

Why are American families paying price for Washington's reckless Iran policy?

TEHRAN- The United States boasts the title of the world's largest oil producer, churning out over 13 million barrels of crude daily and exporting more than it imports. Only about 8 percent of U.S. imported oil comes from the Persian Gulf. By that arithmetic, one might assume that a military confrontation with Iran would barely register at American gasoline pumps.

Yet on July 13, as renewed U.S. airstrikes against Iranian targets shattered a fragile ceasefire, Brent crude jumped \$2.39 to \$78.40 a barrel. ► Page 4

The Strait of Hormuz: Iran's geographic destiny and strategic red line

By Syeda Farheen Naqi Mossavi

HAFIZABAD - Pakistan - For centuries, the narrow blue artery that separates the Arabian Peninsula from the Iranian plateau has been more than a mere shipping lane. The Strait of Hormuz, at its slenderest point a mere 21 nautical miles across, has functioned as the world's petroleum lifeline, the chokepoint through which approximately a fifth of global oil consumption once flowed. But for Iran, this waterway is not simply a commercial corridor to be managed; it is the geographical expression of the nation's strategic depth, a natural extension of its sovereign territory, and, increasingly, the most credible deterrent in its defensive arsenal. Recent events have thrust the Strait back to the center of global attention, with Tehran's decisive assertion of control exposing the fundamental asymmetry that defines the balance of power in the Persian Gulf. ► Page 5

Beyond exhibition: How Iran is securing its share of trillion-dollar halal market

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- The global halal economy is no longer a peripheral niche. Valued well above two trillion dollars and expanding at a remarkable annual rate, it encompasses not only food and beverages but also pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, logistics, tourism, and financial services.

For Iran, actively penetrating this vast and lucrative domain is not merely an export ambition; it is a strategic imperative for diversifying national revenue, reducing oil dependency, and showcasing the country's scientific and industrial prowess. The recent Iranian participation in the Indonesia International Halal Exhibition—marked by a dedicated pavilion, high-level diplomatic engagement, ► Page 4

OCHA condemns US attacks on Iranian relief centers, humanitarian infrastructure

TEHRAN - The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has condemned attacks by the United States and the Zionist Regime targeting Iranian relief workers, medical personnel, ambulances, and humanitarian infrastructure, stressing the need to uphold international humanitarian law and ensure the protection of aid workers and civilians.

In an official letter addressed to Pirhossein Kolivand, the president of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, Gemma Connell, the head of OCHA's Humanitarian Affairs Office, expressed concern over the devastating impact of the conflict on civilians, particularly women and children. ► Page 7



View of several commercial ships from the northern shore of the Strait of Hormuz

Missiles Fired in Hormuz, Ballots Shaken in America

From the Strait of Hormuz to Capitol Hill: A war reshaping US politics

"Iran's military forces, with unwavering resolve and sacrificial valor, transforming the strategic waters of the Persian Gulf into a testament to their enduring resistance against foreign aggression."

By Fardin Molaei

TEHRAN- Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced on Wednesday a sweeping new wave of military operations targeting US military infrastructure across the Persian Gulf, saying the strikes were carried out in retaliation for continued American attacks on Iranian territory and violations of the Iran-US Islamabad memorandum of understanding (MoU).

Seven members of Iran's Army Ground Force were martyred after a US missile strike on a military base in Bampur, southeastern Iran, early Wednesday. The Army said the attack targeted residential and dormitory facilities of the 388th Iranshahr Brigade, leaving several others wounded. Condemning the strike as a "cowardly aggression," the Army vowed a decisive response while affirming that

Iran's borders remain secure.

In a series of statements, the IRGC said it had struck multiple strategic US military installations in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan as part of the latest phases of Operation Nasr-2 (Victory-2), while reiterating that the Strait of Hormuz would remain closed until 'the end of Washington's aggressive actions.'

According to the IRGC, the fourth wave of the operation targeted the main US military logistics center in Mina Abdullah, Kuwait, setting the facility ablaze and destroying

its infrastructure. The IRGC accused Washington of attempting to conceal the failure of recent military operations by launching overnight strikes against Iranian coastal provinces after failing to secure maritime passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The fifth wave focused on Bahrain, where the IRGC said its naval forces struck the US Fifth Fleet's command-and-control headquarters, logistics facilities, fuel depots, warehouses, and military equipment storage sites. The statement argued that US naval deployments had effectively disrupted regional shipping routes and warned that if exports serving American interests continued while others remained blocked, additional energy corridors could also become targets. ► Page 3



Inaugural Global Poetry Award for Martyr Leader concluded

TEHRAN - The closing ceremony of the first Martyr Leader Global Poetry Award, aimed at commemorating the legacy and path of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, was held on Monday at the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization in Tehran with the presence of cultural officials, intellectuals, and prominent international poets.

In his address at the ceremony, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyyed Abbas Salehi, emphasized the unique poetic stature of the Martyr Leader and said, ► Page 8

President Pezeshkian: National unity greatest asset to foil enemy designs

TEHRAN — Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has described "national unity" as the country's key asset to navigate challenges and thwart enemy plots. Pezeshkian made the comments during a cabinet session on Wednesday morning, where he called for avoiding divisive rhetoric and emphasized that safeguarding national solidarity is a collective responsibility. ► Page 2

Iran condemns UK designation of IRGC

TEHRAN- Iran's Army has strongly condemned the United Kingdom's decision to designate the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a "terrorist organization," describing the move as politically driven and reaffirming its unwavering solidarity with the IRGC in defending the country's national security and sovereignty.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Army rejected the British decision, portraying the IRGC as a pivotal force in the fight against terrorism and crediting it with making significant contributions to safeguarding Iran's national security and promoting regional stability.

The Army emphasized that, under the command of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, it will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the IRGC in confronting external threats and protecting Iran's independence, territorial integrity, and national interests. ► Page 2

Assembly of Experts demands retribution for martyred Leader

TEHRAN — Ayatollah Mohammad-Ali Movahedi Kermani, Chairman of the Assembly of Experts, said all planners and perpetrators behind the assassination of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, must be identified, prosecuted, and decisively punished. Speaking to Fars News Agency on the sidelines of a massive memorial ceremony at the Grand Mosalla of Imam Khomeini in Tehran on Tuesday, Ayatollah Movahedi Kermani urged all responsible state institutions to pursue the legal and intelligence files on this case with the utmost resolve until final retribution is exacted and a punishing result is achieved.

The ceremony to honor the martyred Leader in Mosala was packed with citizens, families of martyrs, veterans, youth, and a prominent assembly of high-ranking national and military officials. ► Page 2

Gogol in Hormuz: The collapse of US hegemonic fiction

By Xavier Villar

MADRID - In Nikolai Gogol's "The Government Inspector", corrupt officials in a small Russian town panic at the arrival of a young man from St Petersburg. Ivan Khlestakov is a minor clerk, but the locals' fear of their own embezzlement elevates him to an imperial auditor. His authority derives not from the tsar, but from his hosts' paranoia. When the mask slips, only the ridicule of the deceived remains. Today, the US national security bureaucracy operates under this exact psychology. Washington demands Iran accept security guarantees for temporary sanctions waivers, knowing its own Congress can revoke them at the slightest tremor. When Tehran refuses to validate the fiction, the Trump administration responds with the theatricality of a cornered bureaucrat, threatening from Truth Social to plunge into an abyss it dares not cross. ► Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Strait of Hormuz: A geopolitical lever

Mashallah Shams-al-Vaezin, a prominent analyst of strategic affairs, told Etemad that the recent Iran-US tensions in the Strait of Hormuz should be interpreted in connection with Clause 5 of the memorandum of understanding between the two countries. According to him, Iran views the Strait of Hormuz not merely as a waterway but as a strategic achievement — a national asset it is unwilling to relinquish under any circumstances. He emphasized that despite rising tensions, the likelihood of a war similar to the 40-day conflict is extremely low. The Strait of Hormuz functions not only as a vital energy corridor but as a “geopolitical lever” whose stability directly influences global markets. Any sign of insecurity immediately affects global oil prices, maritime insurance rates, and the security calculations of regional and international actors. Politically, the Strait becomes a bargaining instrument — used both in formal negotiations and in indirect diplomatic signaling. Shams-al-Vaezin argues that Iran, relying on time, strategic patience, and above all its geographical position, can navigate the crisis without escalating it into full-scale conflict. He also advises Iranian decision-makers to adopt diplomatic strategies that would convert military achievements into tangible economic gains, turning geopolitical leverage into measurable national benefit.

Sobh-e-No: Yemen's strategic value rises in Iran's regional calculations

Sobh-e-No analyzed the landing of an Iranian aircraft at Yemen's Hodeidah International Airport, describing it as a move that effectively ended Saudi Arabia's 11-year air blockade of Sanaa. According to the paper, Iran's decision to send a direct flight — without seeking Saudi approval — demonstrated that Tehran rejects Riyadh's monopoly over Yemen's airspace. The newspaper argues that Iran showed it does not abandon its allies during critical moments. This action strengthened Tehran's image as a reliable and powerful supporter within the “Axis of Resistance,” imposed new strategic rules on Saudi Arabia, and signaled that the era of Iranian passivity has ended. The message to Riyadh, according to the paper, is clear: any attempt to continue the blockade will trigger a military response from Yemen. The move also revealed that new regional power dynamics are emerging, confronting Saudi Arabia and its allies with a new reality — the monopoly over Yemen's skies is over, and future responses may extend beyond Yemen's borders.

Resalat: The Western-Arab coalition caught in a strategic trap

Resalat focused on Iran's and the resistance front's strength in confronting the

Western-Arab coalition. The paper described West Asia as witnessing unprecedented field developments and dramatic shifts in regional power structures. Following aggressive actions by the coalition led by the United States and supported by Saudi Arabia, Iran's armed forces and the Yemeni resistance delivered decisive, multilayered, and historic responses. The newspaper argues that these developments sent a clear message to the world: the era of [hit-and-run] imperial behavior in the region is over. It argues that resistance diplomacy combined with military deterrence is the only language understood by aggressors. According to Resalat, the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Red Sea are now more firmly under the control of their “rightful owners” than ever before. The Western-Arab coalition, it says, is trapped in a strategic dilemma where any further action will only accelerate the collapse of its already declining regional influence.

Arman-e-Melli: A full-scale war remains unlikely

To analyze recent developments in the United States and the possibility of war with Iran, Arman-e-Melli interviewed international affairs expert Kourosh Ahmadi. He noted that Congress plays a minimal role in shaping foreign policy, though its members often adopt anti-war positions to strengthen their electoral image. Ahmadi believes a full-scale war is not currently on the US agenda. Instead, he expects tensions to continue below the threshold of total war, with limited military operations and controlled escalation. He suggests that the situation could evolve into a naval blockade, similar to previous episodes. Although the probability of a full war has increased compared to earlier periods, he still considers it unlikely unless major changes occur in the strategic environment.

Hamshahri: The problem began with “necessary arrangements”

Hamshahri criticized the Trump administration's haste in drafting the memorandum of understanding. The agreement required Iran to provide “necessary arrangements” for safe commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz for 60 days and to cooperate with Oman on future administration and maritime services. At first glance, the text seemed to secure what Washington wanted: continued normal functioning of the Strait. But Iran appears to have interpreted these clauses as recognition of its role in managing the waterway after a permanent agreement. Thus, Iran's current efforts to shape the new situation are, in the paper's view, predictable.

Iran condemns UK designation of IRGC

From page 1 ► The statement follows a sharp condemnation by Iran's Foreign Ministry on Tuesday, which denounced London's decision as politically motivated and inconsistent with international law. The ministry stressed that the IRGC is an official component of Iran's Armed Forces, operating alongside the Army to defend the country's sovereignty and security.

The Foreign Ministry also underscored the IRGC's role in combating the Daesh (ISIL) terrorist group, arguing that its counterterrorism efforts have contributed to regional security. It warned that Tehran reserves the right to adopt reciprocal measures in response to the British decision and held the UK government responsible for any political, legal, and diplomatic consequences resulting from the designation.

