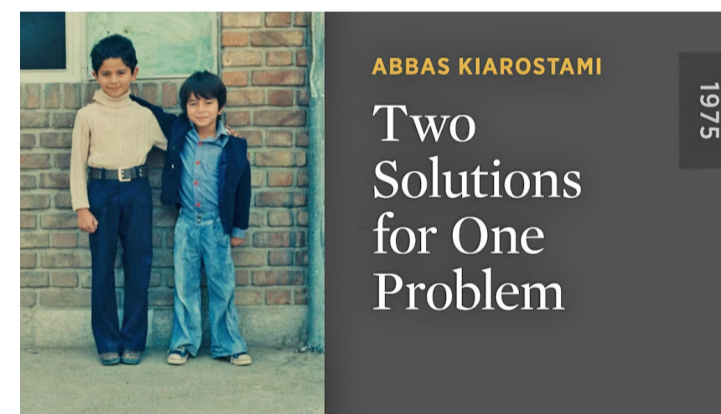
Based on Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi's "Garbage Dump," "The Cycle" marks Mehrjui's second collaboration with the renowned writer, following the pivotal "The Cow".

As in "The Cow" and "The Postman," in which ordinary men turn into animals, there is another metamorphosis embedded in "The Cycle," though a far subtler one: the perfectly angelic Ali is compelled by his surroundings to become a monster. It does not, however, fundamentally change his outlook or behavior. Rather, what makes "The Cycle" the most unsettling of Mehrjui's films is that the unleashing of a beastly nature makes Ali slick and calculating.

With his final film, "Secrets of the Jinn Valley Treasure," Golestan turned to satire and allegory to stage the distortions produced by modernization and power.

The film was restored in 4K in 2026 by Cineteca di Bologna and the Iran Heritage Foundation at L'Immagine Ritrovata laboratory, from the original camera and sound negatives deposited at Cineteca di Bologna.

Writer, director, and producer Ebrahim Golestan's final cinematic work, which he also shot and edited, is a political satire about a farmer who discovers a treasure trove in a cave beneath his barren



ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

Two Solutions for One Problem

1975

land. The wealth turns him into a mini-tyrant, corrupts the villagers, and attracts parasites from the city.

Conceived as a political allegory warning against a rising nouveau riche culture that discarded century-old ways of life in favor of hastily adopted, inharmonious values, the film also pokes fun at intellectuals who turn a blind eye and even assist in the process for their own self-advancement.

Unlike his previous films, Golestan wanted this one to be accessible to the masses. Golestan felt compelled to conceal the story during production (1971-72), as most of the characters were drawn from the leading political figures of the country. Expecting to see his film banned, Golestan even published it as a story in book form before releasing the film. When the film reached the screens, its political message was immediately understood by audiences, who were reported to have applauded during

some of the scenes. This made the censors alert to both the film and the book, and they were eventually banned.

The Cinema Ritrovato is an annual film festival organized every summer by Cineteca di Bologna in Italy and dedicated to the history of cinema, screening film classics and retrospectives, and showcasing the latest restored works from cinematographic archives and film laboratories around the world.

Established in 1986, the festival has evolved from its niche origins into an influential international gathering captivating a new generation of cinephiles.

In addition to presenting 500 films across various sections, this year's edition of the festival includes numerous exhibitions dedicated to the history of cinema as well as a book fair, selling books, DVDs, posters, and other treasures. The festival will wrap up on June 28.