

America's financial stranglehold on Iraq

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – For more than two decades after the 2003 invasion, Iraq has rebuilt its economy around an unusual financial reality: the world's fifth-largest oil producer depends on a foreign power for access to the currency that keeps its economy functioning.

The arrangement has increasingly become a source of political and economic leverage for the United States, raising difficult questions about whether Iraq exercises sovereignty over its own financial affairs.

This year, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump suspended the physical shipment of hundreds of millions of dollars in cash reserves, funds generated entirely from Iraqi oil exports, leaving Baghdad publicly humiliated. ► Page 5

Iran shines at intl. biology, chemistry Olympiads

TEHRAN – Iranian students have delivered an outstanding performance, clinching three gold medals and a silver medal at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO), and three silver medals and a bronze medal at the International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO).

The 37th International Biology Olympiad (IBO 2026) took place from July 12 to 19 in the city of Vilnius, Lithuania. The event brought together participants from some 80 countries across five continents.

Radin Bayani, Mohammad-Reza Vaezi, and Amir-Hossein Nosrati grabbed gold medals, while Amir-Hossein Hemmati won the silver medal, IRIB reported. ► Page 7

Ancient Alamut fortifications complete Iran's architectural and defensive history, heritage expert says

TEHRAN – The proposed UNESCO World Heritage nomination of the Cultural Landscape of Alamut and its related fortifications would complete the historical narrative of Iran's architectural and defensive heritage, Iranian cultural heritage veteran Seyyed Mohammad Beheshti said on Sunday.

Speaking to Miras-e Aria, Beheshti said the serial nomination represents one of the most significant defensive systems in Iran's central Alborz Mountains and forms a key link in understanding the continuity of Iranian architecture and military organization.

"The chain of Iran's architectural history cannot be fully understood without Alamut," he said. ► Page 6



A satellite image shows smoke billowing near an oil facility in the Ahmadi governorate, Kuwait, July 18, 2026

No U.S. Base in West Asia Is Beyond Iran's Reach

By Mahmoud M. Ravi-Nejad

TEHRAN— Iran has significantly expanded its military response to renewed US operations in and around the Persian Gulf, combining retaliatory drone strikes, air defense operations and tighter control over the Strait of Hormuz in a coordinated campaign to impose mounting costs on Washington while preserving their own military resources.

The latest exchanges come after the collapse of the ceasefire understanding between Tehran and Washington, with hostilities spreading across southern Iran and to US military facilities in the Persian Gulf, underscoring the growing risk of a broader regional confrontation.

The convergence of drone operations, integrated air defenses, and maritime control illustrates Iran's broader military doctrine, which prioritizes asymmetric capabilities capable of challenging conventionally superior adversaries at comparatively low cost.

According to Iranian military statements, US forces launched overnight strikes against several locations in southern Iran, including Qeshm, Sirik and Bandar Abbas, continuing a campaign that US officials have previously said is intended to degrade Iran's military, logistical and maritime infrastructure.

Iran responded by announcing successive phases of Operation Thunderbolt, targeting two key American military facilities in Kuwait with explosive drones.

The Iranian Army said ammunition depots, radar installations, logistics infrastructure and personnel facilities at Camp Udairi and Ali Al-Salem Air Base were struck in retaliation for repeated US attacks that have killed civilians

and damaged bridges, transportation infrastructure and other non-military sites across Iran.

The Army described Camp Udairi as one of Washington's principal regional logistics centers and Ali Al-Salem as a critical hub for deploying US forces across West Asia, arguing that disrupting their operations would complicate American military support throughout the region. ► Page 3

Hojjatoleslam Qomi: Vengeance for martyred Leader is universal duty

TEHRAN — Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Qomi, the head of Iran's Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, has doubled down on calls to avenge the assassination of the former Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Speaking from the organization's headquarters in Tehran, Qomi declared that enacting retribution against those responsible is a borderless, universal obligation. ► Page 2

Iran rights body urges UN action after US strike of children hospital

TEHRAN — Iran's Human Rights Headquarters has called on the United Nations and international human rights organizations to condemn a US attack on a children's cancer hospital in the southwestern city of Ahvaz, saying the incident constituted a serious violation of international humanitarian law and a war crime.

In a statement issued on Saturday, the headquarters said US airstrikes on July 15 targeted the vicinity of Shahid Beqaei Specialized Hospital, forcing the emergency evacuation of 211 children undergoing cancer treatment, including chemotherapy patients. It urged the UN Security Council, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and international human rights organizations to take immediate action, warning that continued silence would amount to complicity. ► Page 2

ICCIMA compiles "War Damage Management Package"

TEHRAN- Samad Hassanzadeh, head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, announced the compilation of a "War Damage Management Package" by the chamber's special economic headquarters.

Speaking at the board meeting, he said that given the rapid developments in geopolitical tensions, the final text of this package will be sent to the heads of the three branches of government and the Supreme National Security Council by next week, hoping for necessary legal follow-up.

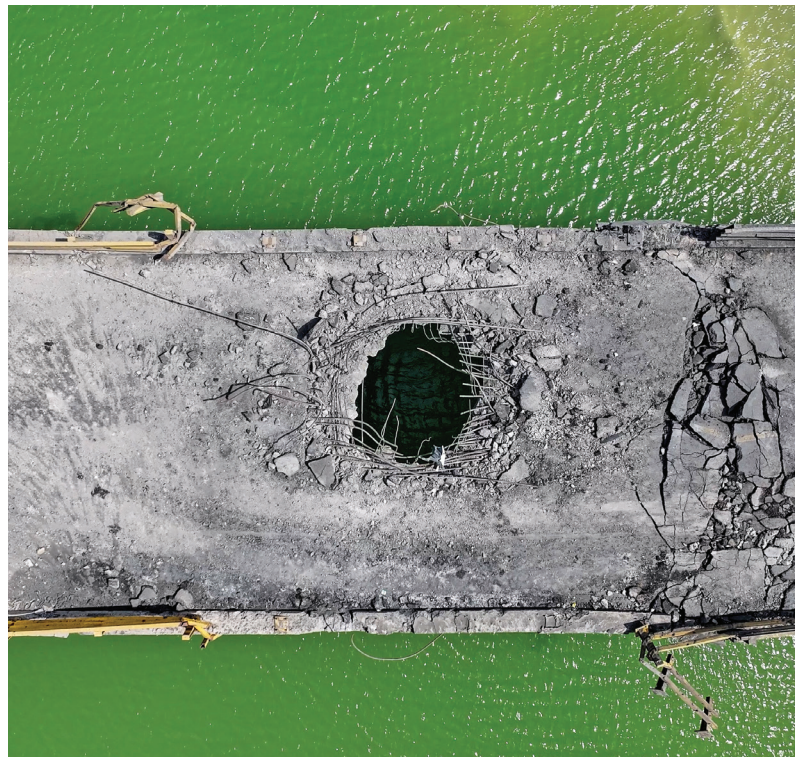
Hassanzadeh strongly condemned the enemy's aggressive attacks on the southern coastal provinces—including Hormozgan, Bushehr, Khuzestan, and Sistan-Baluchestan—and called for practical support for these regions. ► Page 4



Leader thanks Iraqis for 'historic epic'

TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei has expressed gratitude to the Iraqi people for their 'magnificent and deeply meaningful epic' during the funeral procession of the martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, praising the massive public participation as a 'symbol of unity, faith, and solidarity' between the Iranian and Iraqi nations.

In a message issued on Saturday, Ayatollah Khamenei thanked Iraq's senior religious authorities, scholars, tribal leaders, intellectuals, university professors, commanders, and people from all walks of life for their role in honoring the late Leader during his funeral ceremonies in Iraq. ► Page 3



Bridges or lives? Trump's calculated war on Iran's everyday people

TEHRAN- The recent escalation of U.S. military action against Iran has moved beyond the battlefield. In a cynical display of coercion, Donald Trump has openly threatened to systematically destroy Iran's civilian infrastructure unless the country capitulates to U.S. demands. This is not a war against a government; it is a war against the Iranian people, their economy, and their future.

By targeting power plants, bridges, factories, and ports, the Trump administration is deliberately attacking the very foundations of Iran's economy and the livelihood of its citizens. ► Page 4

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Miscalculation behind attacks on Iran's infrastructure

The Iran newspaper, in an article, examined the recent US attacks and argued that targeting public infrastructure is less a sign of strength and more evidence of a strategic shift after Washington failed to achieve its goals on the ground. When declared objectives cannot be met through confrontation, the effort shifts toward imposing economic and psychological costs on the population as a substitute for military success. Still, experience shows that the Iranian people have not retreated under such pressure; rather, they have defended their national rights with greater cohesion. The Islamic Republic has repeatedly demonstrated that it will respond to any hostile act in a way that is both proportionate and deterrent. This approach is not driven by adventurism but by the need to reinforce deterrence and prevent future aggression.

Sobh-e-No: A war that shapes the future

Sobh-e-No, in an explanation of the significance of the Persian Gulf conflict, wrote that this war is a contest for "claiming advantage" in the geography of power. For Iran, the Strait of Hormuz is no longer merely a strategic waterway for oil exports; it has become a platform for demonstrating power and a permanent bargaining tool. By showcasing its ability to control this vital passage, Iran sends a message to the world: global energy security is impossible without Tehran's consent, and any shift in the regional balance must bear Iran's signature. This is more than a defensive reaction—it is a "strategic offensive" aimed at cementing Iran's role as a determining force. Iran can manage the costs of sanctions and pressure with patience, because it sees the ultimate goal not as geographic survival but as the preservation of its historical role. What happens in the Strait of Hormuz reflects Iran's intention to rewrite the rules of the game for both adversaries and allies.

Former US counterterrorism chief says Iran emerged stronger after war, urges policy shift

TEHRAN — The former head of the US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) has argued that Washington must acknowledge Iran's strengthened regional position following months of military confrontation, warning that continued attacks would only deepen strategic setbacks for the United States.

Joseph Kent made the remarks in a post on X on Sunday, saying the recent conflict had reshaped the geopolitical landscape of West Asia and rendered previous US assumptions about the region obsolete.

"The war has changed the region. Iran has emerged as a major regional power, the sooner we recognize this reality and adjust our posture accordingly, the stronger our position will be," Kent wrote.

According to the former intelligence official, the US campaign has failed to accomplish its strategic objectives. He cautioned that any attempt to launch a ground operation against Iran would prove to be "a strategic disaster," leading to significant American casualties while further destabilizing the region.

Kent also argued that the assassination of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, produced the opposite of its intended effect. Rather than weakening the Iranian establishment, he said, the incident reinforced national cohesion, with many Iranians rallying behind the government and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

Calling for an end to hostilities, Kent proposed that Washington reduce its military footprint across the region, including the withdrawal of US troops, bases, and naval forces. Such a move, he said, would help restore uninterrupted shipping through the

Siasat-e-Rooz: A clumsy attempt at separation

Siasat-e-Rooz, in its editorial, addressed J.D. Vance's recent remarks. Vance claims that the pro-Israel lobby is spending millions to disrupt negotiations between Iran and the United States. According to the paper, the US has effectively launched a proxy war on behalf of Israel, while simultaneously giving that regime a green light for its actions in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. At the same time, Washington is creating a buffer zone for Israel by involving Lebanon in conflict with Hezbollah and supporting Saudi attacks on Yemen. In other words, the paper argues, the White House still prioritizes Israel above all else, and Vance's rhetoric is merely a deception aimed at the American public—70 percent of whom, it claims, want their country to distance itself from Israel. The editorial adds that Vance's "clumsy separation" is meant to trap Iran into the miscalculation of believing there is a divide between Israel and the US, thereby shifting Iran's priorities away from comprehensive defense, deterrence, and retaliation for the casualties of the 12-day war and Ramadan, and toward diplomacy.

Vatan-e-Emrooz: The race to recover

Vatan-e-Emrooz, in its analysis, highlighted the strength and speed of Iran's infrastructure recovery after enemy attacks. The paper argues that in recent years a new concept has entered security discourse: "the race for recovery." Experience from recent wars shows that sometimes the speed of repairing a bridge, restarting a power plant, or restoring the electrical grid matters more than the attack itself. A country that can rapidly rehabilitate damaged infrastructure demonstrates the institutional and managerial capacity needed to navigate crises. This is the lesson many analysts emphasized during the US-Iran conflict, praising Iran's national ability to recover and quickly return daily life to normal. In other words, strategic advantage is not only the ability to strike—it is the ability to continue.



Strait of Hormuz by removing what Iran considers the principal source of military tension.

He maintained that many American military installations in the region have become strategic liabilities rather than assets. Their removal, he argued, would reduce the likelihood of Iranian strikes on US positions and ease risks to maritime traffic in one of the world's most important energy corridors.