The statement added that the British decision was based on “baseless security allegations,” while denouncing the UK for hosting and supporting terrorist and violent groups and networks.

The Foreign Ministry concluded by saying that Iran reserves “all its rights under the United Nations Charter and international



law” to take reciprocal measures against Britain's action, stressing that responsibility for the “destructive political, legal, and diplomatic consequences” of the decision rests with the British government.

The UK government announced its decision to designate Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization, claiming that the force has been involved in activities threatening British national security and regional stability. London claimed the measure forms part of a broader effort to counter what it describes as hostile activities linked to Iran.

President Pezeshkian: National unity greatest asset to foil enemy designs

TEHRAN — Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has described “national unity” as the country's key asset to navigate challenges and thwart enemy plots. Pezeshkian made the comments during a cabinet session on Wednesday morning, where he called for avoiding divisive rhetoric and emphasized that safeguarding national solidarity is a collective responsibility.

Speaking during the same cabinet session, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, announced that the farewell, tribute, and funeral processions held for the late Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, have been officially registered on Iran's National Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Describing the historic ceremonies as a profound symbol of the rich mourning traditions and so-



cial solidarity of the Iranian people, the minister noted that this spiritual heritage was formally registered on June 29, 2026, under registration number 3365.

The calls for solidarity come at a highly sensitive time for the Islamic Republic following the martyrdom of Ayatollah Khamenei on the first day of the US-Is-

raeli aggression on February 28. He guided the nation's domestic and foreign policy for over three decades. Ayatollah Khamenei was laid to rest in his birthplace of Mashhad last Thursday, home to the Imam Reza Shrine, one of the most sacred sites in Shia Islam. The massive funeral processions spanning multiple

cities culminated in Mashhad, drawing millions of mourners and prompting the Ministry of Cultural Heritage to permanently enshrine the event on the national registry to emphasize social cohesion.

The transition of authority to Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, represents a pivotal moment in Iran's modern history. Historically, periods of leadership succession are met with intense international scrutiny and domestic political sensitivity. In his statements, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, has strongly echoed these sentiments, repeatedly calling on all political factions, security forces, and citizens to preserve national unity. He has warned that maintaining a unified front is essential to preserve state stability and deter external adversaries during this period of monumental change.

Assembly of Experts demands retribution for martyred Leader

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The ceremony to honor the martyred Leader in Mosala was packed with citizens, families of martyrs, veterans, youth, and a prominent assembly of high-ranking national and military officials. In attendance at the solemn ceremony in Tehran were the sons of the martyred Leader, alongside key heads of state and top officials, including President Masoud Pezesh-

kian, Head of the Judiciary Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf.

During the event, a message of gratitude from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, was delivered to the attendees, thanking the Iranian and Iraqi people for their massive participation in the funeral and memorial ceremonies of the martyred Leader. The message, read aloud by the late Leader's eldest son, Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mostafa Khamenei, emphasized that practicing patience in the face of such a loss is in no way incompatible with seeking revenge and confronting the global powers involved in these severe crimes.

This memorial event represents the continuation of a profound period of national mourning that gripped the region following the assassination of the late Leader on February 28, at the onset of the joint US-Israeli war. Millions of citizens filled the streets of Tehran in ear-



ly July for the funeral processions before the coffin was taken across borders to Iraq, where historic processions passed through the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. The official mourning period concluded last Thursday when the late Leader was laid to rest at the Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad, yet the scale of the ongoing gatherings across Iran demonstrates that the public's sense of loss and the collective demand for accountability remain as strong as ever.

Iranian government: Over 30 civilians killed in recent US attacks

TEHRAN — Iranian government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani stated on Wednesday that more than 30 civilians have lost their lives in recent US strikes targeting southern Iran. In a statement published on the social media platform X, Mohajerani expressed her deepest condolences to the victims' families and pledged full government support for the affected communities in the region.

The United States has carried out several waves of intense airstrikes on Iran's southern regions in recent days. While Washington maintains that these operations are strictly aimed at “degrading Iran's ability to threaten commercial shipping” in the vital Strait of Hormuz, the rising civilian death toll directly contradicts these claims.

The renewed US bombardment represents a flagrant violation of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed

electronically on June 17 by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and US President Donald Trump. The Islamabad MoU explicitly demanded a permanent end to hostilities on all fronts and committed both sides to final peace negotiations within a 60-day window. US forces launched these bombings after Trump abruptly declared that the June agreement was “over”.

The June MoU was originally engineered to preserve the April 8 ceasefire, which temporarily paused the joint US and Israeli war on Iran that erupted on February 28. According to official data, nearly 3,500 people have been killed in Iran since the outbreak of the war, roughly half of whom are confirmed to be civilians.

The catastrophic human cost of Washington's military campaign was set on the very first day of the war, marked by a tragic US missile strike on an elementary school in the southern



city of Minab. The attack killed 168 people, the vast majority of them school children. While US media outlets later acknowledged that an American Tomahawk cruise missile was responsible for obliterating the school, Washington has faced severe international criticism for failing to ensure accountability or alter

its targeting parameters to protect innocent lives. Critics argue that the Minab school disaster, paired with the recent deaths of 30 more civilians in the south, underscores a reckless disregard for international humanitarian law and exposes the empty nature of Washington's “precision striking” rhetoric.

Iran files formal UN complaint detailing dozens of US breaches of MoU

TEHRAN - Iran has submitted a formal complaint to the United Nations, accusing the United States of systematically violating the recently signed memorandum of understanding (MoU). Amir Saied Iravani, Iran's Permanent Representative to the UN, detailed 42 separate breaches in a letter addressed to Secretary-General António Guterres and the Security Council, firmly asserting that the US is acting as the aggressor rather than the victim.

The dispute centers on the Islamabad memorandum of understanding, signed on June 17 under Pakistani mediation. Designed to halt months of conflict, the pact aimed to establish lasting peace, lift the US naval blockade, and reopen the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz. However, Washington began undermining the accord almost immediately after its signing, persistently failing to fulfill its commitments.



According to the official letter, which Iran requested be circulated as a formal Security Council document, the US has shown a blatant disregard for its international obligations. Tehran's key grievances include repeated military strikes targeting Iranian

territory, the unlawful revocation of oil export licenses, and the continued freezing of Iranian assets. Furthermore, while the pact designates Iran as responsible for managing safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, Tehran accuses the US of establishing a parallel, militarily protected shipping route that has reintroduced instability to the vital waterway.

The document, which covers a timeline of incidents from June 18 to July 13, also highlights the US failure to curb Israeli military actions in Lebanon. It specifically criticizes recent statements by President Donald Trump regarding plans to reinstate the blockade and impose transit fees on vessels. Ultimately, Iravani criticized the UN Security Council's inaction, warning that its failure to respond has only emboldened Washington's hostile behavior.

Missiles fired in Hormuz, ballots shaken in America

From the Strait of Hormuz to Capitol Hill: A war reshaping US politics

By Fardin Molaei

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According to the IRGC, the fourth wave of the operation targeted the main US military logistics center in Mina Abdullah, Kuwait, setting the facility ablaze and destroying its infrastructure. The IRGC accused Washington of attempting to conceal the failure of recent military operations by launching overnight strikes against Iranian coastal provinces after failing to secure maritime passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The fifth wave focused on Bahrain, where the IRGC said its naval forces struck the US Fifth Fleet's command-and-control headquarters, logistics facilities, fuel depots, warehouses, and military equipment storage sites. The statement argued that US naval deployments had effectively disrupted regional shipping routes and warned that if exports serving American interests continued while others remained blocked, additional energy corridors could also become targets.

The sixth phase expanded operations to Jordan and Kuwait. The IRGC's Aerospace Force said it destroyed hangars housing US F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighter aircraft at Al-Azraq Air Base in Jordan and eliminated several MQ-9 strategic drones stationed there. In a separate operation, Iranian missile and drone units reportedly struck US military facilities in Kuwait, targeting satellite communications infrastructure, Patriot air-defense systems, radar installations, logistics centers, and HIMARS rocket launchers.

Throughout the statements, the



Seven Iranian Army personnel were martyred and more than a dozen others were wounded in a US attack on an Iranian Army Ground Forces barracks in Bampur, Sistan and Baluchestan Province.

IRGC maintained that the operations were directed exclusively at US military assets, while urging regional governments and populations to end the American military presence in their countries.

Iran also accused Washington of repeatedly violating Iranian sovereignty since early April, despite the Pakistan-mediated Islamabad MoU signed in June, which requires an end to all military aggression. Iranian officials further added that the United States has attempted to escort commercial vessels through routes outside the maritime corridor designated by Tehran for navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, prompting continued Iranian military responses.

Hormuz strategy rooted in earlier military doctrine

The latest escalation follows statements issued on July 14, when Iranian military officials insisted that the Strait of Hormuz would only reopen if Iran's sovereign rights were fully respected and all parties adhered to the Islamabad MoU. Army spokesman Brigadier General Mohammad Akraminia warned that any attempt to impose alternative arrangements through military pressure would draw a decisive Iranian response.

On the same day, senior military adviser Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi said the current Hormuz strategy originated from long-term plans ordered years earlier by the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. Safavi said the strategy included comprehensive operational planning

for the Strait of Hormuz and broader maritime theaters, alongside sustained expansion of Iran's missile capabilities.

Persian Gulf escalation begins to shape US domestic politics

The Hormuz confrontation has also begun to reverberate inside the United States. As tensions in the Persian Gulf intensify, President Donald Trump is facing mounting domestic political pressure. A new Economist poll conducted between July 10 and 13 found Trump's job approval at just 37 percent, while 59 percent of respondents disapproved of his performance. The survey also showed that more than half of Americans believe the US global influence has weakened during his presidency, underscoring how the escalating confrontation in the Strait of Hormuz is increasingly shaping both US foreign policy and the domestic political landscape ahead of the November midterm elections.

A new survey of 1,100 registered US voters found that rising grocery prices are the leading source of financial stress for American households, with 67% saying the increasing cost of living is placing significant pressure on their finances.

The poll, conducted by Global Strategy Group for The Kitchen Table Project, showed that 82% of respondents believe politicians could lower prices, while majorities across party lines support government action to curb price gouging and anti-competitive corporate practices.

Nearly half of those surveyed blamed tariffs and trade restrictions for rising costs, while 46% pointed to corporate profit-driven price increases. Housing, gasoline, and utility bills were also identified as major financial burdens.

The escalating military confrontation between Iran and the United States in the Strait of Hormuz is increasingly being viewed by international analysts as a defining test not only for Washington's Middle East strategy but also for the political future of the Republican Party ahead of the US midterm elections.

Ian Bremmer, president of Eurasia Group, has argued that prolonged military engagements in the Middle East rarely produce political dividends for US administrations unless they deliver swift and decisive results. He notes that sustained instability in global energy markets, combined with rising inflation and fuel prices, tends to shift voters' attention from foreign policy achievements to economic hardship at home.

According to Richard Haass, president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, the strategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz means that any prolonged disruption would inevitably become a domestic political issue in the United States. Haass has repeatedly argued that when overseas conflicts begin to affect American households through higher energy costs and economic uncertainty, they quickly transform into electoral liabilities for the party in power. Fareed Zakaria, CNN's international affairs analyst, has similarly observed that history demonstrates a consistent pattern: American public support for military action declines when conflicts become protracted without a clearly defined political objective. In such circumstances, debates over foreign policy give way to concerns about economic management, inflation, and leadership competence.

Political scientist Francis Fukuyama has also warned that strategic overextension abroad can deepen domestic political polarization. In his assessment, lengthy external confrontations often intensify divisions within governing coalitions, particularly when voters perceive that national resources are being diverted from pressing domestic priorities.

Together, these assessments suggest that the political consequences of the Hormuz confrontation could extend well beyond the battlefield. Should the conflict continue to disrupt global energy supplies, fuel inflation, and dominate the U.S. political agenda, it may increasingly shape voter perceptions of Republican leadership and emerge as one of the decisive factors influencing the party's prospects in the upcoming midterm elections.

figures from both Iran and Iraq, as well as the a crowd from the Iraqi community residing in Iran.