Kent suggested that once tensions subside, diplomacy could resume through a framework in which the United States offers sanctions relief in exchange for assurances regarding freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

The former NCTC director stepped down from his post on March 17, 2026, saying he could no longer support the US military campaign against Iran. At the time, he maintained that Tehran posed no imminent threat to the United States and said the conflict had been driven largely by pressure from Israel and its influential lobbying network in Washington.

The latest phase of US-Israeli military operations against Iran began on February 28, prompting Tehran to respond with daily missile and drone strikes targeting American and Israeli military assets across the region.

Hojjatoleslam Qomi: Vengeance for martyred Leader is universal duty

From page 1 ▶ "It is a duty shared by everyone—including non-Muslims who believe in freedom and all those who have grown weary of the widespread and systematic injustice in today's world," Qomi stated. "And they are by no means few. The call for vengeance and retribution is not limited to this region; it is directed at all freedom-loving people around the world."

Qomi added: "Vengeance must be carried out. It is not open to compromise or expediency. No excuse or justification can suspend this obligation. It must be carried out without exception."

Qomi's remarks directly align with a statement issued earlier this month by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei. In his address, the Leader proclaimed that avenging his father's martyrdom is the absolute "will of the nation" and "must inevitably" take place "soon."

The late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was martyred in Tehran on February 28 following an aggressive military campaign launched by the United States and Israel.

The remarks come amid an outpouring of national and regional grief. Millions of mourners have filled the streets across Iran and Iraq since the extensive funeral processions began earlier this



month to honor the late Leader's legacy.

The body of the beloved Leader was first carried through massive crowds of faithful mourners in Tehran and the holy city of Qom before crossing into Iraq, where extensive ceremonies were held in the holy shrines of Karbala and Najaf. The historic processions concluded in the holy city of Mashhad where the late leader was laid to rest in the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS).

Throughout these processions,

public outrage against the US and Israeli aggression reached a peak. Mourners frequently carried signs and chanted slogans demanding justice and the punishment of President Donald Trump, who directly ordered the February 28 strikes.

The escalating calls for justice coincide with a severe breakdown of regional agreements due to continued American hostility. Following an initial 40-day conflict, a tentative ceasefire took effect on April 8, followed by a negotiated memorandum of understanding

(MoU) in June that established a 60-day framework for diplomatic talks.

However, that fragile peace was shattered when the United States unilaterally resumed its military attacks against Iranian targets despite the active agreement. With Washington enforcing an illegal naval blockade, the region has seen a resumption of hostilities, making Qomi's uncompromising words a clear signal of Iran's steadfast resolve to defend its sovereignty and honor its martyrs.

Qalibaf: Unity key to defeating the 'enemy'

TEHRAN — Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has emphasized that preserving national unity is essential for emerging victorious against the United States and Israel on the battlefield.

"Upholding sacred unity is not simply a moral or social recommendation—it is an indispensable condition for achieving victory in the struggle against the enemy," Qalibaf stated in a recent message published on X on Sunday. He added, "We should consider adherence to this religious and national directive of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution an integral part of our historic responsibility in this national resistance and in governing the country."

The Parliament speaker made these comments following a message from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, highlighting the significance of preserving national unity in the face of foreign aggression against the country.

President Masoud Pezeshkian similarly doubled down on this unified stance on Saturday. The president declared that internal cohesion serves as the bedrock of the country's governance and its historic resistance against arrogant global powers.



US President Donald Trump has claimed that internal fractures, confusion, and deep divisions exist among Iranian officials and within broader society. Previously, Trump alleged that Tehran's political structure is suffering from extreme infighting between so-called "hardliners" and "moderates," using these groundless claims to excuse the strategic failures of US foreign policy in the region. These assertions are viewed in Iran as a desperate, transparent attempt by the global arrogance

to sow discord where none exists.

By projecting a false image of internal collapse, the United States seeks to weaken the resolve of the Axis of Resistance and manipulate international public opinion. However, the reality on the ground completely contradicts Washington's wishful thinking. Iranian military and political officials have pointed out that terms like "moderate" and "hardliner" are foreign constructs absent from the vocabulary of the Islamic Revolution. Regardless of minor procedural debates inherent to any robust governance framework, all institutions and segments of society stand completely unified under the strategic guidance of the Leader. Rather than fracturing society, foreign aggression—such as illegal blockades and military provocations—has historically had the opposite effect. It solidifies the collective sense of national identity and ironclad resolve among the Iranian people. The prompt, synchronized statements from the presidency, parliament, and judiciary demonstrate that the Islamic Republic remains a single, unyielding front. The nation's defensive capabilities and diplomatic levers are firmly aligned, ensuring that any miscalculation by the American-Israeli apparatus will result in definitive failure on the battlefield.

Iran rights body urges UN action after US strike of children hospital

From page 1 ▶ The statement said the strike formed part of a broader campaign against civilian infrastructure during the ongoing US-Israeli military operations against Iran. According to the headquarters, eight hospitals have been forced to suspend operations, and numerous other healthcare facilities have sustained damage since the conflict began.

The body argued that attacks affecting hospitals violate the Fourth Geneva Convention, which grants special protection to medical facilities during armed conflict, as well as the principle of distinction between civilian and military targets under international humanitarian law. It further said such actions fall within the definition of war crimes under Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Iran's Human Rights Headquarters called on the UN Security Council to formally condemn the attacks and demand an immediate halt to US military operations. It also urged the UN human rights office to document the violations and submit an official report, while appealing to governments

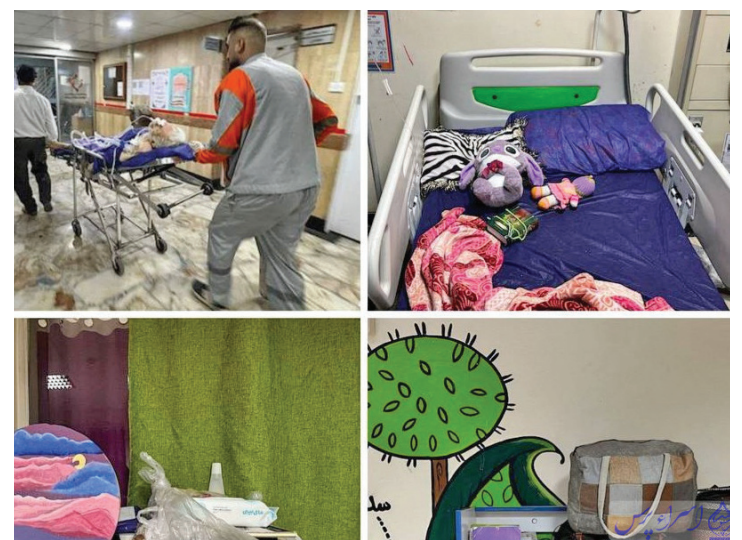
and international human rights organizations to hold Washington accountable through legal and diplomatic channels.

The latest appeal follows strong condemnation from Iran's Foreign Ministry a day earlier over the strike near the medical complex.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei described the attack as a "cowardly war crime," saying the explosions near Shahid Beqaei Specialized Hospital forced doctors and nurses to urgently evacuate pediatric cancer patients, many of whom were receiving chemotherapy or other critical treatments.

"The attack caused severe suffering and anxiety among hospitalized children," Baqaei said in a statement, comparing the incident to attacks on healthcare facilities in other conflict zones. He argued that endangering hospitals, even if they are not directly hit, constitutes a grave breach of international humanitarian law.

Hospital officials said the explosions occurred only a short distance from the specialized pediatric oncology center, triggering emergency procedures to relo-



cate every patient.

Hospital manager Dr. Majid Bou'azar said the evacuation involved some of the hospital's most medically vulnerable patients, including children undergoing intensive cancer treatment. Medical personnel described chaotic scenes as doctors, nurses and parents rushed children to safety, with some patients reportedly being moved while connected to oxygen supplies, ventilators or intravenous medication.

According to hospital offi-

cials, the nearby blasts disrupted normal medical operations and temporarily rendered parts of the facility unusable, raising concerns about continuity of care for critically ill children.

Iran's Human Rights Headquarters said it would continue pursuing legal action through international mechanisms against those it holds responsible for the attack, while urging the international community to take concrete measures to safeguard medical facilities and civilians caught in armed conflict.

No US base in West Asia is beyond Iran’s reach

From Page 1 ▶

The new balance of deterrence

The drone strikes coincided with another development highlighting Iran’s growing emphasis on asymmetric warfare.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced that its Aerospace Force had shot down a US MQ-9 unmanned aerial vehicle over Ahvaz using ‘a newly deployed advanced air-defense system’ operating within Iran’s integrated air-defense network.

The destruction of the reconnaissance drone would represent another example of Iran’s strategy of using comparatively inexpensive indigenous air-defense systems to neutralize sophisticated American military assets costing tens of millions of dollars.

Military analysts have long viewed this cost-imposition strategy as one of Tehran’s principal deterrence tools. Rather than matching the United States platform for platform, Iran has invested heavily in domestically produced drones, layered air-defense systems, electronic warfare capabilities and precision missiles designed to inflict disproportionate operational and financial costs on technologically superior adversaries.

That approach has become increasingly visible during the current confrontation, with Iranian officials repeatedly emphasizing that relatively low-cost drones and missiles can threaten strategic facilities, air-defense systems and logistics hubs that require vastly greater investment to build, operate and defend.

Iran’s retaliatory campaign has underscored the central role of its missile and drone forces in its military doctrine. Iranian officials argue that the country’s expanding arsenal of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and long-range drones enables it to strike U.S. military installations across the Persian Gulf, including bases hosted by regional allies, while complicating American operational planning. Tehran has consistently portrayed these capabilities as the cornerstone of its deterrence strategy and a means of imposing substantial military and economic costs on any adversary contemplating a prolonged conflict.

The latest exchanges have reinforced the importance of precision-guided, relatively low-cost weapons in modern warfare.



Rather than seeking conventional military parity with the United States, Iran has invested heavily in indigenous missile technology, mobile launch platforms, and layered strike capabilities designed to challenge technologically superior forces. Military analysts note that such asymmetric capabilities can increase the risks and operational burden for an opponent by threatening high-value military assets spread across the region.

Anthony H. Cordesman, the defense analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), believes that Iran’s missile force constitutes one of the most significant elements of its conventional deterrence.

Cordesman wrote that Iran has developed “the largest and most diverse missile force in the Middle East,” arguing that its missile arsenal serves as the backbone of Tehran’s conventional deterrence strategy by enabling it to threaten military bases, critical infrastructure, and regional force deployments despite the United States’ overwhelming conventional military superiority.

The US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) has also released a report on Iran’s military power, saying that Tehran has the largest missile arsenal in the Middle East, which it uses alongside unconventional warfare and cyber techniques to project power.

Iranian commanders argue that such asymmetry reduces Washington’s military advantages while increasing the economic and operational burden of sustaining prolonged military operations in the region.

Senior Iranian officials also projected confidence that the current campaign has strengthened

Tehran’s deterrence posture.

Commander of the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters Major General Ali Abdollahi warned that any act of covetousness, coercion, hegemonic ambition, or brutality by the US forces will be met with a decisive and devastating response and also would trigger a “decisive and devastating response,” saying Iran’s Armed Forces were prepared to impose costs exceeding those sustained by Washington during previous rounds of conflict.

He reaffirmed the military’s allegiance to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei and said preserving national unity remained a central element of Iran’s defense strategy.

Unforgettable Lessons

The Leader himself delivered a similar message a day earlier.

In a nationwide address marking the funeral ceremonies for the late Iranian leader, Ayatollah Khamenei said Washington’s violation of its bilateral understanding with Tehran had once again demonstrated that the US president’s signature was “worthless and unreliable.”

He praised ‘the Iranian nation’s unity and resilience’ during recent weeks and warned that any further escalation by the United States would be met by Iran and the Resistance Front with “unforgettable lessons.”

The remarks reflected Tehran’s broader effort to present military resistance alongside domestic cohesion as mutually reinforcing pillars of national security.

Alongside military operations, Iran has also tightened its con-

trol over one of the world’s most strategically important maritime chokepoints.

The IRGC Navy announced Sunday that two commercial vessels suffered ‘accidents’ after attempting to transit the Strait of Hormuz through an unauthorized route while allegedly switching off their navigation systems. According to the force, two additional vessels abandoned the route after receiving warnings from Iranian naval units.

The IRGC reiterated that shipping through the Strait must comply with routes designated by Iranian authorities, declaring that no oil, gas or fertilizer shipments would pass through the waterway without prior coordination and authorization.

The statement reinforced Tehran’s repeated assertion that it now exercises effective operational control over navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of globally traded crude oil normally passes.

The convergence of drone operations, integrated air defenses and maritime control illustrates Iran’s broader military doctrine, which prioritizes asymmetric capabilities capable of challenging conventionally superior adversaries at comparatively low cost.

While the United States continues to field advanced aircraft, missile-defense systems and naval assets worth billions of dollars, Iranian officials argue that domestically manufactured drones, mobile missile units and indigenous air-defense systems have enabled Tehran to sustain pressure on American forces without engaging in direct conventional warfare on equal terms.

Whether that strategy ultimately alters the military balance remains contested. However, the latest exchanges suggest that Iran continues to rely on cost-efficient deterrence designed to complicate US military planning, increase operational expenses, and demonstrate that technologically superior forces remain vulnerable to persistent asymmetric attacks.

With both sides continuing military operations following the collapse of the ceasefire, the Persian Gulf remains one of the world’s most volatile flashpoints, where each new exchange carries the risk of triggering a wider regional conflict.

Leader thanks Iraqis for ‘historic epic’



From Page 1 ▶ He said the Iraqi people, drawing on their deep religious heritage, close ties to the holy shrines, and longstanding commitment to the Resistance Front, had created an unforgettable and spiritually significant scene by welcoming the martyred Leader with profound grief and heartfelt devotion.

The Leader said Iraq’s enduring attachment to the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and the Islamic seminary of Najaf had preserved the country’s religious identity despite decades of oppression under former regimes. He said that devotion later found renewed expression in the annual Arbæen pilgrimage, which has grown into one of the world’s largest religious gatherings.

Referring to the funeral procession, Ayatollah Khamenei said the unprecedented turnout of millions demonstrated the depth of solidarity, brotherhood, and shared purpose between

the Iranian and Iraqi peoples. He argued that the gathering had undermined efforts by the ‘Global Arrogance,’ led by the United States, to weaken relations between the two neighboring nations.

He further said the mass funeral ceremonies held in both Iran and Iraq had opened ‘a new chapter of awakening and active engagement’ capable of reshaping regional dynamics and challenging policies pursued by external powers in West Asia.

Looking ahead to the upcoming Arbæen pilgrimage, the Leader said Iraq would once again welcome millions of visitors, including pilgrims intending to perform the pilgrimage on behalf of the martyred leader. He expressed hope that the event would further strengthen the message that “love for Hussein unites us” and would bring greater security, blessings, and prosperity to the Iraqi people.

Geography’s veto

By Xavier Villar

MADRID - To repeat a failing strategy is to confess an exhaustion of political imagination. The United States, still unable to metabolize the profound humiliations of its recent military and political defeats, has fallen into a kind of strategic hauntology. Nowhere is this spectral paralysis more evident than in its approach to the Persian Gulf. Time and again, Washington trips over the same geographical reality: the material intransigence of the Iranian coastline. Western decision-makers routinely reduce the viability of global energy routes to problems of logistical engineering or naval supremacy, betraying a profound geographical ignorance. They fail to recognise the Strait of Hormuz not merely as a shipping lane, but as an ontological knot in the machinery of modernity, where the abstraction of global capital collides with the unforgiving relief of the earth.

The US Fifth Fleet, anchored in Bahrain, operates on the hubristic premise that naval power can be projected with impunity across any body of water. This doctrine was forged for deep oceanic highways, not for the shallow, semi-enclosed waters of the Persian Gulf. Here, the technological majesty of destroyers and aircraft carriers is dissolved by a proliferation of asymmetric threats. Tehran has spent decades studying these exact vulnerabilities, cultivating an ecosystem of deterrence—coastal anti-ship missiles, swarms of fast attack craft, naval drones, and smart mines. Geography is not a passive backdrop; it is a material actor dictating the terms of engagement. The strait’s narrowest point is a mere 34 kilometers wide, with shipping lanes just three kilometers across. The mountainous Iranian coast, commanding strategic islands like Abu Musa, grants Tehran a dominant surveillance position that inherently favors coastal defense over power projection.

In Western capitals, this vulnerability is often soothed by the invocation of terrestrial alternatives. Saudi and Emirati pipelines are frequently touted as viable contingencies, an epistemic tranquilizer designed to calm market anxieties. Yet, this narrative collapses under the weight of material reality. These pipelines operate far below the capacity required to absorb diverted maritime traffic, and building new infrastructure would demand years of investment and a regional stability that a crisis of this magnitude would inherently shatter. Liquefied natural gas is even more rigid, tethered to specialized cold chains and specific regasification terminals that cannot be improvised. The fantasy that energy trade can be reconfigured at will ignores the sheer material inertia of global infrastructure.

The West views Hormuz through the prism of liberal international law, demanding it remain open for the sake of global commerce. Tehran, conversely, views it through the lens of national secu-

LATEST NEWS

■ Araghchi: Iran’s retaliatory strikes reshaped regional security

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran’s retaliatory strikes on US military bases fundamentally reshaped the regional security architecture by demonstrating Tehran’s ability to strike targets across the region without triggering an effective military response. Speaking in an online interview, he said Iran had anticipated the possibility of war, prepared contingency plans for various scenarios, and entered negotiations only after exhausting diplomatic options. Araghchi argued Washington resorted to military action after failing to halt Iran’s nuclear program through diplomacy and insisted that Tehran’s resistance disproved US and Israeli assumptions about weakened deterrence. He added that Iran strengthened its military capabilities during the conflict and would never compromise its nuclear rights or national interests under pressure.

■ Pezeshkian urges global standards for Iran’s oil industry

President Masoud Pezeshkian has called on Iran’s Oil Ministry to develop integrated management and communication systems that meet global standards, describing the initiative as a strategic priority. During a visit to the National Iranian Oil Company on Sunday, he also urged faster collection of flare gases to reduce energy waste and boost refinery efficiency. Pezeshkian emphasized that technological innovation, specialist training, and continuous assessment

of strengths and weaknesses are essential to enhancing Iran’s competitiveness in the global energy sector.

■ US strikes cannot weaken Iran’s resolve as tunnel reopens in six hours: VP

Iran’s Vice President for Executive Affairs, Mohammad Jafar Qaempanah told reporters that a US strike on the Shahid Mirzaei Tunnel, located on the Bandar Abbas–Hajjiabad route, was aimed at cutting off transportation links in Hormozgan province—but that the tunnel was reopened within six hours.

He added that the enemy’s actions do not diminish the resistance of the Iranian nation and its armed forces in the slightest.

■ Qaani: Resistance front will continue its path under Ayatollah Khamenei’s leadership

IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Qaani said the commanders and fighters of the Resistance Front remain committed to continuing the “glorious path of resistance” under the leadership of Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei.

In a statement, Qaani expressed gratitude for the Leader’s continued support toward the Resistance Front, reaffirming its unwavering loyalty to the covenant made with the “martyred Imam of the Ummah.”

He said the Resistance Front would continue pursuing the course that has consistently received Ayatollah Khamenei’s endorsement, pledging to preserve its ideological commitment and remain steadfast in

advancing the objectives of the resistance movement.

■ All Iran-Iraq border crossings open for Arbæen pilgrims: official

The head of Iran’s Central Headquarters for Arbæen announced that all border crossings leading to Iraq are fully operational and prepared to facilitate the entry and exit of pilgrims traveling to attend the Arbæen pilgrimage.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Ali Akbar Pourjamshidian said the Shalamcheh, Chazabeh, Mehran, Khosravi, Bashmaq, and Tamarchin border crossings in western Iran are fully ready to accommodate pilgrims heading to Iraq for the Arbæen pilgrimage, adding that no major obstacles exist to their travel.

■ Iran’s swift response to US aggression has trapped Washington: Arab analyst

Prominent Arab analyst, Abdel Bari Atwan, says the renewed military campaign launched by US President Donald Trump against Iran has backfired, arguing that Iran’s swift response has trapped the United States in a major strategic quagmire.

In an article published on the Rai Al Youm website on Saturday, Atwan said Trump launched the military campaign against Iran despite clear opposition from the US military establishment, which objected to plans to wage aggression aimed at taking control of the Strait of Hormuz and international shipping through the strategic waterway.

Resistance economy, people’s livelihood according to Martyr Leader

TEHRAN- The concept of a “Resistance Economy” was first introduced by Iran’s Martyr Leader in September 2010 (Shahrivar 1389) during a meeting with a group of entrepreneurs. Formulated as a direct response to mounting external economic pressures and intensified sanctions, it was designed to prepare the nation for a qualitative “leap” forward by leveraging domestic capabilities and insulating the country from foreign hostility.

This doctrine subsequently shaped the national economic slogans for over a decade, including “Economic Jihad” (2011), “National Production and Support for Iranian Labor and Capital” (2012), “Resistance Economy: Action and Implementation” (2016), “Resistance Economy: Production-Employment” (2017), and the final slogan for 2025, “Investment for Production.” Across fifteen years, the Leader consistently framed annual mottos around economic revitalization, emphasizing support for domestic goods, production booms, knowledge-based enterprises, inflation control, and widespread public participation.

At its core, the Resistance Economy represents a comprehensive strategy for economic resilience. Its primary objective is to immunize Iran against external shocks—including sanctions, military aggression, and global market volatility—by relying strictly on internal resources, diverse production capacities, and active grassroots involvement. The Leader famously identified the economy as Iran’s “Achilles’ heel” and repeatedly stressed that structural reform must follow an indigenous Iranian-Islamic model, strictly avoiding dependence on foreign prescriptions or capitulation to external demands.

Iran possesses immense inherent advantages that make this strategy viable. Its unique geopolitical position, four-season climate, and remarkable diversity in agricultural and livestock production provide a robust food base. The country ranks among the top ten globally in strategic mineral reserves, including vast deposits of oil, natural gas, copper, and various industrial ores. Furthermore, Iran has made significant strides in advanced modern technologies, such as nanotechnology, biotechnology, stem-cell research, medical sciences (notably ophthalmology), nuclear technology, and defense industries. The proliferation of thousands of knowledge-based companies further underscores this potential.

In a pivotal Nowruz (New Year) speech in March 2016, delivered at the Razavi Shrine, the Leader elaborated on the Resistance Economy’s operational dimensions through ten key points, which serve as the principal blueprint for its nationwide implementation:

1. Strategic Roadmapping: Government officials must identify the nation’s competitive economic chains and prioritize mother industries to unlock broader production opportunities, clearly outlining responsibilities for all relevant bodies.
2. Revitalizing Idle Production: With a staggering 60% of industrial capacity dormant or underutilized, experts, economists, and officials must devise comprehensive revival plans to reactivate these facilities.
3. Balancing Foreign Trade: Import policies must be carefully calibrated so they do not undercut domestic production, weaken national industrial capabilities, or discourage local manufacturers.
4. Prudent Financial Management: Funds released through the JCPOA (nuclear deal) must be channeled primarily into domestic production, not wasted on non-productive imports. Strict oversight of foreign capital inflows and banking resources is essential.
5. Knowledge-Based Industrialization: Critical economic sectors like oil, gas, automotive engine manufacturing, aviation, and shipbuilding must transition toward knowledge-based production models, mirroring the success already achieved in the domestic long-range missile program.
6. Leveraging Past Investments: Existing industrial assets—such as domestic power plants and petrochemical facilities—should be optimally utilized to avoid unnecessary foreign expenditure on items that can be produced locally.
7. Mandatory Technology Transfer: All international commercial contracts must explicitly include technology-transfer clauses to steadily bolster domestic engineering and technical know-how.
8. Anti-Corruption Campaigning: A relentless, uncompromising fight against financial corruption, embezzlement, smuggling, cronyism, and rent-seeking is mandatory to safeguard overall



economic health and public trust.

9. Energy Efficiency Improvement: Aggressive measures to improve energy productivity and reduce waste could yield national savings of up to \$100 billion annually, significantly strengthening the fiscal position.

10. SME Support: Special attention must be given to small and medium-sized enterprises, which currently face over 60% closure and unemployment rates, as they are vital for localized, decentralized job creation and economic dynamism.

Critically, the Leader refuted the false dichotomy presented by the US—that Iran must either submit to American dominance to solve its problems or simply accept ever-tightening sanctions. He posited a clear third, sovereign path: firm resistance exercised through practical, actionable economic strategies rooted in domestic resilience, innovation, and self-reliance.

To overcome the obstacles and establish a genuine Resistance Economy, a comprehensive set of structural prerequisites must be urgently addressed:

First, the economy must fundamentally transition from a trade-and-import-centric model to a robust production-oriented one. This requires incentivizing private investment—both small and large—in agriculture and industry through subsidized low-interest loans, accompanied by meticulous, stage-gated disbursement oversight to ensure measurable physical project progress.

Second, the government’s bloated size must be substantially reduced. This involves merging redundant ministries, dissolving parallel organizations, streamlining administrative bodies, and transitioning to performance-based operational budgeting that directly aligns public spending with verifiable organizational effectiveness and service delivery.