Iran general says regional conflicts will end in favor of resistance axis

Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi, senior advisor to Iran's armed forces chief, stated that developments across West Asia are intrinsically linked and that the ultimate outcome of regional conflicts will favor Iran and the resistance axis. Speaking to Al-Mayadeen, he described the Zionist regime as the primary source of regional instability over eight decades and warned that no rational US president would attack Iran.

Iran rejects southern strait route, proposes new corridor to Oman

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi affirmed that Tehran will enforce its sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz at any cost and will never accept the southern route. He stated that Iran has proposed a new northern route for vessel traffic to Oman, but the US has pressured Muscat to open a southern corridor instead. Gharibabadi noted 42 documented US violations of the Islamabad Understanding, emphasizing that Washington's opposition stems from Iran's effective control over the strait rather than commercial concerns.

Gogol in Hormuz: The collapse of US hegemonic fiction



By Xavier Villar

MADRID – In Nikolai Gogol's "The Government Inspector", corrupt officials in a small Russian town panic at the arrival of a young man from St Petersburg. Ivan Khlestakov is a minor clerk, but the locals' fear of their own embezzlement elevates him to an imperial auditor. His authority derives not from the tsar, but from his hosts' paranoia. When the mask slips, only the ridicule of the deceived remains. Today, the US national security bureaucracy operates under this exact psychology. Washington demands Iran accept security guarantees for temporary sanctions waivers, knowing its own Congress can revoke them at the slightest tremor. When Tehran refuses to validate the fiction, the Trump administration responds with the theatricality of a cornered bureaucrat, threatening from Truth Social to plunge into an abyss it dares not cross.

Trump's recent proclamation that the memorandum of understanding with Iran is 'dead', alongside threats of a renewed blockade, is no exercise in strength. From Tehran, this reads as the frustration of a hegemon exhausting its options for conventional coercion. Recent military exchanges acted as a brutal reckoning for Washington, tracing the physical limits of its power. The memorandum's announced death is the direct result of Washington's systematic sabotage. The text offered a logical sequence for de-escalation: Iran would regulate Hormuz traffic, the US would lift the blockade, Tehran would access its funds, and threats would cease. But Washington treated it not as a binding framework, but as a tactical pause to preserve its coercive advantage.

From the Iranian perspective, the violation was immediate. The first clause, demanding an end to the war in Lebanon, was ignored. Asset releases were stunted; threats continued, with Trump even suggesting the kidnapping of Iranian negotiators. The final blow came in July, when the White House revoked oil exemptions just as Tehran consolidated its maritime route. This reveals the inherent violence of US diplomacy. The true trap lay in the legal architecture of the empire. Much of the sanctions regime is shielded by congressional legislation like CAATSA. Presidents can only offer renewable waivers. After the 2015 nuclear deal, Iranian planners drew a definitive lesson: temporary economic relief neither rebuilds a country nor guarantees security. Washington demands Iran translate its sovereignty into the language of liberal internationalism, while ignoring the sequential logic of its own agreements. Tehran knows the White House's cheques are counterfeit.

It is in this dead end that the Strait of Hormuz has ceased to be a mere military chokepoint, becoming the axis of Iranian sovereignty. Trad-

ing the nuclear program or regional alliances for ephemeral sanctions relief was an unacceptable asymmetry. By forcing commercial traffic into a designated corridor and establishing a joint administration with Oman to collect transit tariffs, Iran seeks a profound shift in Persian Gulf management. Far from seeking total closure—which would trigger a casus belli—Tehran is transforming a maritime highway, historically patrolled by the US Fifth Fleet, into a sovereign customs house. This manoeuvre challenges the Pentagon's interpretation of the law of the sea. Washington invokes 'transit passage' to justify its aircraft carriers, ignoring that the strait's geography makes coastal sovereignty claims absolute. Tehran is not 'closing' the strait; it is bureaucratizing its sovereignty, forcing global shippers to choose between the physical security of the Iranian coast and the legal fiction of the Fifth Fleet.

For decades, 'freedom of navigation' in the Persian Gulf functioned as a covert subsidy to Western economies, guaranteeing hydrocarbon flows at zero cost to hegemonic powers. By demanding that traffic submit to its designated corridor, Iran is collecting the historical bill for that externality. If the US Congress wants to toughen sanctions, it must foot the bill. Coercion is no longer free. This conversion of geography into rent extraction is what truly disturbs Pentagon planners. US strategic petroleum reserves are practically depleted, and global inventories remain tight. Military planners know that escorting every tanker through the Ormuz funnel requires an unsustainable logistical deployment against the Revolutionary Guards' swarm boats. Air punishment can destroy infrastructure, but it cannot erase coastal topography or neutralize a state that has integrated the assimilation of damage into its survival doctrine.

The Islamic Republic possesses a political cosmology where resistance to imperial hegemony is an ontological imperative. The memory of the 1953 coup and the unilateral exit from the JCPOA remains alive as a reminder of Washington's broken promises. Subduing a state that accepts tactical damage as the price of its continuity requires a ground invasion that no US president will order. The supposed death of the memorandum is the collapse of an illusion. As long as Washington inhabits the fiction of its own hegemony, refusing to accept that it can no longer impose a unilateral diktat, no agreement will be possible. The cornered bureaucrat continues to wave his papers and threaten the abyss, but in the Persian Gulf, legal fiction has crashed into matter. Until the empire accepts its defeat, the strait will remain where reality demands payment of its debts.

Iran slams Israeli war crimes in Gaza and West Bank

Iran has denounced Israel's escalating attacks against the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank, demanding international action to stop the killings and hold Israeli leaders accountable.

In a statement released on Wednesday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry condemned the Israeli strikes on the Jabalia police center, which killed a police commander and several officers, as well as the ongoing arrests, torture, land confiscation, infrastructure destruction, and restrictions on humanitarian aid entering Gaza.

The statement pointed to the systematic violation of the so-called ceasefire in Gaza. It said Israel has violated the truce more than 3,600 times since it was declared nine months ago, killing over 1,100 Palestinians, many of them women and children.

It also condemned the continued inhumane siege of Gaza, which has blocked the entry of basic necessities.

The statement stressed that the United States is complicit in Israeli crimes due to its full military, political, and media support for Israel and its obstruction of international accountability mechanisms.

The ministry called on the UN, its member states, and especially Islamic countries to fulfill their legal and moral duties to stop the genocide, end the occupation, and prosecute Zionist criminals.

According to the Gaza Government Media Office, Israeli attacks since the ceasefire have killed 1,122 Palestinians and injured 3,599.

LATEST NEWS

■ Araghchi in Qatar to offer condolences over ex-Emir's passing

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi traveled to Doha on Wednesday afternoon to meet with senior Qatari officials and offer condolences following the passing of the country's former emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

According to Iran's Foreign Ministry, Araghchi's visit is aimed at conveying Iran's condolences to the leadership and people of Qatar over the death of the former emir.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani passed away on Sunday at the age of 74. Qatar declared four days of national mourning, with flags lowered to half-mast and government offices closed.

■ No plans for talks with US right now: Iran

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson says Tehran has no plans to engage in talks with the US and is focused solely on defending the country.

Speaking to reporters, Esmail Baqaei said Iran would honor its international commitments only if the US did the same.

"Our commitments remain in effect only as long as the other side fulfills its pledges," Baqaei said, adding that Iran abandoned its commitments under the MoU after the US failed to up-

hold its side of the temporary agreement.

"After the other party violated its obligations, we also refrained from implementing ours in any area where it was required."

■ Cleric opposes resuming Iran-US talks

A senior cleric has called on the government not to return to talks with the US after Trump's threats to strike Iran's civilian infrastructure.

"Officials must not retreat from the legitimate rights of the Islamic nation under the pretext of economic problems, fear of the costs of war or strikes on infrastructure, and they must not continue the path of negotiations and the memorandum with the infidels any further," Alireza Arafai said in a statement.

■ Iraqis tribute to martyred Imam

On Wednesday, July 15, 2026, Iraqi citizens of Tehran conducted a special commemorative service at the Karbala'ei Hussaini, located at the Galubandak Intersection, to pay homage to the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei, and to pledge an oath of allegiance to the new Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Sayyed Mojtaba Khamenei. The ceremony was attended by the Iraqi Consul General in Tehran and his delegation, several notable political, religious, and cultural

Beyond exhibition: How Iran is securing its share of trillion-dollar halal market

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- The global halal economy is no longer a peripheral niche. Valued well above two trillion dollars and expanding at a remarkable annual rate, it encompasses not only food and beverages but also pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, logistics, tourism, and financial services.

For Iran, actively penetrating this vast and lucrative domain is not merely an export ambition; it is a strategic imperative for diversifying national revenue, reducing oil dependency, and showcasing the country's scientific and industrial prowess. The recent Iranian participation in the Indonesia International Halal Exhibition—marked by a dedicated pavilion, high-level diplomatic engagement, and targeted business networking—offers a compelling case study of how Tehran is translating its knowledge-based capabilities into tangible economic influence across Southeast Asia.

The significance of this mission lies first in its composition. Unlike traditional trade delegations focused solely on raw materials or intermediary goods, the Iranian pavilion featured nine knowledge-based companies, supported by the Non-Governmental Medical Equipment Research and Technology Fund and the Iran Trade Center in Indonesia. This alignment demonstrates a deliberate shift from commodity-centric export to technology-driven value creation. By showcasing advanced pharmaceutical products, medical devices, processed agricultural goods, and innovative industrial solutions, Iran sent a clear message: it is ready to compete in the halal market not with volume alone, but with quality, precision, and compliance with stringent international halal standards. In a region where consumers and regulators increasingly demand transparency, traceability, and scientific validation, Iran's research-backed offerings provide a distinct competitive advantage over traditional suppliers.

Equally notable is the diplomatic weight attached to this commercial endeavor. The presence of Iran's Ambassador to Indonesia, Boroujerdi, who toured the pavilion and engaged directly with company managers, underscored the state's unwavering commitment to export development. However, it was the subsequent visit by Indonesia's Minister of Finance, Purbaya Yudhi Sadewa, that elevated the event to a strategic milestone. His direct inspection of Iranian products and capacities signals that Jakarta regards Tehran as a serious and trustworthy partner in its post-pandemic economic resurgence and infrastructure expansion. Such high-level engagement is invaluable; it accelerates bureaucratic processes, fosters mutual understanding of regulatory frameworks, and paves the way for bilateral investment treaties that reduce tariffs and facilitate joint ventures. When a host nation's finance minister invests time in a foreign pavilion, it is a clear indicator that the relationship transcends simple buyer-seller interactions and enters the realm of enduring economic alliance.

Yet, the most forward-thinking aspect of Iran's strategy lies in its grassroots business-to-busi-



ness approach. The organized meetings with the Indonesian Young Entrepreneurs Association (HIPMI) represent a conscious effort to build bridges with the very entrepreneurs who will shape Indonesia's economic future over the next two decades. By engaging with local start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises, and innovation hubs, Iranian companies are not merely seeking immediate orders; they are cultivating long-term partnerships in technology transfer, co-production, and after-sales services. Furthermore, the specialized B2B sessions coordinated by the Medical Equipment Fund provided a structured platform for Iranian producers to address logistical challenges, adjust product specifications to local market demands, and explore co-operative distribution channels. These practical dialogues transform diplomatic goodwill into operational reality, ensuring that Iranian products can navigate Indonesia's archipelago logistics and diverse consumer preferences effectively.

What truly positions Iran advantageously in this race is its inherent synergy with halal market requirements. The country boasts a robust pharmaceutical infrastructure, a strong agricultural base, advanced petrochemical derivatives for packaging and processing, and a youthful, highly educated workforce capable of sustaining innovation. Additionally, Iran's geographical location provides a strategic corridor linking Southeast Asia with Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Europe—a transit advantage that can reduce shipping times and costs for Indonesian partners eyeing wider markets. Combined with the existing cultural and religious affinities that naturally lend credibility to Iranian halal certifications, these assets create a unique ecosystem where science, geography, and commercial ethics converge.