Third, genuine privatization and widespread public participation must be actively promoted, in full compliance with Article 44 of the Constitution, alongside complementary legal reforms designed to stimulate authentic, competitive private-sector activity free from state monopolies.

Fourth, a cultural renaissance emphasizing diligence, work ethic, self-belief, and entrepreneurship is necessary to elevate per-capita income and boost Gross National Product through increased labor productivity both at home and in the workplace.

Fifth, domestic agricultural, industrial, and livestock production deserve unwavering government support, including low-interest financial facilities, tariff protections, and carefully targeted non-tariff incentives to shield local producers from unfair foreign competition.

Sixth, strategic national plans must enhance technology adoption and expand knowledge-based enterprises, integrating universities with industries to boost R&D spending and embed scientific knowledge directly into production lines and industrial processes.

Seventh, the nation must decisively pivot away from destructive import-dependence toward proactive export-promotion. This requires making domestic goods internationally competitive in both price and quality through increased efficiency, innovation, and strict quality control.

Eighth, social cohesion is critical. National unity must be fortified by actively avoiding ethnic, racial, cultural, and religious divisions. Celebrating shared religious and national identities fosters mutual assistance, solidarity, and a stable social bedrock essential for major economic transformation.

Ninth, regulatory red tape must be slashed. By implementing a “single-window” licensing system, bureaucratic bottlenecks can be removed. If oversight bodies fail to respond promptly, the system should automatically issue permits to prevent unnecessary delays in business creation.

Bridges or lives? Trump’s calculated war on Iran’s everyday people

U.S. targeting Iran’s infrastructure is economic war on people

From Page 1 ▶

A campaign of economic strangulation

The evidence of this strategy is overwhelming. In early February, reports emerged of coordinated U.S. and Israeli strikes on key industrial and civil centers across Iran. Targets included the Mahdasht Petrochemical complex, the Bushehr nuclear power plant, the Bandar Khamir cement factory, and the under-construction B1 bridge in Karaj, which resulted in the tragic loss of 13 lives.

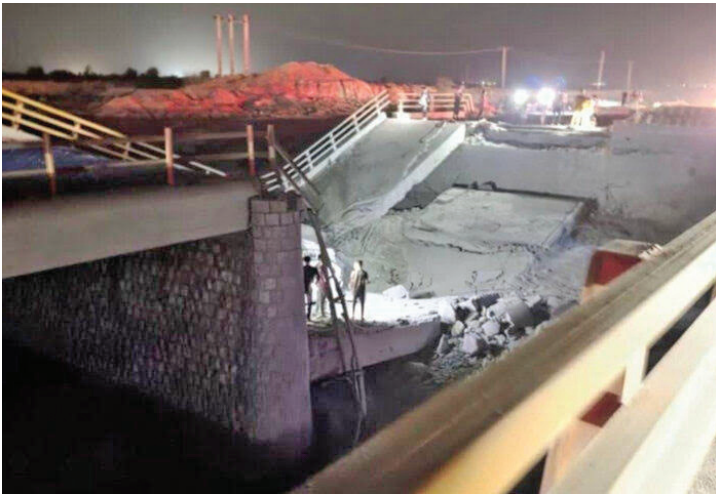
As one report noted, behind every power plant or factory are thousands of families whose lives and work depend on the electricity and materials these facilities provide. This is not collateral damage; this is a calculated policy.

A UN human rights chief has previously stated that “deliberately attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure is a war crime.”

The attacks have only intensified. In mid-July, the campaign expanded to target the country’s vital southern ports and logistical hubs, the very arteries of Iranian trade. On July 17, U.S. airstrikes hit multiple bridges in Hormozgan province, collapsing a tower at a key port and killing at least seven people.

Human cost behind the headlines

These attacks are more than just statistics. They represent a direct assault on the daily lives of



ordinary Iranians. In Khuzestan, a province already suffering from extreme heat, an American strike hit near the Shahid Baghaei 2 Hospital in Ahvaz, forcing the evacuation of cancer patients, including children. In Bushehr, a strike on the nuclear power plant claimed the life of a security guard. In Chabahar, the marine control tower and a meteorological station were hit, killing a staff member on duty.

The pattern is clear: from hospitals and airports to agricultural silos and food production facilities, the U.S. is systematically dismantling the infrastructure that sustains the Iranian people.

Even the steel industry, the backbone of Iran’s manufacturing, has not been spared. The Mo-barakeh Steel Complex and the Sepiddasht steel plant were targeted, threatening thousands of

jobs and hundreds of downstream industries.

A reckless gamble with global stability

This reckless policy has not occurred in a vacuum. It follows the collapse of nuclear talks and is part of Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign, which has already seen the U.S. revoke waivers for Iranian oil sales, inflicting severe economic pain on the Iranian populace. The strategy has backfired spectacularly, destabilizing the entire region. Iran has retaliated by launching missiles at U.S. allies in the Gulf, including Qatar, Kuwait, and Bahrain. The vital Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for global energy supplies, has seen shipping come to a near-standstill, threatening the global economy and leaving thousands of seafarers stranded.

Resilience of a nation under siege

Despite the immense pressure, the response from the Iranian people has been one of defiance and resilience. Reports from the ground detail how technical teams, workers, and volunteers have mobilized to repair damaged facilities and restore services. As one observer noted, “the ability to rebuild in Iranian society is very high.” While the U.S. administration seeks to break the Iranian spirit by attacking its bridges and power plants, it is the collective will of the people to rebuild that stands as the ultimate rebuke to this unjust war.

Conclusion: An act of war, not diplomacy

Trump’s threats and the ensuing military actions are a clear and present danger to international peace and security. By targeting civilian infrastructure, the U.S. is not just attacking a nation; it is committing an act of economic warfare against a people. The international community must hold the United States accountable for these actions, which are a flagrant violation of international law and the UN Charter. This is not a path to a deal; it is a path to further suffering and regional chaos. The question remains: how many more bridges must fall, and how many more lives must be shattered before the world calls this what it is—a crime?

Iran’s new ambassador to South Korea, TCCIMA examine solutions to revive Tehran-Seoul trade

TEHRAN- The new Iranian ambassador to South Korea, before departing for his post, visited the Tehran Chamber of Commerce and held talks with the Secretary-General of the Tehran Chamber to exchange views on the capacities for cooperation with this East Asian country and the development of commercial, technological, and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

In this meeting, the necessity of mutual recognition of capabilities and increasing awareness of the potentials of the two countries with the aim of strengthening trade relations was emphasized.

In the meeting between Ahmad Erfanian, the new Iranian ambassador to South Korea, and Fereydoun Vardinejad, the Secretary-General of the Tehran Chamber, which was held with the presence of the Deputy for International Affairs and Trade Development of the Chamber, as well as representatives from the Iran-South Korea Joint Chamber of Commerce, the regular holding of B2B meetings and specialized webinars, the exchange of economic and technological information, as well as trade delegations and communication with South Korean chambers

of commerce were proposed as solutions to strengthen economic and trade interactions between Iran and Korea.

At the beginning of this meeting, Fereydoun Vardinejad, Secretary-General of the Tehran Chamber, referred to South Korea’s growth experience over the past few decades and said: In recent years, we have also witnessed this country’s influence in cultural, industrial, and political fields compared to other countries. It seems that maintaining cultural identity and brand development are among the issues that the policymakers of this country have emphasized, and they have been largely successful in this area.

The Secretary-General of the Tehran Chamber further spoke about the readiness of Iran’s private sector to cooperate with Korean companies and stated: Traders and businessmen of the two countries can learn about each other’s economic opportunities and capacities through the exchange of information and establish long-term commercial ties. In other words, the development of exchanges depends on recognizing capabilities and increasing awareness of the potentials existing in the economic sectors

of the two countries.

According to the Public Relations Department of the Tehran Chamber, Vardinejad described the areas of cooperation with Korean traders as diverse and said: Through synergy and long-term planning with the economic section of the embassy, as well as a targeted approach to the development of trade between Iran and South Korea, cooperation with the economic enterprises of this country can be strengthened in fields such as automotive, home appliance industries, information technology, digital economy, medicine and medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, and more.

He further presented proposals aimed at facilitating trade relations between the two countries and said: Increasing the direct communication of the Tehran Chamber with the Iranian embassy in South Korea, regularly holding B2B meetings and specialized webinars, exchanging economic and technological information, interacting with trade delegations, and communicating with South Korean chambers of commerce can help increase knowledge of this country’s capacities.

ICCIMA compiles “War Damage Management Package”

From Page 1 ▶ He affirmed the chamber’s backing for any rational measures that reduce tensions while preserving the Islamic Republic’s authority, as peace and security are vital for production and investment.

Criticizing the government, he noted that a post-war support resolution was approved without consulting the chamber as the representative of the private

sector, despite the fact that the private sector bears the main burden of employment.

He added that the chamber has formed a special economic headquarters with four working groups—enterprise resilience, supply chain, trade and currency, and legal and international affairs—which have produced this management package.

On currency issues, Hassan-zadeh reiterated that exporters’ revenues must be returned to the Central Bank and reintroduced into the trade and production cycle in a transparent manner.

He also warned of the irreparable damage from ongoing summer power outages, which have cut electricity to industrial units 2 to 3 days a week, compounding the damage from re-

cent conflicts.

Finally, he reported that the chamber has followed up with President Pezeshkian regarding unpaid government dues to importers of essential goods (especially grains). The President has ordered urgent meetings and instructed banks to engage constructively with these small and medium-sized enterprises to resolve their financial bottlenecks.

Morteza Dehghan appointed as CEO of IAC

TEHRAN- By an order from the Minister of Transport and Urban Development, “Morteza Dehghan” has been appointed as Deputy Minister, a principal member of the Board of Directors, and the CEO of Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company (IAC) for a two-year term.

According to a report by Mehr News Agency, based on an announcement from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, the Minister of Transport and Urban Development, appointed “Morteza Dehghan” as Deputy Minister, principal board member, and CEO of the company for two years.

In her decree addressed to Dehghan, Sadeh emphasized the importance of drawing on

the experiences and knowledge of colleagues and prioritizing the general policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Vision Document, the Seventh National Development Plan, as well as the stated goals of the 14th administration regarding national unity within the framework of laws and regulations.

This decree, issued in consideration of Morteza Dehghan’s commitment, experience, and valuable managerial track record and in implementation of the resolutions of the Extraordinary General Assembly of Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company, calls upon the CEO to prioritize the following axes through collaboration with other relevant specialized sectors within the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, alongside carrying out approved duties and obligations:

- Updating communications, navigation, and surveillance equipment and technologies through diligent follow-up and maximum utilization of domestic technical expertise;
- Developing skills and improving working conditions for specialized human resources as the company’s greatest and most valuable asset;
- Creating new sources of sustainable revenue, enhancing competitiveness, and increasing the company’s share in the regional navigation market by boosting air traffic and innovating in services;
- Encouraging and incentivizing the private and non-governmental sectors in the development of airports by facilitating investment and providing legal incentives and privileges.

America’s financial stranglehold on Iraq

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – For more than two decades after the 2003 invasion, Iraq has rebuilt its economy around an unusual financial reality: the world’s fifth-largest oil producer depends on a foreign power for access to the currency that keeps its economy functioning.

The arrangement has increasingly become a source of political and economic leverage for the United States, raising difficult questions about whether Iraq exercises sovereignty over its own financial affairs.

This year, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump suspended the physical shipment of hundreds of millions of dollars in cash reserves, funds generated entirely from Iraqi oil exports, leaving Baghdad publicly humiliated.

The standoff, reportedly partially ended on Saturday after Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi gave in to U.S. demands to disarm particular factions and launch performative anti-corruption raids, has ripped the mask off a bitter geopolitical reality.

23 years after the U.S. invasion, Iraq is still financially controlled by America. One of the world’s largest oil exporters in the OPEC+ alliance is forced to beg for access to its own money, highlighting a system of economic coercion that Washington politely calls “oversight” but which looks remarkably like financial occupation.

The mechanics of economic strangulation

At the heart of this leverage lies the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI), established under U.S. auspices after the 2003 invasion. Today, approximately 90% of Iraq’s national budget, derived from crude sales, is deposited directly into an account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. This means that the very cash used to pay civil servants, import food, and stabilize the Iraqi dinar must physically pass through U.S. hands.

When the Trump administration blocked a \$500 million cargo shipment in April 2026 and halted the regular monthly inflows estimated at over \$1 billion, it did not freeze “foreign aid.” It froze Iraq’s own property.

Washington’s justification was two-fold. Officially, the administration claimed it was cutting off funds flowing to “Iran-backed militias” and forcing Baghdad to tackle “systemic corruption.” However, for Iraqi officials, these arguments ring hollow, a case of the pot calling the kettle black, wielded by a nation with a historical track record of global financial wrongdoing.

The hypocrisy of the anti-corruption crusade

Iraqi lawmakers have publicly bristled at the U.S. framing of the conflict as a moral crusade against graft. While corruption is undeniably a plague within Iraq’s political system, officials argue that it is a universal problem, not an Iraqi invention.

“Fighting corruption is great, but why does it have to be tied to the United States?” a senior Iraqi ad-



President Donald Trump (R) met with Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaydi (L), who was visiting for official talks, at the White House in Washington, D.C., on July 14, 2026.

visor asked during the crisis. Critics point to the 2008 Wall Street bailouts, the systemic influence of Super PACs in U.S. elections, a military-industrial complex riddled with procurement fraud, and the Panama Papers revelations as evidence that the U.S. has no moral high ground to lecture anyone on financial honesty.

By weaponizing a universal governance issue to serve its strategic objectives, Washington has rendered genuine reform impossible. When anti-corruption measures are externally imposed under the threat of economic suffocation, they are viewed not as a path to good governance, but as a tool of subordination. The message from Washington is clear: Iraq must clean its house, but only on America’s terms, and only after it distances itself from its immediate neighbor, Iran.

The resistance vs. proxy narrative

Perhaps the most contentious aspect of the U.S. ultimatum is its designation of Iraqi factions as “Iran-backed militias.” Iraqi officials and leaders of these groups vehemently reject this label, insisting on the term “national resistance.” Their justification is steeped in the brutal historical legacy of the 2003 invasion.

The United States dismantled the Iraqi state, abolished the army, and unleashed a brutal sectarian civil war from 2004 to 2007, a period marked by almost daily terrorist car bombings that tore through markets, mosques, and neighborhoods, turning Baghdad into a city of checkpoints and body bags.

This chaos created the vacuum for Al-Qaeda in Iraq to flourish and ultimately birthed the rise of Daesh, whose reign of terror ironically required Iraq’s neighbor, Iran, to defeat. The official Iraqi estimate is staggering: over one million Iraqis perished directly or indirectly as a result of the unwarranted U.S. invasion and its bloody aftermath.

Officials argue that the resistance movements are not Iranian puppets; they are “Iraqi sons” who emerged to fight an occupying force that has never truly left.

Washington maintains one of the largest embassies in the world in Baghdad. The so-called diplomatic complex is a sprawling, heavily fortified mini-city that resembles a military base.

The compound is stacked with

C-RAM (counter-rocket, artillery, and mortar) systems, land-based versions of the Navy’s Phalanx close-in weapon system. Each C-RAM is equipped with a 20mm Gatling gun capable of firing approximately 4,500 rounds per minute, artillery shells, and drones out of the sky.

The system operates with tracking radars and electro-optical sensors to autonomously detect and destroy short-range targets within seconds. This is not the equipment of a diplomatic outpost; it is the arsenal of a forward operating base.

The hypocrisy of America’s position becomes glaring when compared to its allies’ actions. The Zionist regime bombed the Iranian embassy in the Syrian capital Damascus under the pretext that Iranian military personnel were present, a brazen violation of diplomatic sovereignty.

Yet the U.S. maintains its own Baghdad embassy as a heavily armed fortress, conducting unilateral airstrikes and military operations from Iraqi soil without any parliamentary consent in Baghdad. If a diplomatic mission hosting military personnel is a legitimate target in Damascus, why is a U.S. embassy that functions as a de facto military base in Baghdad afforded absolute inviolability? The double standard could not be starker.

Officials argue that international law enshrines the right of occupied peoples to resist foreign military presence.

Iraqi resistance groups targeted U.S. interests during the 40-day American-Israeli aggression on Iran. They did this not because Tehran told them to, but because they see it as their national duty. They believe that if Iran falls, the war will come to Iraq next. For them, hitting U.S. assets is self-defense.

The same groups point out that if they had contained the battle against Daesh inside Syria before 2014, the Takfiri group would have never crossed the border into Iraq. In their view, this policy of striking first before being slaughtered, displaced, and women taken captive in their homeland is now of utmost importance.

Geography cannot be sanctioned

Perhaps the most logical and damning counter-argument from Baghdad is one of simple cartography. Iran is a neighbor. It shares

a 1,500-kilometer land border with Iraq, deep cultural ties, religious affinity via Shia shrines, and interdependent trade networks. The United States, on the other hand, is not even on the same continent.

Iraqi officials argue that it is the height of arrogance for Washington to demand that Baghdad sever its security ties with Tehran while the U.S. continues to meddle in Iraq’s domestic affairs.

While Washington frames its military footprint as a stabilizing force, Iraqis view it as the root cause of their suffering. The U.S. has spent decades destabilizing the region, and demands that Baghdad treat its next-door neighbor as a pariah, simply to satisfy American hawks.

The verdict: a client-state exposed

The suspension of dollar shipments has laid bare the fiction of Iraqi sovereignty. Officially, Iraq is an independent republic. In practice, its economic lifeline is piped directly through New York. The Federal Reserve, ostensibly an independent banking institution, has been politicized to serve as an extension of the White House’s “maximum pressure” campaign.

Iraqi officials describe the situation as the ultimate embarrassment.

The United States continues to argue that it is protecting Iraq from itself, from corrupt elites and Iranian influence. But the reality is far grimmer.

Washington is using the most vulnerable part of the Iraqi economy, its cash reserves, as a cudgel to enforce its own regional hegemony. By treating Iraq’s oil revenue as a geopolitical piggy bank, the U.S. has demonstrated a profound contempt for international norms and the very concept of national self-determination.

For Iraqis, the lesson is bitter but clear: as long as their oil dollars pass through the New York Fed, they will never truly be free. The tragedy is that the U.S., which claims to champion democracy and sovereignty, has become the primary obstacle to Iraq achieving either.

Over two decades of occupation, war, financial strangulation, and streets soaked in the blood of innocent Iraqis have culminated in a client-state that cannot even pay its workers without Uncle Sam’s permission. The American empire may be waning, but its grip on Iraqi oil remains an iron fist.

A sovereign nation is expected to exercise independent authority over its finances, monetary affairs, and economic policy. Iraq, however, cannot fully insulate itself from decisions made in Washington because the currency that finances its government, supports its imports, and stabilizes its banking system is controlled by a system it does not own and cannot independently access.

Many Iraqi politicians continue to criticize American interference in their country’s domestic affairs, arguing that financial restrictions give Washington leverage over decisions that should belong exclusively to Baghdad.



accused them of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, including “starvation as a method of warfare, and ... murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts”.

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

All inhumane practices aim to depopulate Gaza of Palestinians

By staff writer

TEHRAN – Israel’s genocidal campaign against the Palestinians, coupled with efforts to drive them from their homeland, continues unabated.

On Saturday alone, the Israeli occupation army killed eight Palestinians and injured several others in two separate attacks on Gaza City.

Haaretz reported on Friday that Israel continues to kill children in Gaza as a “matter of routine.”

The newspaper added that more than 21,000 children have been killed in Israeli attacks since Oct. 7, 2023.

Haaretz also highlighted Gaza’s deepening humanitarian crisis, reporting that homes remain in ruins and around 1.7 million people are still living in tents without electricity, running water, or adequate sanitation.

Clearly, Israel has created such a situation to make life unbearable in the Gaza Strip.

Rats and mosquitoes are widespread, infectious diseases are spreading, and tens of thousands of people are suffering from skin infections amid intense heat and the harsh conditions inside the tents, the newspaper added.

The relentless brutality has been accompanied by the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza. Israel is expanding the area under its occupation east of Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip.

Israeli War Minister Israel Katz last week renewed his push to establish illegal settlements in northern Gaza.

“I intend to establish three Nahal outposts, which are also a military entity, in those places that were in northern Gaza,” Katz told Channel 14, referring to bases that combine farming with an armed presence in an effort to consolidate control over territory.

Katz’s remarks echoed a recent statement by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who said that “the groundwork to establish three settlements in the North Gaza area” had been completed. Smotrich, who also holds responsibility for the “settlement administration” portfolio in the Ministry of War, has repeatedly called for the full occupation of the Gaza Strip.

“This is their ideology. They want the Gazans out of Gaza and they want to settle there like they settle in the West Bank,” former Israeli diplomat Alon Liel told Al Jazeera.

Taken together, these actions and statements point to an effort to depopulate Palestine of its native Palestinian population. They also fuel speculation that Israel may have viewed the Oct. 7 attack as an opportunity to advance long-standing territorial objectives.

While much of the international community, including Israel’s Western allies, continues to support the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, ultra-hardline Israeli figures advocate taking control of all of Palestine in pursuit of what they describe as a “Greater Israel” project, which they believe extends into parts of neighboring Arab countries.

Israel has made no secret of this objective. In early 2025, the Netanyahu government announced the creation of an agency to oversee what it described as the “voluntary migration” of Palestinians from Gaza under a plan proposed by Katz.

This so-called “voluntary migration” has, in practice, become forced displacement through killings, constant fear, starvation, the deprivation of healthcare and basic sanitation, and other inhumane practices.

Issam Younis, a prominent Palestinian human rights defender and director of the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, said he was not surprised by Katz’s latest remarks.

“It was very clear from day one in the genocide that the main goal was to make life impossible in Gaza by destroying everything,” he told Al Jazeera. “It’s a race against time – take over land, starve Gaza and deny it any chance at life, then expel the population and build settlements.”

Younis added, “Dehumanizing statements by senior Israeli officials reaffirmed this: calling Palestinians in Gaza ‘human animals’, saying that there are no civilians in Gaza, then saying clearly that the objective was to expel the population and create settlements in the Gaza Strip.”

Digital campaign debunks Israel’s narrative about Gaza ceasefire

Meanwhile, activists launched a digital campaign under the hashtag, “They Lied to You,” in an effort to bring the suffering in the Gaza Strip back to the forefront of global attention.

They stressed that the decline in international media coverage of events in the territory does not mean that the genocidal war has ended or that the suffering of its residents has stopped.

The campaign, launched in Arabic and English on July 16, included journalists, humanitarian workers, children from Gaza and Arab and foreign supporters.

Through video clips and written posts, activists sought to bring renewed attention to scenes of Palestinians being killed by Israel and to the multiple forms of suffering caused by starvation, displacement and disease.

Their aim was to challenge the widespread impression that the ceasefire agreement in Oct. 2025 had ended the war and the humanitarian tragedy.

The campaign coincided with an escalation in Israeli attacks on Gaza, including bombardments and assassination operations that killed and wounded dozens of Palestinians, among them children and women.

The escalation on the ground was accompanied by continuing displacement, hunger and a lack of adequate medical treatment. The conditions worsened as Israel failed to fulfil obligations stipulated in the ceasefire agreement, including reopening the crossings and allowing the agreed quantities of food, relief and medical aid to enter.

Activists urged the world to act to save what remains of Gaza as Israel increased the pace of destruction and expanded its occupation of the territory to 70% of its total area, contrary to the agreement.

“They lied to you when they said there was a ceasefire in Gaza. What kind of ceasefire is this when children are still being killed, homes are being bombed, tents are being targeted, and families are grieving every day?” said Civil Defense spokesperson Mahmoud Basal, who took part in the campaign.

“A genuine ceasefire means that the killing stops, the bombardment falls silent, children sleep without fear, and people return to their lives. But in Gaza, the air strikes are continuing and civilians are still paying the price day after day, despite all the talk of calm,” he wrote on X, Middle East Monitor reported.

He urged people not to allow “misleading news to obscure the truth.”

Under the same hashtag, a staged video by an activist circulated widely. The activist appeared to have been punched in the face, had his mouth covered with black tape, and held a sign that read: “The war is over.”

Seconds later, he removed the tape from his mouth and turned the sign around, revealing the hashtag “They Lied to You” on the other side.

“They lied to you. They said the scene was over, that Gaza had disappeared from the news, and that the sound of bombardment had faded. But the reality we are living is different,” Palestinian activist Osaid al-Kahlout said in a widely shared video.

“The sounds of explosions continue, along with the signs of destruction, the suffering of families, and the fear of children who are still living amid war, devastation, bombardment, and artillery fire,” he said. “The story is not over. Gaza is not a number in a news bulletin, and its people are not a passing headline. The truth remains present, no matter how long the silence lasts. They lied to you, and some of you believed the narrative. The world must wake up.”

“The problem is not that they lied to you. The problem is that you wanted to believe them,” Palestinian activist Ghazi Muhi wrote on X.

Palestinian activist Ahmed Murtaja also condemned repeated media references to a ceasefire in Gaza. “Families are still losing their children, and children are still being pulled from beneath the rubble. How can anyone say the war is over?” he said. Children also participated in the campaign with videos reflecting their suffering, in an attempt to make their voices heard around the world.