In conclusion, the cohesive Iranian presence at the Indonesia International Halal Exhibition is a masterclass in modern economic diplomacy. By harmonizing state-level political will, knowledge-based industrial capacity, and private-sector entrepreneurship, Tehran has laid a robust foundation for a sustained and influential role in Southeast Asia's halal market. This is not a one-off promotional effort but the opening salvo of a long-term strategy to reposition Iran as a global hub for halal technology and innovation. If nurtured with consistent policy support, transparent regulation, and continuous investment in R&D, this momentum can transform Iran from a peripheral observer into a central player in one of the world's most dynamic economic sectors.

Iran showcases trade potential at China International Supply Chain Expo in Beijing

TEHRAN — Iran strengthened its commercial presence in China by establishing a dedicated pavilion at the fourth China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) in Beijing, underscoring the growing strategic and economic partnership between the two countries.

Organized with the active participation of the Iran-China Chamber of Commerce and Industries, the pavilion served as a platform to promote Iranian business opportunities, deepen industrial cooperation, and facilitate new partnerships with Chinese and international companies.

Held from June 22 to 26, the China International Supply Chain Expo is the world's first national-level exhibition dedicated to supply chains. Since its launch in 2023, the event has become an important platform for strengthening secure, stable, open and inclusive global industrial and supply chains.

This year's edition brought together 676 exhibitors and more than 1,200 upstream and downstream supply chain partners. Companies and organizations from 85 countries, regions and international organizations participated, with overseas exhibitors accounting for a record 36.5 percent of the total. The number of professional visitors also rose by 22 percent compared with previous editions,

reflecting the expo's growing international influence.

Iran's participation highlighted the country's commitment to expanding trade and investment cooperation with China, its largest trading partner. The Iran-China Chamber of Commerce and Industries used the event to introduce investment opportunities, strengthen business-to-business connections, and encourage greater cooperation across manufacturing, logistics, energy, agriculture and technology.

The expo featured exhibition areas covering advanced manufacturing, clean energy, intelligent vehicles, digital technology, healthy living, green agriculture and supply chain services, alongside a new artificial intelligence zone showcasing innovations in data, computing power and AI applications.

With conditions in Iran gradually stabilizing, Chinese companies have expressed growing interest in participating in the country's reconstruction and economic development. The Iranian pavilion provided an opportunity for businesses from both sides to explore new partnerships and reinforce the long-term trade relationship between Iran and China, paving the way for broader cooperation in regional and global supply chains.

Renewed Iran strikes spike U.S. gasoline prices, expose energy independence myth

Why are American families paying price for Washington's reckless Iran policy?

TEHRAN- The United States boasts the title of the world's largest oil producer, churning out over 13 million barrels of crude daily and exporting more than it imports. Only about 8 percent of U.S. imported oil comes from the Persian Gulf. By that arithmetic, one might assume that a military confrontation with Iran would barely register at American gasoline pumps.

Yet on July 13, as renewed U.S. airstrikes against Iranian targets shattered a fragile ceasefire, Brent crude jumped \$2.39 to \$78.40 a barrel, and the average U.S. gasoline price hit \$3.87 per gallon—70 cents higher than a year ago. In California, drivers are shelling out nearly \$6 a gallon.

The question Washington refuses to answer is simple: if America is supposedly energy-independent, why are its own citizens footing the bill for an unnecessary war?

The painful reality, as economists have repeatedly explained, is that oil is a global commodity. "Oil literally flows to the highest price," Moody's Analytics chief economist Mark Zandi told USA Today. American producers, driven by profit, sell to the highest bidder anywhere in the world. When U.S. bombs fall on Iran, they don't just disrupt West Asian supply—they send shockwaves through every corner of the global market. The Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil passes, becomes a chokepoint of uncertainty. Refineries are damaged, shipping lanes become dangerous, and Asian and European nations that rely heavily on Persian Gulf crude scramble for alternatives. In that scramble, prices rise everywhere—including in the United States.

This is not an accident of geography; it is a predictable consequence of a belligerent foreign policy that puts geopolitical posturing above the economic well-being of American families. The Biden administration's decision to launch strikes against Iran, following what Tehran describes as Washington's failure to comply with the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, has not made Americans safer—it has made them poorer.

The West Coast, which imports a larger



share of its oil from the West Asia, has been hit especially hard. California's \$5.93-per-gallon average is a stark reminder that the war's costs are unevenly distributed, yet no region is truly insulated. "Everybody's competing for the same barrel of oil," noted James Cox of Harris Financial Group. That includes Texas crude, Iranian crude, and Russian crude—all traded on the same global exchange.

To be sure, this is not the 1970s oil crisis. There are no rationing coupons, no national 55-mph speed limit, no weeks-long lines at filling stations. But that cold comfort does little for the working mother filling her SUV or the trucker watching his margins evaporate. As University of Pennsylvania professor Nikolai Roussanov observed, "The U.S. economy, on net, is somewhat insulated because we are a large supplier—but that doesn't help the consumer at the pump."

The irony is bitter. Washington has spent years touting energy independence as a shield against foreign entanglements. Yet this very war has proven that shield to be a myth. American oil companies reap record profits while American consumers bleed at the pump. Meanwhile, some nations more reliant on

West Asian oil have been forced into four-day workweeks, fuel rationing, and public-transportation mandates—but they, at least, did not choose to start the fire.

The ceasefire of April 8 was a brief reprieve, but Trump's resumption of hostilities has reignited price volatility. And even if hostilities subside, the damage to regional infrastructure will take years to repair, as California Forward CEO Kate Gordon noted. "There's no going back to what we had," Zandi concluded, "at least not this year."

The question that begs an answer is this: why does a superpower that prides itself on energy abundance continue to wage wars that impoverish its own people? The cost of this conflict is not measured only in missile strikes and military budgets—it is measured in every dollar that American families hand over at the pump, a direct tax on their daily lives for a war that serves neither their security nor their prosperity. Until Washington learns that global markets do not respect national borders, the American people will keep paying for policies that benefit only the arms industry and the oil traders—while the real price is borne at the kitchen table.

Development of hybrid, electric vehicles, government's new strategy for energy management

TEHRAN- The development of hybrid, dual-fuel, and electric vehicles is the government's new approach to managing fuel and energy consumption, which not only leads to consumption reforms in the gasoline sector but also brings about a fundamental transformation in the production structure of the automotive industry and a technological change in this field.

President Masoud Pezeshkian's emphasis on accelerating the implementation of reforms related to gasoline rationing, developing public transportation, and increasing the production of hybrid and dual-fuel vehicles indicates the government's new approach to managing fuel consumption by changing fleet technology and replacing vehicles with low-consumption ones.

The government's focus on producing hybrid and dual-fuel vehicles sends a direct message to domestic automakers that, alongside the import of these types of vehicles, the automotive industry in the new model should transform from a "consumer goods manufacturing" industry into an "executive arm of energy security".

The development of hybrid products, given the significant reduction in liquid fuel consumption, can minimize the pressure on refineries and drastically reduce the country's need for gasoline imports in the medium term.

Hybrid vehicles, by utilizing a combination of combustion and electric engines, ensure stable performance on various urban and road routes while simultaneously playing an effective role in moderating the energy imbalance.

The expansion of this technology will not only lead to a gradual change in consumption patterns and market tastes but also, by

reducing the government's financial burden in the fuel supply sector, will provide the necessary financial resources for developing new energy infrastructure.

In fact, the increased penetration of hybrid vehicles serves as a catalyst for the successful implementation of fuel subsidy reforms and the creation of a sustainable development cycle in the automotive industry.

The development and modernization of the dual-fuel (natural gas consumption) vehicle fleet is also proposed as a strategic solution alongside hybrid vehicles.

Given that Iran is one of the world's largest producers of natural gas, directing the vehicle fleet and even part of the heavy logistics fleet towards gas consumption also prevents the waste of foreign currency on gasoline imports.

An examination of gasoline consumption in vehicles shows that converting part of the current fleet to dual-fuel and widely producing new vehicles with this technology can compensate for the severe gasoline imbalance by utilizing the "surplus gas capacity". This action, in addition to reducing fuel costs for citizens and industries, reduces the government's economic pressure to supply expensive fuels.

Experts believe that the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, as the body in charge of the automotive industry, and domestic automakers must move away from traditional production models and base their development plans on "alternative technologies". However, this requires special government support in the form of low-interest facilities for fleet modernization towards low-consumption and dual-fuel vehicles, support for research and development to localize hybrid engine components and en-

ergy management systems, and a revision of tariffs to facilitate the entry of advanced technologies for producing green vehicles into the country.

Undoubtedly, reducing the fuel imbalance means ensuring energy supply for various sectors and will prevent fuel crises that could lead to the shutdown of production lines or increased logistics costs.

Optimal management of the fuel mix is one of the important axes of the five-year development plan. Within this framework, automakers were obligated to allocate a portion of their production to low-consumption and clean vehicles. Accordingly, targeting the production of half a million electric and hybrid vehicles per year, while reducing fuel consumption, will enhance productivity and the development of new technologies in the automotive industry.

Domestic automakers have produced and marketed products in the field of new technologies. However, alongside hybrid and dual-fuel vehicles, the role of electric vehicles, especially in the public fleet and the scrapping of old vehicles, is also essential. In this regard, electric buses have been produced in the country since last year and have joined the public fleet.

Beginning of hybrid and electric vehicle production in country

In this regard, Amir-Hassan Kakaei, an automotive industry expert, told IRNA: Electric and hybrid vehicles are currently being produced by several domestic automakers in the country, although mass production of these types of vehicles requires resources.

He adds: Introducing electric and hybrid vehicles is not the only solution to reduce fuel consumption and air pollution; rather, oth-

er issues such as the aging fleet and the development of public transportation infrastructure must also be considered.

Referring to the aging fleet crisis, Kakaei notes that out of the 27 million vehicles in the country, more than 17 million are considered worn-out, with ages far exceeding the global standard (10 years).

The automotive industry expert states: Our main issue is not merely fixing superficial defects; the fundamental challenge is the aging of the vehicle fleet, which has not been properly addressed in the country's seven-year plans either.

Stating that replacing vehicles with electric ones in Iran does not necessarily mean reducing fuel consumption and "cleaning up" the environment, he says: Our energy mix in electricity production is still based on fossil fuels. While the world is moving towards clean energy, we are even facing a gas shortage (as a relatively clean fuel) and in many regions, we are forced to use mazut. As a result, converting fossil fuels into electricity for electric vehicles merely shifts pollution from the vehicle's exhaust to the power plant's smokestacks and is not considered a final solution for improving the air quality in cities like Tehran.

Kakaei emphasizes that our main problem, before being a technological challenge, is an economic and policy-making challenge. Shifting the priority from "passenger cars" to "public transportation", he suggested: The budget should be spent on developing public transportation fleets, especially electric buses. We have the ability to produce electric buses in Iran, but the lack of attention from policymakers to the real needs of citizens has hindered the development of this sector.

Rubio’s crusade to dismantle the ICC is a global confession of guilt

The US war on international law is designed to shield genocidal atrocities

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN — Marco Rubio’s July 13 Wall Street Journal broadside reads like the frantic howl of an imperial political class that has lost control of the global narrative.

Vowing to dismantle the International Criminal Court “brick by brick, if necessary,” the U.S. Secretary of State conjures a populist nightmare where American Marines and Border Patrol agents are dragged before hostile foreign tribunals.

This is pure demagoguery. In its 24-year history, the court has never indicted a single American, a shameful failure of justice given the endless catalog of U.S. atrocities, nor does its jurisdiction threaten routine domestic immigration enforcement.