“They lied to you and said the war was over. There is still war, hunger, destruction, bombardment, and the loss of loved ones and neighbours,” said a Palestinian child connected to medical tubes in a hospital, published by the Palestinian Information Center. “Those who say the war is over are liars.”

“‘They Lied to You’ is a campaign hashtag challenging the claim that the war on Gaza has ended. The genocidal war continues, so we must continue supporting Gaza,” Moroccan writer Hassan Bennajeh wrote on X.

Mamdani calls Netanyahu ‘war criminal’ and exploring whether he can arrest him if he visits New York

New York City mayor Zohran Mamdani has said he was reviewing whether his administration could arrest Benjamin Netanyahu if as expected the Israeli prime minister visits the city for the UN General Assembly in September, the Guardian reported.

Mamdani’s comments on Saturday’s episode of the New York Times’s the Interview podcast echoed ones he had made to the publication as he successfully ran for mayor last fall.

“I believe that prime minister Netanyahu belongs in The Hague,” Mamdani said, referring to the Dutch city that is home to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which issued an arrest warrant for Netanyahu in November 2024 over war crimes in Gaza. “He’s a war criminal who has been charged by the International Crimi-

nal Court, and what you will find is that is an opinion that is held by many, purely because of what his actions have wrought over these past many years.”

Mamdani said it was unclear to him whether he has the legal authority to order the New York Police Department (NYPD), which he oversees, to detain a foreign leader like Netanyahu. But he said he was in “an active conversation” with the city’s law department about the matter.

“Whatever the law allows me to do in New York City, that’s what we will do,” Mamdani added. “But we won’t be writing our own laws to that end.”

The warrant which the ICC issued for the arrest of Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders

Iran edge Qatar at 2026 Asian Junior Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran earned a narrow 26-25 win over Qatar at the 2026 Asian Junior Handball Championship on Sunday.

The Iranian team had previously defeated Kuwait, lost to South Korea and were held to a draw against the UAE in Group B.

Iran are scheduled to play Japan on Monday.

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.

Iranian trio into AVC U18 Championship 2026 Dream Team

TEHRAN – Iran emerged as the new champions of the AVC Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship 2026 after defeating Japan 3-1 (23-25, 25-22, 25-17, 25-22) in the gold medal match in Haikou, China, capping an outstanding campaign with the continental title.

The tournament brought together Asia's brightest volleyball prospects, providing the continent's next generation of stars with the opportunity to compete on one of its premier youth stages while showcasing the future of Asian volleyball, asianvolleyball.net reported.

The victory marked another memorable achievement for Iran's rising stars, whose resilience, teamwork and consistency carried them through the week-long championship. Japan finished with the silver medal after another impressive campaign that highlighted the nation's continued excellence in youth volleyball.

Completing the podium was Chinese Taipei, which secured the bronze medal with a strong performance in the third-place playoff. The bronze-medal finish capped an impressive tournament for Chinese Taipei, joining champions Iran and runners-up Japan on the podium as the championship celebrated another generation of emerging talent across Asia.

Following the final, the tournament's stand-out performers were honored with places in the official Dream Team.

Iran's Abolfazl Pashaamiri earned the tournament's highest individual distinction as the Most Valuable Player after leading his team to the championship. He also received the Best Opposite award, making him the only player to claim two individual honors.

Iran's Pedram Heydari Sefat and Amirali Shams are also in the Dream Team.

AVC Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship 2026 Dream Team

Most Valuable Player: Abolfazl Pashaamiri

Best Outside Hitter: Kaiji Nishimura

Best Outside Hitter: Wei-Hsiu Chang

Best Middle Blocker: Pedram Heydari Sefat

Best Middle Blocker: Haru Sawano

Best Opposite: Abolfazl Pashaamiri

Best Libero: Toma Mizobuchi

Best Setter: Amirali Shams

The 2026 edition once again underscored the AVC's commitment to developing the future of Asian volleyball by providing a world-class platform for emerging athletes to gain valuable international experience. Throughout the tournament, the continent's rising stars

demonstrated exceptional skill, determination and sportsmanship, reaffirming the strength and depth of youth volleyball in Asia as they continue their journey toward the senior international stage.

Former Barcelona talent Halilovic near Persepolis switch

TEHRAN – Persepolis are closing in on the signing of former Barcelona midfielder Alen Halilovic, with negotiations progressing positively between both parties.

The 30-year-old Croatian is currently a free agent after leaving Dutch side Fortuna Sittard, making him an attractive option for the Iranian giants ahead of the 2026/27 Persian Gulf Professional League season.

Halilovic, once regarded as one of Europe's brightest young talents, rose to prominence at Dinamo Zagreb before joining Barcelona in 2014. Although he never fulfilled his early potential, he has gained valuable experience across Spain, Italy, England, Belgium, the Netherlands and Croatia.

Head coach Mehdi Tartar is determined to strengthen Persepolis' squad, and Halilovic's creativity, vision and technical ability could add a new dimension to the club's midfield if the deal is completed.

Iran end 2026 VNL on a disappointing note

TEHRAN – Iran wrapped up their 2026 FIVB Men's Volleyball Nations League campaign with a 3-1 defeat to Turkey on Sunday, ending the tournament on a disappointing note.

Turkey claimed the match 17-25, 25-22, 25-16, 25-19 to finish their preliminary campaign on a high. Opposite hitter Adis Lagumdžija starred for the Turkish side with 23 points, while Ali Haghparsat was Iran's top scorer with 20 points.

Iran struggled throughout the third week of the competition. Team Melli opened Week 3 with a 3-1 loss to Ukraine before bouncing back with a hard-fought 3-2 victory over Germany. However, the team failed to build momentum, suffering consecutive defeats against Slovenia (3-0) and Turkey (3-1) to close out the tournament.

The 2026 FIVB Men's Volleyball Nations League, the eighth edition of the annual international competition, is being held from June 10 to August 2. The Finals will take place at the Beilun Gymnasium in Ningbo, China.

Persepolis defender Milad Mohammadi joins Belarusian club

TEHRAN – Iran international Milad Mohammadi has completed a surprise move to Belarusian side Maxline Vitebsk.

Mohammadi, 33, has penned an 18-month contract after leaving Persian Gulf Pro League giants Persepolis.

The experienced left-back had been widely expected to extend his stay with Persepolis for a third consecutive season, with reports suggesting that an agreement had already been reached between the two parties.

However, in an unexpected turn of events, Mohammadi opted to continue his career in Europe, joining Maxline Vitebsk instead.

The move comes as a surprise to Persepolis supporters, who believed the player would remain at the Tehran-based club after negotiations over a contract extension.

Mohammadi, a regular member of the Iranian national team, now embarks on a new chapter in Belarus, returning to European football after previous spells abroad. His arrival is expected to strengthen Maxline Vitebsk's defensive line as the club prepare for the second half of the season.

Ancient Alamut fortifications complete Iran's architectural and defensive history, heritage expert says

From Page 1 ► The Cultural Landscape of Alamut, nominated for inscription on UNESCO's World Heritage List, comprises seven strongholds and related fortifications associated with the Nizari Ismaili state between the 11th and 13th centuries. At its center is Alamut Castle, historically known as the political and military headquarters of the Nizari Ismailis.

Beheshti said the central Alborz region had long served as a natural fortress because of its mountainous terrain, providing refuge for local rulers, communities and military forces throughout different periods of Iranian history.

He said the region's historical landscape reflects that role, with defensive castles and mausoleums accounting for many of its surviving monuments, demonstrating the area's strategic importance over centuries.

According to Beheshti, archaeological evidence indicates that many of the region's fortifications were already in use during the Parthian period. He said the network was expanded into an integrated defensive system during the Seljuk era after the establishment of the Nizari Is-



maili state, with Alamut Castle serving as its central command.

The defensive chain extended from the vicinity of Qazvin to the foothills of the Alborz Mountains near Tehran, with each fortress supporting others as part of a coordinated system, he said.

Beheshti said the nomination represents more than a collection of historic buildings, describing it as recognition of a significant chapter in Iran's cultural and political history linked to the Nizari Ismailis.

He said Alamut Castle also holds particular architectural importance because relatively few structures from the Seljuk period and earlier have survived. The castle provides a rare oppor-

tunity for direct study of architecture from that era, he said.

Although the site is smaller than large complexes such as [the UNESCO-registered] Bam Citadel, Beheshti said the architectural evidence and archaeological discoveries at Alamut provide unique insights into the development of Iranian architecture.

He said archaeological research, conservation work and documentation at Alamut began in the late 1990s and continued without interruption under the Alamut Cultural Heritage Base. He credited the sustained efforts of specialists, particularly archaeologist Hamideh Choubak, with enabling the preparation

of a comprehensive nomination dossier.

Beheshti added that the nomination adopts a serial approach by including multiple castles and associated fortifications within the cultural landscape of the central Alborz rather than focusing on a single monument.

He said the approach reflects the principles of integrity and interconnectedness that are central to UNESCO's evaluation criteria by demonstrating the historical, geographical and functional relationships among the fortifications and their surrounding landscape.

If inscribed, the Cultural Landscape of Alamut would become one of the few Iranian World Heritage properties recognized as a cultural landscape, highlighting both the monuments and their wider environmental and historical setting, Beheshti said.

He then thanked the cultural heritage experts involved in preparing the nomination, specifically acknowledging heritage experts Choubak and Mohammad Hassan Talebian, and expressed hope that the years of research and conservation would result in the site's inscription on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Prominent Iranian archaeologist Ismail Yaghmaei passes away at 84

TEHRAN – Ismail Yaghmaei (also known as Ehsan Yaghmaei), one of Iran's renowned archaeologists and a veteran of the country's cultural heritage, passed away on Sunday morning, at Pars Hospital in Tehran. He was 84.

He had been hospitalized in a coma since July 6 after suffering a stroke.

Jebraeil Nokandeh, general director of the National Museum of Iran, confirmed the news and offered condolences to Yaghmaei's family and the archaeological community. "His invaluable services will remain forever etched in the memory of Iran's history and archaeology," Nokandeh stated. "Iran's heritage is deeply indebted to his unwavering efforts—he stood firm in its defense, paid the price, and never surrendered."

Born in Tehran on September 18, 1941, Yaghmaei was the son of Habib Yaghmaei, a distinguished literary scholar and editor of the renowned Yaghma magazine. He earned his master's degree in archaeology from the University of Tehran in 1975. His professional career officially began in May 1967 when he was hired as an expert at the General Office of Ar-

chaeology under the Ministry of Culture and Arts. He was later retired from the Cultural Heritage Organization on February 11, 1996.

Over nearly six decades, Yaghmaei led numerous excavations across Iran. His most influential work centered on the Bardak Siah palace in Bushehr province, where he put forward a bold hypothesis concerning the genuine origin of the Achaemenids—directly linking his field data with historical reinterpretation in his seminal book on the site. His field presence also extended to major sites including Haft Tappeh in Khuzestan, Susa, Shahr-e Sukhteh, Chogha Gavaneh in Kermanshah, Marvdasht, Kangavar, the Qazvin plain, Gorgan, Kerman, and the northwestern regions of Iran—each excavation shedding new light on the country's civilizational identity.

A prolific author, Yaghmaei's bibliography is extensive. His published works include: Kati-be-ye Khun (The Blood Inscription), relating to artifacts discovered at Qalaychi Bukan; The Influence of Assyrian Culture on the Mannaeans (focusing on Bukan); Niayesh-e Mehr dar Iran (The Worship of Mithra in Iran); Dej-e Este'mar (Fortress of Colonialism); Safe Points; That

Palace of Jamshid: A Study on the Background of Persepolis; Thousand-Year-Old Tresses: Glimpses of an Archaeologist's Memoirs; Susa: Archaeological Excavations in the 15th City of the Middle Elamite Period; and his book on the Bardak Siah palace.

In his poignant work "When I Was a Child", reflecting on his numerous relocations between archaeological mounds, he wrote: "Today, with empty hands, I await my departure. The last migration. Ismail."

His life and family legacy were also the subject of the acclaimed film Pamian. A heart-breaking, tearful image of him—captured while witnessing the neglect and destruction of historical sites—went viral on social media, cementing his status as an enduring symbol of devotion to Iran's cultural heritage.

Yaghmaei's scientific achievements and decades of dedicated research have left an indelible mark on the understanding of Iran's ancient cultures, enriching the country's archaeological studies. His extensive corpus of work remains a valuable and inspirational resource for generations of researchers to come.

Ancient Iranian goldsmithing in spotlight as 3,000-year-old earrings worn by actress spark heritage debate

TEHRAN – A pair of earrings incorporating approximately 3,000-year-old Iranian gold medallions has sparked international debate over the use of ancient cultural artifacts in contemporary fashion, drawing renewed attention to the sophistication of ancient Iranian jewelry making and raising questions about the ownership, preservation and ethical use of archaeological objects.