The actual trigger for Washington’s existential panic is far more indicting: the arrest warrants issued for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former War Minister Yoav Gallant for the war crime of starvation and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

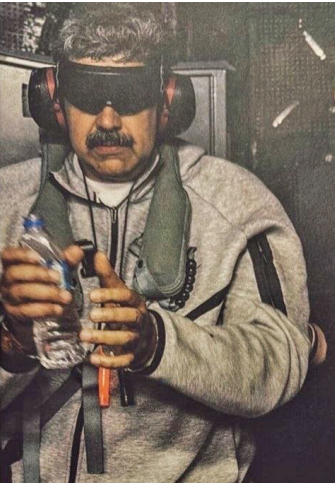
Those warrants, solidly upheld on appeal in late 2025, laid bare the horrific reality of the U.S.-backed war machine. They documented how Tel Aviv systematically deprived a trapped civilian population of food, water, medicine, and fuel.

Recent United Nations reports have taken these findings to their logical conclusion, formally declaring that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza by deliberately targeting Palestinian children to destroy the future of the nation.

At least 73,000 Palestinians are dead, over 20,000 of them children, yet Rubio’s op-ed maintains a cold, calculated silence on this mass slaughter.

The true source of Rubio’s fury is that the world court has dared to treat the lives of Palestinians, Afghans, and Iranians as legally significant.

He dismisses the global coal-



tion backing the court as a network of “leftist NGOs, smug globalists, and hostile Third World governments.”

Strip away this toxic, colonial arrogance, and what remains is the global majority: the post-colonial nations that have spent decades bleeding under the boot of Western imperialism, CIA coups, and resource extraction, now demanding that the powerful face the same law as the weak.

The hypocrisy is staggering when viewed against the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war of aggression against Iran and the Resistance Front.

As Rubio’s words went to print, U.S. warplanes were conducting fresh waves of strikes against the Iranian ports of Bushehr, Chabahar, and Bandar Abbas, entering the 135th day of an illegal unprovoked war.

This lawless campaign is paired with a direct naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, an act of maritime piracy designed to choke the Iranian economy and starve its people through economic terror.

This offensive warfare, launched without a shred of UN authorization, violates Article 2(4) of the UN Charter and stands as a textbook crime of aggression under the Rome Statute, a treaty designed precisely to check unchecked power.

While Rubio lectures the world on sovereignty, the U.S.-Israeli axis continues to systematically erase the sovereignty of other countries.

Look at Venezuela, where Washington kidnapped Nicolás Maduro, seized control of the state treasury to plunder the nation’s vast oil resources, and installed Rubio as the de facto “viceroy” of Caracas.

This is the ultimate neo-colonial farce: Rubio essentially runs the country from Washington, utilizing lengthy, podcast-style Spanish-language voice messages via WhatsApp to dictate domestic policy, sign off on cabinet appointments, and micromanage the financial affairs of Trump’s favorite submissive puppet, Delcy Rodríguez.

In Lebanon, Israeli aggression and cross-border strikes have killed thousands and forced the displacement of over 500,000.

In the West Bank, just one day after Rubio’s piece was published, Netanyahu signed a 2.3 billion shekel framework to entrench 12,000 more illegal settlement units, accelerating a de facto annexation that violates the Geneva Conventions.

Meanwhile, inside Israeli prisons, systematic torture, sleep deprivation, and sexual violence are so routinely deployed against Palestinian hostages that investigators have described the

prison system as a network of torture camps.

For Rubio and the Trump administration, “sovereignty” is a unilateral privilege reserved for the oppressor, while the victim is expected to endure subjugation in silence.

For decades, Washington has used financial coercion, extraterritorial sanctions, and bloody military coups to dictate the national destiny of others.

Now, the U.S. threatens punitive sanctions against ICC judges and has blacklisted Palestinian human rights organizations, such as Al-Haq and Al Mezan, for the “crime” of presenting evidence to the court.

Threatening international judges with travel bans and asset freezes is the extortion tactic of a transnational mafia cartel.

Rubio reaches back to the American Revolution, complaining of a foreign power “transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences.”

The United States operates a global archipelago of lawless black sites, kidnaps foreign citizens, holds prisoners indefinitely without trial at Guantanamo Bay, and regularly pardons its own convicted war criminals.

The atrocities committed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran are not “pretended” crimes; they are documented genocidal realities.

The “brick by brick” campaign to destroy the court is the ultimate confession of guilt.

Every brick Rubio pulls away from the architecture of international law only exposes the rotting, blood-stained foundation of the American empire beneath it.

A declining empire that must burn down the global courthouse to shield its genocidal client from a judge has already pronounced its own moral bankruptcy, leaving “little Marco” to plead its case in the Murdochs’ flagship rag like a guilty man lecturing the jury.



Bloodthirsty Netanyahu scrambling to save political career

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The chances of Benjamin Netanyahu, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, remaining in power do not appear promising.

Most opinion polls recently released by various research centers and Hebrew media outlets indicate a clear decline in support for the far-right Likud Party, which, since the end of December 2022, has formed, alongside other right-wing parties, the most fascist government in the history of the Zionist regime.

Although all successive Israeli governments have adopted policies of violence and war crimes, none has reached, over more than seven and a half decades, the level of brutality seen under the Netanyahu’s current government. According to the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, the crimes committed have reached unprecedented levels.

Among the catastrophic consequences of Netanyahu’s rule has been the killing of more than 80,000 innocent civilians in the Gaza Strip, as well as massive destruction of infrastructure and civilian, medical, and relief facilities, exceeding 90 percent.

Netanyahu can be viewed as the most violent and bloodthirsty prime ministers in the history of the Zionist regime, surpassing even David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister after the establishment of the occupying regime, who formulated its national security doctrine. A doctrine rooted entirely in killing, criminality, and bloodshed in pursuit of the “Greater Israel” dream, for which the rogue regime waged numerous wars.

He also eclipses Menachem Begin, the first Likud prime minister in 1977; Yitzhak Rabin, architect of the “bone-breaking” policy during the first Palestinian intifada in 1987; Ariel Sharon, the butcher of Sabra and Shatila; and many others who relied on violence and murder as a means to achieve the

regime’s goals and to deter and terrorize all its neighbors, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or religion.

After October 7, 2023, Netanyahu faced a wide range of crises, particularly after the major and unprecedented failure suffered by Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) along the Gaza border.

Israeli investigations classified this as a complete and total failure of the Gaza Division, which had been responsible for securing the Strip’s borders, as well as a major failure at both the political and military levels throughout the Zionist regime.

Other crises also surrounded Netanyahu, including the judicial reform crisis, the issue of recruiting ultra-Orthodox Jews, and the crisis surrounding the dismissal of former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, the head of the Shin Bet, and the legal adviser. These were accompanied by successive scandals revealed by Hebrew media, including bribery, excessive spending, scandals involving his wife Sara, others involving his son Yair, and many more.

All of the above have clearly affected Netanyahu’s chances of winning another term as prime minister. This pushed him to search by every possible means for an escape route that could save his political future and spare him the dark fate awaiting him if he loses the next elections.

A fate that has drawn increasingly close, especially since the corruption cases against him before courts could lead to butcher of Gaza spending long years behind bars, as happened with former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

During recent months, a troubled Netanyahu has attempted to play his final cards to save himself from an approaching fate. He found what he was looking for, according to some Israeli analysts, in the Zionist-American war on Iran, which opened an important window to escape his bleak future and cover up his major defeat in the Gaza Strip.

The Strait of Hormuz: Iran’s geographic destiny and strategic red line



From page 1 ► The latest chapter in this long-running saga began when Iranian forces struck a vessel transiting the Strait on an unauthorized route, leading the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps to announce the waterway’s indefinite closure until what Iranian officials describe as “the end of American interventions in this region”. This was not a spontaneous act of brinkmanship but the culmination of a carefully calibrated strategy. Iranian policymakers have long understood that the Strait represents leverage that no amount of diplomatic concessions or economic sanctions can replicate. As one senior adviser to the Supreme Leader recently observed, the Strait of Hormuz is “more important” as a deterrent than “dozens of atomic bombs”. This statement, striking in its candor, encapsulates Tehran’s strategic calculus: geography, not nuclear enrichment, provides Iran with its most formidable shield.

The current confrontation must be understood within its proper historical and legal context. The United States and its allies frequently invoke the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, particularly the guarantee of transit passage through straits used for international navigation. Yet this invocation conveniently overlooks a crucial detail: Iran has never ratified UNCLOS. More significantly, the Strait’s waters are shared between Iran and Oman. The International Court of Justice’s 1949 Corfu Channel Case recognized the principle of innocent passage, but it also acknowledged that coastal states retain certain rights to regulate navigation within their territorial waters. Iranian legal scholars argue that Washington’s insistence on unfettered access amounts to a denial of Tehran’s basic sovereign prerogatives.

The diplomatic maneuvering surrounding the Strait has been equally telling. When Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi travelled to Muscat for talks with his Omani counterpart, the discussions centered on “coordinating arrangements” for navigation through the waterway. This choice of venue and language was deliberate. Oman, which shares jurisdiction over the Strait, has historically served as a mediator between Tehran and Washington. But the very fact that such coordination is deemed necessary underscores a point Iran has made consistently: the Strait cannot be managed without Iranian participation. The alternative, as recent events have demonstrated, is chaos. Maritime intelligence firms reported that daily tanker traffic plummeted from 47 vessels to just 23 in the space of a week. Approximately 6,000 seafarers found themselves stranded aboard hundreds of vessels as shipping ground to a near halt. This was not the result of Iranian aggression; it was the predictable consequence of attempting to operate a vital waterway against the will of the coastal state that commands its northern shore.

Let the numbers speak for themselves. Roughly 73 billion barrels of oil pass through the Strait of Hormuz every year. At 70 to 80 dollars per barrel, that represents over 500 billion dollars in annual trade. Now comes the Trump proposal: a 20 percent “security premium” slapped on that flow. Do the math, that is one hundred to one hundred and twenty billion dollars a year extracted from a region by a power that is not even from the region, does

not own the resource, and does not even border the waterway. That is not security. That is rent seeking on a global artery. That is imperial taxation dressed up in the language of protection. Contrast that with what Iran has floated: one to two million dollars per tanker, which, based on approximately 25,000 to 30,000 tankers annually, comes out to roughly 25 to 60 billion dollars per year, shared with Oman. And here is the key difference: that fee is tied to actual services. Coastal navigation control in one of the world’s narrowest chokepoints, search and rescue operations, anti-piracy and maritime safety, environmental protection and spill response, port and traffic coordination on both sides of the Strait. In other words, payment for management of a waterway that Iran physically inhabits and secures.

The absurdity of Washington’s position was laid bare when Trump announced on social media that the United States would unilaterally declare itself “THE GUARDIAN OF THE HORMUZ STRAIT” and impose a 20 percent levy on all cargo passing through it. “The Hormuz Strait is OPEN, and will remain OPEN, with or without Iran,” Trump wrote, adding that the US was “reinstating the THE IRANIAN BLOCKADE”. The sheer audacity of a nation thousands of miles away claiming guardianship over a waterway that lies in Iran’s territorial waters might have been dismissed as rhetorical excess, had it not been accompanied by a third consecutive night of American airstrikes targeting southern Iran. Yet it was Foreign Minister Araghchi who delivered the most effective response. In a post on X, he wrote: “POTUS is absolutely right. Whoever provides secure and safe passage of commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz should be compensated for this service. Iran has always been the GUARDIAN of the Strait and will remain so FOREVER. 20% is of course too much. We will be fair.” With these words, Araghchi turned Trump’s grandiose proclamation on its head, accepting the premise of compensation while calmly asserting Iran’s eternal and unchallenged role as the waterway’s true custodian. The contrast could not have been more striking: Washington’s heavy-handed decree versus Tehran’s quiet confidence rooted in geographic reality.

Events on the water have only reinforced this message. On Tuesday, the IRGC reported that two “offending supertankers” had been hit and disabled in the Strait after they ignored repeated warnings, turned off their navigation systems and attempted to pass through a mined route. The United Arab Emirates confirmed that two Emirati oil tankers were struck by Iranian cruise missiles, with one Indian crew member killed and eight others wounded. The IRGC made clear that cooperation with what it termed the “aggressor enemy” in the Strait would only delay the reopening of the waterway and deepen the global energy crisis. This was not indiscriminate violence but targeted enforcement, a demonstration that Iran’s control over the Strait is not merely declaratory but operational. The US Navy-led Joint Maritime Information Centre announced that its blockade would take effect at 20:00 GMT on July 14, but on the water, it was Iranian cruise missiles, not American proclamations, that determined what could and could not pass.