The controversy emerged after American actress Zendaya Maree Stoermer Coleman wore the earrings during a London photocall for Christopher Nolan's film The Odyssey, in which she portrays Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom and war.

According to CNN and People magazine, the earrings incorporate ancient Iranian gold medallion discs believed to date to the first millennium B.C., making them about 3,000 years old. The objects are associated with the Ziwiye hoard, one of the most significant archaeological discoveries linked to ancient northwestern Iran.

The gold discs are widely believed to originate from the archaeological site of Ziwiye in Iran's Kordestan province, a fortified settlement associated with the Medes and Scythians. The Ziwiye collection, described by Encyclopaedia Britannica as a group of artworks dating to the seventh century B.C., is regarded as one of the finest surviving examples of early Iranian craftsmanship in precious metals.

The medallions illustrate the high level of mastery achieved by ancient Iranian goldsmiths, whose work combined artistic design with sophisticated metalworking techniques. Archaeological discoveries from Ziwiye and other Iron Age sites demonstrate that Iranian craftsmen were producing finely worked gold ornaments, ceremonial objects and luxury goods centuries before the rise of the Achaemenid Empire.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

First Announcement



National Iranian Oil Company

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

2229274
1

TENDER NO.: 08-38-0540005

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir. Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity
1	SLICKLINE, SPOOLED ON IRON REEL H2S, CO2 AND CHLORIDE ION TRIM TYPE: SUPA-75 OR SANICRO-26 MATERIAL: HIGH CROSION RESISTANCE STAINLESS STEEL UNS N08926 (ALLOY 25-6 NDT TEST INCLUDING EDDY CURRENT TEST A ALSO WRAP TEST SHOULD BE PERFORM & DOC DIAMETER & LENGTH AS SPECIFIED: REF. "SANDVIK (ZAPP-GROUP)", "BRIDON" SIZE 0.082 INCH X 18000 FEET	22RL

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 26,304/76 EURO or 43,864,971,540 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

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TEHRAN – Iranian students have delivered an outstanding performance, clinching three gold medals and a silver medal at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO), and three silver medals and a bronze medal at the International Chemistry Olympiad (ICHO).

The 37th International Biology Olympiad (IBO 2026) took place from July 12 to 19 in the city of Vilnius, Lithuania. The event brought together participants from some 80 countries across five continents.

Radin Bayani, Mohammad-Reza Vaezi, and Amir-Hossein Nosrati grabbed gold medals, while Amir-Hossein Hemmati won the silver medal, IRIB reported.

The IBO is the world's leading biology competition for high school students, held each year in a different host country. The inaugural event took place in 1989 in the former Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), with participants from six nations. Since then, the IBO has grown significantly.

By bringing together talented young individuals, the IBO seeks to challenge and inspire them to further develop their abilities and pursue scientific careers. The competition aims to highlight biology as a fascinating and essential discipline, covering areas such as genetics, behavior, and ecology—fields that are crucial for tackling global challenges like sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation, and climate resilience.

Additionally, the IBO provides a platform for comparing biology curricula and teaching practices worldwide, which can offer valuable insights for enhancing biology education at the national level.

As the foremost international

competition for high school biology students, the IBO aims to discover and nurture future leaders in the life sciences, encouraging them to build global networks and pursue meaningful contributions in the scientific community.

The 58th International Chemistry Olympiad (ICHO 2026) was held from July 10 to 19 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Over 350 students from 90 countries attended the event.

Ali Shamsi-Mofakhar, Mahyar Najari, and Amir-Reza Hosseini secured silver medals, while Ario Seirafi won the bronze medal.

The ICHO is a chemistry competition for students at the secondary school level with the aim of promoting international contacts in chemistry. It is intended to stimulate the activities of students interested in chemistry by way of the independent and creative solution of chemical problems.

The ICHO competitions help to facilitate cordial relations between young adults of different nationalities; they encourage cooperation and international understanding.

Each participating country's delegation consists of competitors and accompanying persons (also known as mentors). It is expected that there are four competitors and two mentors in the delegation.

The competitors are secondary school students or recent graduates who have not started university education. Competitors must be under 20 years of age on the 1st of July of the year of the competition.

Recent achievements

The five-member team of Iranian students has demonstrated

a remarkable achievement, garnering three gold medals and two silver medals at the 56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO).

Held from July 4 to 12 in Bucaramanga, Colombia, the IPhO 2026 brought together over 400 students from more than 90 countries, Javanonline.ir reported.

Hirbod Foudazi, Kian Zarrabian, and Mohammad Mirmohammadi secured gold medals, while Amir-Sam Goharpey and Nima Koushki won silver medals.

Iran's Physics Olympiad team, consisting of five students, has achieved an astounding triumph at the International Scientific Physics Olympiad 2026, winning two gold medals, a silver, and a bronze.

Hirbod Foudazi was ranked first among all participants, receiving the title of absolute winner, achieving the best result in the Theoretical Exam, and grabbing the gold medal and the national diamond, IRNA reported.

Amir-Sam Goharpey won the other gold medal; Kian Zarrabian and Mohammad Mirmohammadi received a silver medal and a bronze medal, respectively.

The Iranian team showed brilliance, claiming the championship at the fourth International Mathematics Summer Camp (IMSC) held in Beijing, China, from June 17 to July 12, demonstrating exceptional teamwork and dedication to mathematics.

Aryan Zandi, Arsha Azizoddin, Seyyed Amir-Hossein Tayeb, Ali-reza Sharifi, Radin Nik-Eqbali, and Ali Joonbakhsh Najafabadi won 4 gold medals and two silver medals, outperforming students from Poland and Brazil, IRNA reported.

This year's event brought together 58 teams from 46 coun-

tries and regions, including 41 international teams and 17 teams from China, with over 500 Chinese and international students, teachers, and coaches in total.

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

Artina Heidari won the silver medal; Setayesh Haqnazari, Sana Karbalaee Vali, and Helia Khodabandelou received the bronze medals, IRIB reported.

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

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

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

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

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

SDS hotspots in Iraq, Syria affecting Iran to be controlled

TEHRAN – According to the head of Iran's National Headquarters for Dust Storm Policy and Coordination, the country intends to identify and control two sources of sand and dust storms in Iraq and Syria that have the most impact on the country by the end of 2026.

Once the two hotspots are located, the headquarters will utilize funds and global mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Islamic Development Bank to implement operational plans for their management, IRIB quoted Behzad Raygani as saying.

Highlighting the role of environmental diplomacy in addressing these phenomena, he said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the implementation of six comprehensive plans to combat sand and dust storms. Hence, the working group on environmental diplomacy, in collaboration with the Meteorological Organization and the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, is developing supporting documentation to provide technical and scientific assistance.

Referring to the last regional meeting that was held in Turkey, Raygani said that Iran proposed to establish a subgroup comprising Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia to identify critical dust hotspots and develop an action plan in the meeting, and the idea was well received by the other representatives.

However, cultural and social obstacles in neighboring countries are key factors delaying the implementation of regional initiatives. Unlike Iran, people in countries like Iraq and Syria are used to living in arid environments with dust storms, so addressing dust storms is not probably among their top priorities.

Iran chairs intl. event on combating SDSs
Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, Amir-Saeed Iravani, chaired a high-level event held to mark the International Day for Combating Sand and Dust Storms (SDSs) in New York on July 10.

The event was organized by the Permanent Missions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, the Republic of Senegal and Mongolia, in cooperation with members of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, providing a platform to exchange experiences, strengthen partnerships and identify actions to advance implementation at the national, regional and global levels.

At Iran's initiative, in 2023, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed July 12 as the International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms, recognizing that SDSs and their negative impacts at different scales are issues of international concern.

This year, the day was marked under the theme: 'From Source to Impact: Protecting Land and Life from Sand and Dust Storms'. The event brought together Member States, United Nations entities, regional and international organizations, experts and other stakeholders to strengthen international cooperation and accelerate action to address the growing impacts of sand and dust storms.

As highlighted by the four host countries,

dust storms, beyond degrading land and the environment, have severely impacted human health, food and water security, agriculture, transportation, infrastructure, economic activities, biodiversity, and the achievement of sustainable development goals.

Addressing the event, Iravani highlighted that dust storms have become a global challenge affecting development, health, food security, transportation, the economy, climate change, and the environment, which requires a comprehensive, preventive approach based on broad international cooperation to be dealt with, IRNA reported.

Besides climate change, drought, desertification, land degradation, and the unsustainable use of natural resources, conflicts and wars, particularly in the West Asia, have resulted into land degradation, deterioration of natural resource management, and emergence or expansion of dust and sandstorm hotspots, he noted.

Highlighting the impact of unilateral coercive measures and sanctions on the capacity of developing countries to protect their environments, Iravani stressed the need to eliminate barriers to environmental cooperation and ensure equitable access for affected countries to necessary resources, technology, and knowledge.

The official welcomed the regional programs of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific as well as the inter-regional cooperation between the Commission and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

He described the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2035) a significant opportunity to convert political commitments into practical, results-oriented actions.

During the interactive dialogue session, representatives of UN member states called for strengthening scientific, technical, and financial collaborations, developing early warning systems, ensuring sustainable land management, combating desertification, and enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities.

The participants noted that SDSs know no political border, and that no individual country can tackle the challenge on its own. Accordingly, enhancing the role of the UN, fostering cooperation among source countries where dust originates, transit countries, and destination countries that receive dusts, as well as effectively supporting developing countries are essential to achieve sustainable responses.

The four countries, Iran, Iraq, Senegal, and Mongolia, issued a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to promoting regional and international cooperation to combat dust storms. They called for governments, the UN, financial institutions, regional organizations, scientific centers, private sectors, and other stakeholders to enhance their cooperation in areas like prevention, monitoring, early warning, land restoration, knowledge and technology transfer, capacity building, and securing financial resources.

‘Regional countries can use Iran’s experience in managing Arbaeen pilgrimage’

TEHRAN – Hossam Elsharkawi, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), has highlighted Iran's experience in managing the Arbaeen pilgrimage, saying that the country can serve as a regional hub to train other nations and share expertise with them.

The shared mission of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies worldwide is to support people and provide humanitarian services to them; Iran has valuable expertise in mass gathering management, which has to be shared internationally, Mehr news agency quoted Elsharkawi as saying.

The official made the remarks while addressing the sixth International Congress on "Health in Arbaeen", being held in Tehran on July 19 to 20.

"The international federation is striving to create a platform to transfer Iran's knowledge, scientific documentation, and experi-

ence on mass gathering management to other countries, as this experience is truly golden and unparalleled globally," he stressed.

The official went on to say that the IFRC is currently is consulting and exchanging views with Iranian officials to establish an educational hub for mass gathering management in the country, a center that would provide ongoing specialized training, preserve and pass on the knowledge to future generations.

This year, 515 articles were submitted to the congress, out of which 19 articles will be delivered as lectures, and 22 as posters. The congress is hosting 105 lecturers in different sectors this year, IRNA reported.

The congress includes 25 scientific panels and eight training workshops, which highlight the idea that health in mass gatherings depends on interdisciplinary research and multi-center studies, analyzing data, and utilizing modern technologies—including artificial intelligence and modeling.

IFRC: IRCS serves as a model of excellence in crisis management

TEHRAN – Jagan Chapagain, the Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), in a letter to Pirhossein Kolivand, the head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), has lauded the IRCS efforts during the 40-day US-Israeli war against Iran, noting that relief and medical services, search and rescue operations, and dedications of the IRCS volunteers showcase the outstanding capabilities of a strong national society in crisis management.

Highlighting the immense operational, logistical, and humanitarian challenges, Chapagain stated, "The Iranian Red Crescent Society has demonstrated decisive and effective leadership by acting as the country's primary humanitarian player," IRIB reported.

"On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), I wish to extend our appreciation and recognition for the extraordinary humanitarian response led by the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) in the context of the current conflict situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran," the letter reads.

"Your swift mobilization of volunteers and staff, the scale and effectiveness of life-saving assistance, and the steadfast commitment to our fundamental principles have ensured that those in need of urgent assistance have received timely and dignified support.

The coordination of emergency health services, round-the-clock relief operations, psychosocial assistance, and community outreach, as well as the courageous and highly professional search and rescue operations, reflect not only technical excellence but also deep-rooted trust within communities. Such trust is the cornerstone of effective humanitarian action and underscores the unique aux-

iliary role of IRCS and its footprint in the wide Iranian territory.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of four dedicated IRCS volunteers who tragically lost their lives in the line of duty. Their selfless commitment to saving lives stands as a powerful testament to our values. On behalf of the IFRC, I wish to express our heartfelt solidarity with the IRCS, as well as our deepest condolences to the families, friends, and colleagues of these selfless individuals. Their sacrifice will not be forgotten.