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

Iran names flag bearers for 2026 Asian Games

TEHRAN – Iran’s National Olympic Committee has officially named Atousa Golshadnezhad, the reigning world karate champion, and Fazel Atrachali, captain of the national kabaddi team, as the country’s flag bearers for the 2026 Asian Games.

The decision was approved during the 66th Executive Board meeting of the National Olympic Committee, held on Tuesday.

Golshadnezhad and Atrachali will lead the Iranian delegation during the opening ceremony in Nagoya, marking a historic milestone as the first athletes from karate and kabaddi to carry the Iranian flag at the Asian Games.

In previous editions, the honor had been reserved for athletes from sports such as wrestling, weightlifting, football, shooting, basketball, and taekwondo.

The 20th Asian Games will take place in Nagoya, Japan, from Sept. 19 to Oct. 3, 2026.

Iran is set to compete with a delegation of 308 athletes across multiple disciplines.

A total of 15,000 athletes are expected to compete at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi and Nagoya, Japan, making it one of the largest editions in the event’s history. Competitors from 45 National Olympic Committees across Asia will take part in the continental showpiece, which runs from September 19 to October 4, 2026. The Games will feature dozens of sports and thousands of medal events across multiple venues.

Iran start 2026 Asian Junior Handball Championship in style

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Kuwait 29-27 in their opening match of the 2026 Asian Junior Handball Championship on Wednesday.

The Iranian team will play Korea in Group B on Thursday.

Iran are drawn in Group B along with Japan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Qatar, India, and the UAE.

Group A consists of China, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Chinese Taipei, and Hong Kong.

The 19th Asian Men’s Junior Handball Championship is being held in Chuzhou of China from 15 to 26 July 2026.

The event serves as qualification event for the 2027 IHF Men’s Junior World Championship.

Republic of Korea hold the distinction of being the most decorated team overall, having won a total of 13 medals, comprising three gold, seven silver, and three bronze medals. The host nation China, claimed their lone championship title during the 2nd edition in 1990, which was held in Tehran, Iran.

The Asian Men’s Junior Handball Championship is the official competition organized by Asian Handball Federation for junior men’s national handball teams of Asia, and takes place every two years.

Iran down U.S. at 2026 Sitting Volleyball World Championships

TEHRAN – Iran’s men registered their fifth win at the 2026 Sitting Volleyball World Championships, beating the U.S. in straight sets (25-21, 25-15, 25-16) on Wednesday.

Team Melli had previously defeated Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Japan and Croatia.

Iran will play Kazakhstan on Thursday in the competition’s semifinals.

Earlier in the day, the women’s team lost to Canada 3-0 (25-19, 25-22, 25-22) and failed to book their place in Final Four.

The World Championships, hosted at the World ParaVolley Development Centre, feature 16 men’s teams and 16 women’s teams.

The tournament is the first opportunity for teams to secure qualification for the LA28 Paralympic Games, with the men’s and women’s champions earning direct qualification places.

Persepolis agree deal to sign Mohammadmehdi Zare

Persepolis have reached an agreement to sign Iranian center-back Mohammadmehdi Zare from Russian Premier League club Akhmat Grozny, strengthening their defensive options ahead of the new season.

The highly rated defender is expected to reunite with Persepolis head coach Mehdi Tartar, having previously worked under him during their successful spell together at Gol Gohar. Their existing relationship is seen as a key factor in the move, with Tartar viewing Zare as an ideal fit for his tactical system.

At Persepolis, Zare is set to form a new central defensive partnership with experienced international Hossein Kanani, creating one of the strongest backlines in Iranian football. His composure on the ball, aerial ability, and defensive awareness are expected to add greater stability to the team’s defense.

The transfer marks another important addition for Persepolis as the Tehran giants continue to reinforce their squad with the aim of challenging for domestic honors and making a strong impact in continental competitions this season.

Iran win bronze at Taekwondo World Cup Team Championships

TEHRAN – Iran’s women’s team clinched a bronze medal at the 2026 World Taekwondo World Cup Team Championships.

Moroccan team of Khoulat Merieme, Ennams Fatima-Zahra, Nada Laaraj and Amina Dehhaoui clinched the gold with victory against Russia in the final.

Silver medals went to Alisa Soshnikova, Margarita Agrofenina, Iuliia Kudriavtseva and Mariia Federa.

In the match for bronze, the Iranian team of Hasti Mohammadi, Fatemeh Ahmadi, Yalda Valinejad and Baran Nemati triumphed over Thailand.

Competition at the Chuncheon 2026 World Taekwondo World Cup Team Championships concludes tomorrow with the mixed team event.

The 2026 World Taekwondo World Cup Team Championships Series are being held in Chuncheon, South Korea from July 14 to 16.

Tractor continue talks to sign Mohammadmehdi Mohebi

TEHRAN – Tractor remain in negotiations with UAE Pro League club Ittihad Kalba over the signing of Iranian winger Mohammadmehdi Mohebi as they continue to strengthen their squad for the new season.

The Tabriz-based club, now under the guidance of head coach Mohammad Rabiei, have already secured the arrivals of Mohammad Daneshgar, Parsa Jafari, and Hadi Habibi-Nejad during the summer transfer window.

Mohebi has emerged as one of Tractor’s top transfer targets, but the move depends on reaching a financial agreement with Ittihad Kalba, where the 25-year-old remains under contract. Discussions between the two clubs are ongoing as they work to finalize the transfer fee.

Mohebi spent the second half of last season on loan at Sepahan, joining the Isfahan club in early February. The winger made seven appearances for the Persian Gulf Pro League side before returning to the UAE, and Tractor hope to bring him back to Iranian football on a permanent deal.

Minister calls municipalities key partners in tourism development, historical district restoration

TEHRAN – Iran’s Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts on Tuesday said cooperation between the government and municipalities was essential for expanding tourism infrastructure and restoring historical urban districts.

Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri made the remarks during a meeting with the secretary-general of the Assembly of Mayors and accompanying officials, describing municipalities as strategic partners of the ministry in the country’s development plans, Mehr news agency reported.

“Successful domestic experiences and international models show that tourism development, expansion of accommodation infrastructure and restoration of historical districts cannot be achieved with the desired speed and quality without the effective participation of urban management,” Salehi-Amiri was quoted as saying.

He said agreements had been reached with municipalities across the country to facilitate investment in hotels and tourism facilities, with some cities offering reductions in municipal fees and infrastructure costs to attract investors.

Kazakhstan sees Iran’s Golestan as potential tourism destination



TEHRAN – Kazakhstan sees Iran’s Golestan province as a potential tourism destination, its consul general in Gorgan said during talks with provincial tourism officials on Wednesday aimed at expanding cooperation between the two sides.

Yerbol Akhmedov, Consul Gen-



eral of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Gorgan, met Yaser Ghan-dehari, deputy head of tourism at Golestan’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, to discuss ways to increase tourist exchanges and develop joint travel packages.

Akhmedov said Kazakhstan

was ready to hold joint programs for tourism and business operators from Golestan in Kazakhstan and called for specialized meetings between travel agencies, tourism facility operators, health tourism providers and universities from both countries.

“Joint meetings between travel agencies, tourism facility operators, health tourism providers and universities from Iran and Kazakhstan can pave the way for effective and sustainable cooperation in tourism,” Akhmedov said.

He said direct contacts between Kazakh tourism companies and tourism operators in Golestan could help design joint tours and increase visitor flows between the two countries.

Akhmedov added that for residents of some regions of Kazakhstan, traveling to Iran could be more affordable in terms of time and transportation costs than traveling to certain domes-

tic destinations within Kazakhstan, creating opportunities for tourism development, particularly in the health tourism sector.

Zahra Armand, a Kazakhstan-based tourism operator who attended the meeting, said cultural ties between Iran and Kazakhstan offered significant potential for expanding tourism relations.

“Many Kazakh citizens already travel to Iran, especially to Golestan province, for medical treatment, but most of these trips are arranged through relatives and acquaintances,” Armand said.

“This capacity should be developed in a targeted, planned and professional manner through co-operation between tourism operators in both countries.”

Golestan province, whose capital is Gorgan, borders the Iranian provinces of Semnan, Mazandaran and North Khorasan, and also shares an international border with Turkmenistan.

Specialized travel media report major shift in tourism patterns



“experience tourism.”

The reports also point to the expanding role of technology and artificial intelligence in travel planning. Travelers are increasingly using AI-powered tools to design itineraries, choose destinations, book services and receive personalized recommendations.

Industry analysts said these technologies are becoming a central component of the tourism sector’s operations and customer engagement strategies.

Environmental sustainabili-

ty and social responsibility have also become key factors in destination selection. According to the reports, many travelers are favoring destinations that prioritize the protection of cultural and natural heritage, involve local communities and manage resources responsibly.

Climate change is also affecting travel demand, with some travelers shifting from very hot destinations toward cooler and more temperate regions.

Another major trend is the rise of event-based travel. Specialized

cient to meet the extensive restoration needs of historic districts and that private investors and municipal authorities should play a larger role in preserving and utilizing cultural heritage assets.

He also called for a stronger role for municipalities in provincial decision-making processes, saying urban management should be considered an important pillar of the country’s executive system.

Salehi-Amiri said many countries had given municipalities a central role in local planning and development and that Iran could benefit from those experiences to improve urban governance.

Competition among cities in areas such as handicraft markets, historic district restoration, creative industries and tourism infrastructure could contribute to urban economic growth and national development, the minister said.

Iran has numerous historic cities, including Yazd, Kashan, Isfahan, Shiraz, Qazvin, Tabriz and Kerman, which contain significant historic districts and cultural heritage sites.

Iran Space Agency announces new development projects

TEHRAN – A wide range of projects is currently underway by the Iran Space Agency, focusing on three main areas of infrastructure development, satellite design, and data and imagery-based services.

According to Hassan Salarieh, the head of the Iran Space Agency, satellite-based value-added services are among the agency's top priorities, with the development of applications based on satellite data and imagery receiving significant attention.

Referring to the agency's infrastructure initiatives, Salarieh said the projects were launched under Iran's 10-year national space roadmap and the Seventh National Development Plan. They include the establishment of satellite control centers, expansion of launch facilities, and the construction of specialized satellite testing laboratories and environmental test centers, IRNA reported.

He noted that substantial progress had been achieved in these projects during the Iranian year 1404 (March 2025–March 2026), with several facilities entering operational service.

Salarieh added that efforts to expand the country's space infrastructure are continuing in multiple areas, including specialized laboratories, the Chabahar Space Launch Base, and a nationwide network of satellite control centers.

“The satellite control centers are being developed as an integrated network across different regions of the country,” he said. “This will improve the stability of communications with satellites while reducing the time required to establish contact.”

He explained that the geographical distribution of control centers will shorten communication intervals with satellites, accelerate in-orbit testing procedures, and ultimately extend satellite operational lifetimes.

The ISA chief also announced plans to establish a network of mobile satellite ground stations, saying the initiative has been prioritized to ensure the continuous and reliable delivery of satellite data and imagery services nationwide.

He added that implementation of these projects will continue throughout the Iranian year 1405 (March 2026–March 2027), with several new facilities and infrastructure projects expected to be inaugurated in the coming months.



Addressing Iran's satellite manufacturing program, Salarieh said numerous satellite projects that began in previous years remain under development.

He highlighted several major space launches carried out over the past year, including the launch of the Nahid-2 telecommunications satellite.

According to Salarieh, Nahid-2 is Iran's first domestically developed telecommunications satellite, designed and built by the Iranian Space Research Center, which operates under the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology. He described the satellite as one of the country's most significant achievements in the space sector.

He added that an upgraded version of Nahid-2 is currently under design and development at the Iranian Space Research Center. Although work on the new version began last year following the launch of Nahid-2, development activities are continuing at full pace during the current year.

Reviewing the satellite's mission, Salarieh said Nahid-2, operating in low Earth orbit (LEO), completed its first operational tests last year, with most of the mission objectives successfully achieved.

“The valuable experience gained from the Nahid-2 mission has formed the basis for designing the next-generation satellite,” he said.

The upgraded Nahid-2, he added, will feature enhanced technical capabilities and enable Iran to provide services through satellite constellations, making it one of the country's key strategic space projects.

Salarieh also announced progress on the Nahid-3 project, describing it as the next generation of Iran's telecommunications satellites.

The satellite is currently in the design phase and is intended to provide communications services from geostationary orbit (GEO). Construction of several major subsystems, including propulsion systems and thrusters, is already underway.

Explaining the role of telecommunications satellites, Salarieh said their primary mission is data transmission, with service capacity determined by bandwidth and data throughput across various frequency bands.

He noted that telecommunications satellites operating in low Earth orbit generally require deployment in constellations to provide continuous coverage. By contrast, satellites in geostationary orbit can cover much larger areas, significantly reducing the number of satellites required.

Located approximately 36,000 kilometers above Earth, geostationary orbit allows a single satellite to provide communications services over a vast region. According to Salarieh, Nahid-3 is being designed specifically to take advantage of these capabilities.

Technology transfer centers to accelerate rural development

TEHRAN – Minister of Science, Research and Technology, Hossein Simaei-Sarraf, has said that the projected inauguration of seven technology transfer centers will accelerate rural development.

In an effort to further empower the workforce and transfer technology to rural areas, the ministry of science and the vice-presidency's office for rural development signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Monday, ISNA reported.

The country has taken great strides in the development of physical infrastructure in rural areas after the Islamic Revolution in 1979. There has been a 99-percent coverage of services such as electricity, safe water, gas, telephone, and internet access in villages with more than 20 households, Simaei-Sarraf highlighted.

Transferring technology to villages will not only have social and economic impacts, but will pave the way for sustainable employment, prevent rural-to-urban migration, and even reverse the migration trend, he noted.

The ministry of science will utilize all its capacities to support this initiative. Currently, the country has some 60 science and technology parks, 16,000 innovation centers, and 2,000 other units operating in the rural development sector. These companies are operating in different fields like energy, water, modern agriculture, processing industries, and handicrafts, which can play a significant role in rural development, the official further noted.

In 2025, the Vice President for Women and Family Affairs, Zahra Behrouz-Azar, said empowering rural communities is a prerequisite for the economic and cultural development of the country.

Referring to the difference between the concept of village and local community, the official said, “The rural areas' economic activities involve agriculture, animal husbandry, crafts, and natural resources.

However, the local community has a broader concept and includes different groups of people, not only in rural areas, but also in urban neighborhoods, nomadic areas, and even digital communities. Local communities rely on social interactions, traditions, beliefs, and shared human relationships.”

In villages, the development of agricultural infrastructure, animal husbandry, health, and education are basic needs, while in local communities, issues such as preserving culture, fostering social interactions, and strengthening support networks are significant.

Referring to the fact that only 30 percent of the country's population resides in villages,



es, Behrouz-Azar said depopulation of rural areas will result in losing a significant proportion of cultural heritage, art, language, and lifestyle.

The official went on to urge universities and educational centers to utilize their knowledge and modern technologies to address current challenges in rural communities, help boost their productivity, and improve the quality of life of farmers, particularly women farmers, since they play a key role in empowering rural communities.

Financing the First Mile

World Rural Development Day is marked on July 6 every year. This year, it was marked under the theme ‘Financing the First Mile of Food Systems’.

Rural communities are the ‘first mile’ of food systems: the places where food is grown, livelihoods are sustained, and resilience begins. They are home to nearly 80 percent of the world's poorest people and stand at the frontline of food insecurity, climate shocks and migration pressures. Yet they also hold immense potential to strengthen food security, create economic opportunity and support long-term stability.

Investing in rural people means investing in the foundations of more resilient societies. When rural areas have the resources they need, communities are better able to withstand shocks, young people have greater reason to build their futures at home, and producers can contribute more fully to local, national, and global markets. Evidence indicates that increased investment in rural areas equivalent to one percent of a country's gross domestic product can reduce international out-migration by nearly one percent-age point (IFAD, 2026).

Unlocking this potential requires practical, sustained action: stronger value chains, wider access to finance, greater support for cooperatives and rural small and medium-sized enterprises, and better connections between producers and markets. Such investments can help turn vulnerability into opportunity and ensure that rural communities are recognized not only for the challenges they face, but for the essential role they play in shaping a more secure and sustainable future.

OCHA condemns US attacks on Iranian relief centers, humanitarian infrastructure

TEHRAN – The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has condemned attacks by the United States and the Zionist Regime targeting Iranian relief workers, medical personnel, ambulances, and humanitarian infrastructure, stressing the need to uphold international humanitarian law and ensure the protection of aid workers and civilians.

In an official letter addressed to Pirhossein Kolivand, the president of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, Gemma Connell, the head of OCHA's Humanitarian Affairs Office, expressed concern over the devastating impact of the conflict on civilians, particularly women and children. The letter also highlighted the damage inflicted on the Iranian Red Crescent Society's personnel, offices, emergency vehicles, ambulances, and helicopters, ISNA reported.

OCHA reiterated that the protection of medical personnel, humanitarian workers, and all civilians is a fundamental principle of international humanitarian law.

The letter further condemned attacks resulting in the deaths or injuries of civilians, including relief workers and medical staff, as well as the destruction of or damage to humanitarian equipment and civilian infrastruc-

ture. It underscored the importance of ensuring safe, rapid, and unimpeded humanitarian access to affected areas.

According to the letter, OCHA has continuously monitored and reported on the humanitarian situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the impact of the conflict on civilians and civilian infrastructure. It also noted that the deaths of healthcare workers and emergency responders had been raised before the United Nations Security Council.

The letter further referred to OCHA's close cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), emphasizing the continuation of joint efforts to strengthen the protection of humanitarian personnel, including Red Crescent staff and volunteers, in all humanitarian crises.

In its concluding remarks, Connell paid tribute to the dedication, sacrifice, commitment, and humanitarian spirit of the staff and volunteers of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, describing their role in delivering life-saving assistance, rescuing victims trapped under rubble, and supporting those affected under the most challenging circumstances as vital and commendable.

Tehran, Jakarta hold webinar to bolster scientific-research ties

TEHRAN –The Iran National Science Foundation (INSF) and the Indonesia National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) conducted a joint webinar, titled ‘Advancing Iran-Indonesia Research Collaboration: Strategic Opportunities Ahead’, on Wednesday to explore avenues for the expansion of scientific and research cooperation between the researchers, scientists, and the scientific institutions of the two countries.

The webinar kicked off with the remarks of the president of INSF, Morteza Hormozinejad, and the deputy chairman for Facilitation of Research and Innovation, BRIN, Agus Haryono.

Also, experts and professors from both countries in the health, water security, and environment sectors delivered lectures.

The event served as a great opportunity to promote scientific ties, expand research collaborations, and develop joint projects between Iran and Indonesia.

Indonesia intends to foster sci-tech co-op with Iran

In December 2025, Rolliansyah Soemirat, the Indonesian ambassador to Tehran, said the new Indonesian administration intends to develop scientific and technological ties with Iran, highlighting Iran's extensive capabilities in science and technology.

“The administration is looking forward to the expansion of international collaborations, particularly in fields of science and technology, which opens up new opportunities for cooperation between the two countries. The main focus of the interactions will be centered around sharing technology and emerging innovations, as well as boosting technological cooperation,” IRNA quoted

Soemirat as saying.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with Hossein Roozbeh, the head of the Organization for the Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology.

Referring to his visit to an exhibition of achievements at the Iran House of Innovation and Technology (iHiT), the official said the exhibition clearly showcased only a part of Iran's capacities and capabilities in science and technology. “These achievements demonstrate Iran's status in the global ecosystem of science and innovation.”

Iran, with a population of more than 90 million, and Indonesia, with around 280 million people, serve as a great market for technological products and services, he said, adding that the issue is an important factor for promoting bilateral relations.

Lauding the inauguration of an iHiT branch in Jakarta, Soemirat stated that the center can lay the basis for future collaborative partnerships in technological fields.

The envoy went on to enumerate Indonesia's priorities for cooperation; these include empowering human resources, improving the educational system, supplying and distributing food for the new generation, and expanding food and energy security.

Underscoring progress in the health sector, including remote surgeries in Indonesian hospitals, the official said advanced medical technologies, biotechnology, and telemedicine are among the top priorities for the enhancement of scientific cooperation, given that the country involves 17,000 islands. In many of these areas,



the best way to provide medical services is through utilizing telemedicine.

The official went on to propose establishing an Iranian business and technology hub in Jakarta, exchanging calendars of technological events, holding joint workshops and exhibitions in person and online, and creating a sustainable communication platform for ongoing interactions between technological companies and institutions of the two countries.

In October 2025, Soemirat emphasized the need to promote scientific, technological, and educational collaborations between Indonesia and Iran.

“Relations between Tehran and Jakarta need to be upgraded from political to technological cooperation,” IRNA quoted Soemirat as saying.

The official made the remarks during a ceremony held at the University of Tehran to mark 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

“To reduce scientific dependence on developed countries, it is essential to establish a joint network in key areas such as in-

formation technology, artificial intelligence (AI), clean energy, and marine sciences between Iran and Indonesia,” he noted.

Referring to the membership of the two countries in institutions such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Non-Aligned Movement, and BRICS, Soemirat emphasized the need for fostering synergy and cooperation between the two nations to address the problems of the Islamic world, the region, and the world.

The official also called for the expansion of ties in the fields of maritime governance, energy security, climate change, and the blue economy so that the sea becomes a factor for unity and creates a model of sustainable development.

The Indonesian ambassador also stated that Indonesia is opposed to any unilateral sanctions and emphasized the necessity of resolving the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomacy. “Indonesia defends the right of all countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.”



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who involves himself in matters without considering the consequences exposes himself to troubles.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:10 Evening: 19:41 Dawn: 3:19 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:01 (tomorrow)

Abbas Kiarostami to be commemorated at Cinema Museum

TEHRAN – The Nations' Diplomacy Think Tank, concurrently with the official launch of its Cultural Diplomacy Department, in collaboration with the Cinema Museum of Iran, is hosting a special ceremony to commemorate the late Abbas Kiarostami, the prominent filmmaker and enduring figure of Iranian culture and arts.

Titled “Abbas Kiarostami: Beyond Borders,” the event will take place on Thursday, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., in the Ferdows Hall of the Cinema Museum in Tehran, Honaronline reported.

During the discussion and tribute session, Ebrahim Haghighi, Seifollah Samadian, Seyed Mohammad Beheshti, and Shadmehr Rastin will attend as special guests to speak about various dimensions of Kiarostami's artistic persona and cultural legacy.

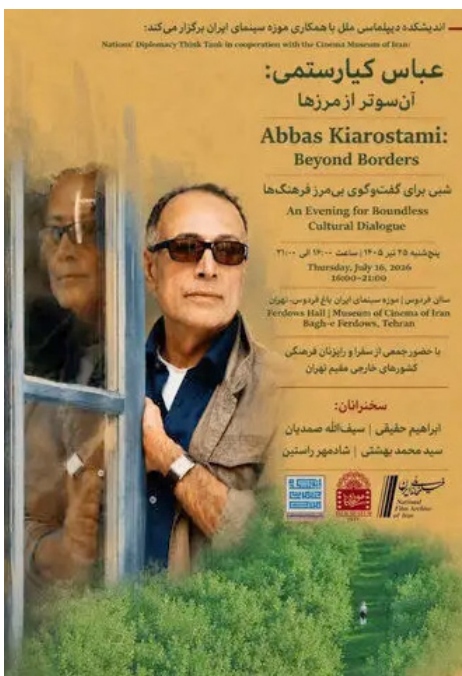
This event will be held in the presence of a gathering of artists, filmmakers, as well as cultural and diplomatic figures.