Your response stands as a powerful example of what a strong National Society can deliver in times of crisis- saving lives, alleviating suffering, and preserving human dignity.

The IFRC remains fully committed to supporting IRCS in its ongoing efforts and in addressing the evolving humanitarian needs. We stand in solidarity with you, your dedicated staff, and your vast network of volunteers, whose courage and commitment continue to inspire the entire IFRC network."

IFRC supports IRCS in humanitarian activities

In May, Chapagain, in a meeting in Geneva with Kolivand, said the Federation firmly supports the Iranian Red Crescent Society in conducting humanitarian activities.

Kolivand visited Geneva at the invitation of IFRC officials to draft a roadmap for long-term collaboration.

"I deeply understand the pain and suffering you have gone through; I sympathize with you and stand with you. We are there for each other through tough times, and you have proven this fact well.

When women, children, and civilians were

targeted, you courageously defended their human rights; such dedication is truly worthy of commendation and respect," the IFRC secretary general told Kolivand.

Referring to unfair sanctions, Chapagain said, "My primary objective is to work toward mitigating the impact of sanctions on the humanitarian activities of the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

We will do our best to reconstruct and replenish the depleted capacities and reserves of the Iranian Red Crescent Society."

Admitting the capabilities of the IRCS, Chapagain said it is the collective duty of the international community and the Federation to support you.

He went on to say that the IRCS is the source of pride of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, bringing immense credit and prestige to the movement.

Moreover, the head of the IRCS held a meeting with Kate Forbes, President of the IFRC, to discuss the humanitarian efforts of the IRCS during the 40-day war imposed on Iran by the US-Israel coalition, the IRCS website reported.

The IFRC President expressed her sympathy to the families of the aid workers who were martyred and to those injured in the line of duty, stating that "We stand with these families, and the services provided by the Iranian Red Crescent during the war that have deeply moved us."

Referring to the initiatives and capabilities of the IRCS, Forbes asked for further information and more detailed explanations on the performance of the "water rescue robots", to facilitate the introduction and sharing of these experiences and technologies with other national societies that are members of the IFRC.



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**
Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430
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No. 18, Moghadasi Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.O. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

JULY 20, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The weakest person is he who is unable to secure a friend for himself, and weaker than him is he who loses his friend.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:11 Evening: 19:38 Dawn: 3:23 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:04 (tomorrow)

Glasgow art remembers 567 Palestinian footballers killed by Israel



AN art installation in a Glasgow park has paid tribute to the hundreds of Palestinian footballers killed by Israel.

The display, organized by the Show Israeli Genocide the Red Card campaign group, memorialized the “567 gifted footballers [who] have been killed since October 2023”.

Two weeks ago, 32-year-old Saleem Al-Ashgar – who played as a goalkeeper for Khan Younis-based club Khadamat Khan – was killed by live fire while stopping at a shop on the way home from work, the Palestinian Football Association (PFA) said.

On Friday, Amnesty International said that Israeli forces have killed at least 1007 Palestinian athletes and sports professionals and destroyed more than 260 sports facilities since October 2023.

“Players have been killed. Pitches reduced to rubble. Teams scattered. Careers cut short,” the charity said.

The art installation in Glasgow's Cathkin Park paid tribute to the “gifted athletes lost to a brutal genocide in front of the whole world”.

A huge Palestinian flag with the words “567 murdered” was unveiled, alongside a football marked by red handprints, and signs saying “Stop the game”.

The Show Israeli Genocide the Red Card group wrote: “While the world watches the corrupt World Cup, Palestinian footballers are still being murdered by the Israeli occupation. 567 gifted footballers have been killed since October 2023.

“Please don't look away and forget these lives

as the world turns to watch the WC final.”

Previously, Amnesty and the Palestinian Football Association have both called for Israeli teams to be barred from Fifa competitions, noting that there are at least six teams based in illegal settlements who play in the Israeli leagues.

In March, Fifa said it would take “no action” against the Israel Football Association, claiming that the “final legal status of the West Bank remains an unresolved and highly complex matter”.

In July 2024, the International Court of Justice – the principal judicial organ of the United Nations – issued an advisory ruling saying that Israel's presence in occupied Palestinian territories like Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank is “illegal”.

The ongoing crisis in Gaza has reached a catastrophic level, with international observers and human rights organizations describing the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure and the immense loss of life as a genocide.

The relentless bombardment and the imposition of a total blockade have led to an unprecedented humanitarian disaster, where famine and disease now claim lives alongside the violence of war. With thousands of children killed, hospitals decimated, and entire neighborhoods leveled, the scale of death and displacement reflects a profound failure of global diplomacy and international law. The international community remains deeply divided, yet the images of ruined cities and starving populations continue to fuel global demands for an immediate comprehensive accounting for the war crimes committed against the Palestinian people by the Israeli forces.

Cartoon of Day



FIFA World Champion
Cartoonist: Paolo Calleri from Germany

Iranian miniature works on display in Moscow

TEHRAN – The exhibition “From Lasso to Harness,” featuring works by artists from Iran and Russia, has been launched at the Museum of Horse Breeding of the Timiryazev Academy in Moscow.

The exhibition showcases works by several Iranian and Russian artists in the forms of paintings, sculptures, and apparel design, including Images of exquisite Iranian miniatures, centered on the theme of the horse as a symbol of freedom and peace.

The exhibition has been held with the support of the Ibn Sina Foundation and the Iranian Cultural Center, both in Russia, IRNA reported.

The exhibition showcases works by great masters of Iranian painting history, such as Kamaluddin Behzad, as well as contemporary artists including Mahmoud Farshchian, Hossein Esmaeili, and Reza Badrossama. The collection covers a range of national, religious, mythological, and mystical themes.

Addressing the attendees at the opening ceremony, Olga Vladimirovna, Director of the Moscow Horse Breeding Museum, which is hosting the cultural event, described cultural and artistic cooperation with Iran as highly valuable, calling it “an effective step in expanding cultural diplomacy”.

Also speaking at the ceremony, Seyed Nasser Tabayi, Deputy Director of the Ibn Sina Foundation,

❖ 16 ИЮЛЯ 2026 ГОДА ❖

В 16:00

ПРИГЛАШАЕМ
НА ОТКРЫТИЕ ВЫСТАВКИ

«ОТ АРКАНА ДО УПРЯЖКИ»

В МУЗЕЙ КОНЕВОДСТВА
АКАДЕМИИ ИМЕНИ К.А. ТИМИРЯЗЕВА

Экспозиция представит искусство Ирана и России в контексте образа коня как символа свободы и мира.

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АВТОР И РУКОВОДИТЕЛЬ ПРОЕКТА —
МАРИАННА ГНЕЗДИЛОВА,
президент Академии «Искусство объединяет мир»
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Куратор и коллекционер: Светлана Антонова

ПРОГРАММА ОТКРЫТИЯ:
• Приветствие участников проекта
• Показ коллекции костюмов по мотивам городской росписи от бренда Астромода
• Чайная церемония

**МУЗЕЙ КОНЕВОДСТВА
ТИМИРЯЗЕВСКОЙ АКАДЕМИИ**
Москва, Тимирязевская ул., 44



considered such exhibitions a step toward strengthening mutual understanding between the two nations, stating, “The language of art and culture can lead to the expansion of international

peace and friendship.”

Zahra Rashidbeigi, Deputy Cultural Counselor of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Moscow, also emphasized the further strengthening of cultural

relations between the two countries.

The exhibition, which opened on the evening of July 16, will welcome visitors for over two months, until September 26.

Resistance Film Festival calls for documentaries on Leader's funeral

TEHRAN- The secretariat of the 19th edition of the Resistance International Film Festival has issued an official call to documentary filmmakers, directors, and media activists to submit works capturing the farewell and funeral ceremonies of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The call for entries is divided into two primary categories of short documentaries and feature-length documentaries. The festival seeks submissions that explore the various dimensions of this national and grassroots event.

The festival organizers have announced several incentives for selected works, including the financial funding of the three top documentaries and the granting of a special festival award to ten selected entries.

Furthermore, a prestigious “Imam Shahid” special prize will be awarded, and winning films will be granted direct entry into the festival's special section for exclusive screenings.

The call for entries highlights several key thematic axes, including the massive public turnout, the depiction of enduring moments from the farewell ceremonies, socio-cultural activism, the domestic and global resonance of the event, and the courageous presence and role of women during the ceremonies.

Interested filmmakers and media professionals are invited to submit their works to the secretariat of the 19th Resistance International Film Festival by the deadline of August 6.

Asghar Farhadi to be honored at 32nd Sarajevo Film Festival

TEHRAN – In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the art of cinema, Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi will be honored with the Honorary Heart of Sarajevo at the 32nd Sarajevo Film Festival, which is set to be held from August 14 to 21 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The acclaimed Iranian director and screenwriter will accept the award in person, while a retrospective of his work will be presented as part of the Festival's Tribute To program, ISNA reported.

Farhadi returns to Sarajevo eight years after serving as President of the Jury for the Feature Film Competition at the 24th Sarajevo Film Festival in 2018, where his film “Everybody Knows” was screened in the Open-Air program.

“It is difficult to overstate Asghar Farhadi's significance to world cinema. His remarkable body of work reminds us that the most profound dramas are often concealed within everyday

life. His films do not offer easy answers; instead, they invite us to look more closely, listen more carefully and engage with life's complexities. We are honored to welcome Farhadi back to the festival and to present him with the Honorary Heart of Sarajevo,” said Jovan Marjanović, Director of the Sarajevo Film Festival.

Asghar Farhadi, 54, is considered one of the most prominent filmmakers of Iranian cinema as well as world cinema in the 21st century.

He became interested in cinema when he was a teenager and started his education in filmmaking by joining the Youth Cinema Society of Isfahan in 1986, where he made 8mm and 16mm short films.

He received his Bachelor of Dramatic Arts at the University of Tehran in 1998 and his Master's in Stage Direction a few years later. He devoted his final thesis to Harold Pinter and in particular the importance of silence and pauses in the playwright's work.

He made his directorial debut with “Dancing in the Dust” (2002). After the success of “About Elly” (2009), for which he won the Silver Bear for Best Director at the Berlinale, Farhadi gained international recognition and critical acclaim with “A Separation” (2011), receiving no less than 70 awards, including an Academy Award and a César for Best Foreign Film.

He then left Iran for France to shoot “The Past” (2013), which won Bérénice Bejo the Best Actress Award at the Cannes Film Festival in 2013. He then returned to Iran to direct “The Salesman” (2016), which premiered in competition at the 2016 Cannes Film Festival, where the film won Best Screenplay and Best Actor (Shahab Hosseini). The film became Farhadi's biggest success and earned him the second Academy Award of his career. The film, “A Hero” (2021), won the Grand Prix at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival. His latest film, “Parallel Tales,” shot in France, was screened at the 2026 Cannes Film Festival.

Towards the end of the four-

entire life was dedicated to the pursuit of justice and the liberation of the oppressed. This ultimate sacrifice, born from the depths of a conflict fueled by imperialist ambitions, has left an indelible mark on the collective soul of the Iranian people and the wider Muslim world, transforming a moment of profound grief into a catalyst for renewed resistance and steadfastness.

In the days following his farewell ceremonies, the streets of Iran's major cities were transformed into rivers of black, as millions of followers gathered to pay their final respects to a leader whose guidance had shaped the country's political and spiritual trajectory for decades.

The funeral rites were characterized by their unprecedented scale and geographic reach, spanning six days of mourning. The processions began in Tehran and extended to the holy cities of Qom and Mashhad, and even reached Najaf and Karbala cities in Iraq, reflecting the Leader's influence beyond national borders.

These ceremonies served not only as a final farewell but as a massive demonstration of unity and loyalty. The burial, attended by high-ranking officials and vast crowds of ordinary citizens, concluded a period of intense national mourning, transitioning the country from a state of collective sorrow to a renewed commitment to the principles for which the martyred Leader stood.

year siege of Sarajevo, in 1995, Obala Art Centar initiated the Sarajevo Film Festival with the aim of helping to reconstruct civil society and retain the cosmopolitan spirit of the city.

Today, three decades later, the Sarajevo Film Festival is the leading film festival in the region, recognized by both film professionals and the wider audience. The Sarajevo Film Festival is an international film festival with a special focus on the region of South-East Europe, shining an international spotlight on films, talent and future projects from the region.

High-quality programming, a strong industry segment, an educational and networking platform for young filmmakers, and thus a presence of the international film industry, film authors, and media representatives alongside a paying audience of over 100,000 confirm its status as the leading film festival in the region, recognized by both professionals and wider audiences.