Abbas Kiarostami (1940 – 2016) was an Iranian film director, screenwriter, poet, photographer, and film producer. An active filmmaker from 1970, Kiarostami had been involved in the production of over 40 films, including shorts and documentaries.

Kiarostami attained critical acclaim for directing the “Koker” trilogy (1987-1994), “Close-Up” (1990), “The Wind Will Carry Us” (1999), and “Taste of Cherry” (1997), which was awarded the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival that year.

In later works, “Certified Copy” (2010) and “Like Someone in Love” (2012), he filmed for the first time outside Iran: in Italy and Japan, respectively.

His films “Where Is the Friend's House?” (1987), “Close-Up,” and “The Wind Will Carry Us” were ranked among the 100 best foreign films in a 2018 critics' poll by BBC Culture. “Close-Up” was also ranked one of the 50 greatest movies of all time in the famous decennial Sight & Sound poll conducted in 2012. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential filmmakers of Iran, and of all time.



Kiarostami had worked extensively as a screenwriter, film editor, art director, and producer and had designed credit titles and publicity material. He was also a poet, photographer, painter, illustrator, and graphic designer. He was part of a generation of filmmakers in the Iranian New Wave, a Persian cinema movement that started in the late 1960s and emphasized the use of poetic dialogue and allegorical storytelling dealing with political and philosophical issues.

Kiarostami had a reputation for using child protagonists, for documentary-style narrative films, for stories that take place in rural villages, and for conversations that unfold inside cars, using stationary mounted cameras. He is also known for his use of Persian poetry in the dialogue, titles, and themes of his films. Kiarostami's films contain a notable degree of ambiguity, an unusual mixture of simplicity and complexity, and often a mix of fictional and documentary elements. The concepts of change and continuity, in addition to the themes of life and death, play a major role in Kiarostami's works.

Inaugural Global Poetry Award for Martyr Leader concluded

TEHRAN – The closing ceremony of the first Martyr Leader Global Poetry Award, aimed at commemorating the legacy and path of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, was held on Monday at the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization in Tehran with the presence of cultural officials, intellectuals, and prominent international poets.

In his address at the ceremony, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyyed Abbas Salehi, emphasized the unique poetic stature of the Martyr Leader and said, “Unlike many leaders in the Arab and Islamic world who are strangers to literature and poetry, our wise leader was nurtured from childhood under the training of his dear mother, possessing a poetic sensibility. Until the end of his life, he memorized poems in three languages—Persian, Arabic, and Turkish—was proficient in literary criticism, and composed poetry himself.”

Highlighting the literary dimensions of the Leader's character, the Minister added, “He not only read a great deal of poetry and possessed an exceptional memory, but also played an unparalleled role in the post-revolutionary era in poetry criticism, composing, and even the cultivation of poets. The mid-Ramadan poetry sessions were merely one manifestation of his passion, as he consistently encouraged and motivated young poets throughout the year.”

“He always emphasized that a revolution without poetry is in-



complete, flawed, and lacking a medium; for the cultural essence and identity of Iranians are intertwined with poetry. From the very beginning of the revolution, he insisted on the link between poetry and the permanence of the revolution—a perspective that remained consistent both before and during his leadership,” ISNA quoted the minister as saying.

Also speaking at the event, Hojjatolleslam Mohammad Mehdi Imanipour, president of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, noted the significance of the event, stating: “The

first cultural and international program of the Islamic Republic of Iran following the grand funeral of the Martyr Leader has begun with poetry, and we hope this initiative will develop into a lasting cultural movement. Based on our planning, the Global Poetry Award will continue in the coming years and its scope will be expanded to other countries.”

“The importance of poetry in the Leader's view was primarily due to this art form's capacity to convey messages, as he believed that messages are transmitted more durably and effectively through poetry,” he added.

Imanipour reported a widespread response from poets around the world, noting: “Poets from 40 countries have submitted their works to the secretariat. The number of works has now exceeded 3,000 poems—a reception that demonstrates the high capacity of this prize and its global status.”

Subsequently, Alireza Ghazveh, Scientific Secretary of the event, reported an unprecedented reception from domestic and international poets, saying: “The number of submissions is still increasing, and the collection of poems, which has already been compiled into 10 volumes, has the capacity to be published in up to 20 volumes.”

Pointing to the participation of various academic groups in compiling this collection, he added: “The sections for Persian, Arabic, English, Afghan, Subcontinent, and Children's poetry have been organized with the cooperation of professors and researchers in these fields, and a team of experts has been responsible for editing these works.”

During the ceremony, several volumes containing poems by domestic and foreign poets (along with translations) were unveiled. Additionally, 42 poets from 10 countries were introduced as winners.

The poetry recitation segment of the event, centered on the elegy of the Martyr Leader, hosted renowned poets from Iraq, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Yemen, and Lebanon.

Iranian director to stage adaptation of Chekhov's “Uncle Vanya”

TEHRAN- Iranian director Yousef Bapiri will stage an adaptation of Russian playwright Anton Chekhov's play “Uncle Vanya” at Tehran's Labkhand Theater Hall on Thursday.

Renamed “Based on Uncle Vanya by Anton Chekhov,” the play features a cast composed of prominent actors Hassan Majouni and Houtan Shakiba.

The play will be staged every night with two separate performances, and will remain on stage until August 21.

“Uncle Vanya,” written by Chekhov in 1897, is a profound exploration of human emotion and existential angst set against the backdrop of a rural Russian estate. The play delves into themes of unfulfilled dreams, the passage of time, and the complexities of love and disappointment. Chekhov's work stands out for its nuanced character development, subtle humor, and reflective dialogue, offering a rich tapestry of interpersonal dynamics.

The play centers around the character of Ivan Petrovich Voynitsky, affectionately known as Uncle Vanya, who has devoted his life to managing the estate of his late brother. His life takes a dramatic turn with the arrival of Professor Serebryakov, a self-absorbed scholar who has returned with his young, beautiful wife, Yelena. Vanya and his mother, Maria, who have dedicated themselves

to maintaining the estate in the professor's absence, find themselves disillusioned and resentful toward the professor's apparent arrogance and indifference.

As the plot unfolds, the characters grapple with their desires and frustrations. Vanya, who harbors unrequited love for Yelena, begins to confront the futility of his sacrifices. Meanwhile, Astrov, a local doctor who is also enamored with Yelena, serves as a voice of social conscience, lamenting the decline of the environment and the impact of human actions on nature. His philosophical musings highlight the disconnection between aspiration and reality, a recurring motif in Chekhov's body of work.

One of the striking aspects of “Uncle Vanya” is its structure. Unlike traditional plays with dramatic climaxes, Chekhov employs a more naturalistic approach, allowing moments of introspection and quiet despair to permeate the narrative. The characters often engage in conversations that seem mundane but are laced with deeper existential questions. This technique invites the audience to reflect on their own lives and the universal struggles of identity and purpose.

Ultimately, “Uncle Vanya” paints a poignant portrait of life's disappointments and unfulfilled potential. As the characters confront

their dreams and realities, the play resonates with anyone who has experienced the weight of yearning and the passage of time. Chekhov's brilliance lies in his ability to encapsulate the human experience with both tenderness and an unflinching gaze, making “Uncle Vanya” a timeless exploration of the complexities of life, love, and loss. In its rich characterization and thematic depth, the play remains a cornerstone of world literature, continually inviting interpretation and reflection.

Anton Chekhov was a renowned Russian playwright and short story writer, born in 1860. He is celebrated for his influence on modern literature, particularly through his innovative narrative techniques and exploration of the human condition.

Chekhov's works often depict the complexities of life, focusing on themes of existentialism, social change, and the subtleties of human relationships. Notable plays such as “The Cherry Orchard,” “Three Sisters,” and “Uncle Vanya” showcase his ability to blend tragedy and comedy. Chekhov's mastery of character development and dialogue has left a lasting legacy, earning him a pivotal place in world literature.

Persian edition of “Siddhartha” republished

TEHRAN- The 17th edition of the Persian translation of German-Swiss novelist Hermann Hesse's “Siddhartha” has recently been published.

Mahi Publications in Tehran is the publisher of the book translated by Soroush Habibi.

Published in 1922, “Siddhartha” is a lyrical exploration of the human spirit's quest for enlightenment. Set in ancient India during the era of Gautama Buddha, the narrative follows Siddhartha—whose name in Sanskrit signifies “one who has found meaning”—on a lifelong odyssey to discover the truth of existence.

Siddhartha begins his journey as the privileged son of a Brahmin, possessing intellect and beauty but lacking inner peace. Driven by a spiritual hunger, he renounces his home to join the Samanas, ascetic monks who embrace extreme deprivation. However, he eventually discov-

ers that asceticism is merely a temporary escape from the self. This realization leads him to the Buddha, referred to in the text as Gotama. While his friend Govinda joins the Buddha's monastic order, Siddhartha departs alone, concluding that enlightenment cannot be taught through doctrine; it must be experienced individually.

Siddhartha's path then shifts from the spiritual to the material. In the city, he meets Kamala and enters the world of commerce under the businessman Kamaswami. Utilizing the discipline of his past, he quickly amasses wealth. Yet, the luxury of the city becomes a gilded cage. Entangled in gambling and indulgence, Siddhartha reaches a breaking point and contemplates suicide by the river. It is here that he experiences a spiritual rebirth, hearing the holy sound “Om,” which reconnects him to

the universe.

Siddhartha decides to remain by the water, apprenticing himself to Vasudeva, a humble ferryman. Under Vasudeva's guidance, he learns to “listen” to the river, realizing that it contains all the voices of time—past, present, and future. This peace is tested when he reunites with Kamala and discovers he has a son. After Kamala's death, the boy becomes rebellious and eventually flees. Though Siddhartha is desperate to follow him, Vasudeva urges him to let the boy find his own path, just as Siddhartha did in his youth. Through this loss, Siddhartha realizes that time is an illusion and that suffering is an integral part of the jubilant fellowship of all connected things. Having passed his wisdom to Siddhartha, Vasudeva departs into the woods, leaving Siddhartha peacefully fulfilled.

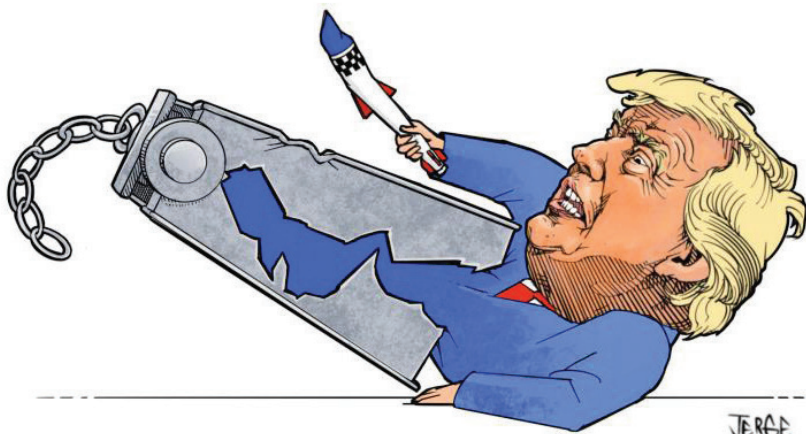
The novel reaches its reso-

lution when Govinda, now an elderly monk, seeks out the legendary enlightened ferryman. He does not initially recognize the man as his childhood companion. When Govinda asks for the secret of wisdom, Siddhartha explains that language is too limited to capture the fullness of truth; for every true statement, there is an opposite that is also true. He urges Govinda to love the world in its completeness, recognizing that nature works in a self-sustaining cycle.

In a final, transcendent moment, Siddhartha asks Govinda to kiss his forehead. Through this touch, Govinda experiences the same visions of timelessness and unity that Siddhartha found by the river. Bowing to his radiantly smiling friend, Govinda finally understands that the journey to enlightenment is not a destination, but a continuous flow of becoming.

Cartoon of Day

TRAPPED



Trapped
Cartoonist: Jorge Gonzalez from Mexico