

Yemeni-Saudi escalation: The core problem and key solution

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – The Yemeni equation is based on escalation in response to escalation and pressure in response to pressure, to compel Saudi Arabia to fulfill the obligations of peace and end the aggression and blockade.

The “escalation for escalation” equation adopted by the government in Sanaa did not emerge out of nowhere. Rather, it took shape over many years of Saudi aggression, an unjust blockade, and severe economic and humanitarian pressure.

From Sanaa's perspective, the international community has failed to address the root causes that have kept Yemen facing crises, and has often been more preoccupied with condemning Yemeni reactions than with addressing the root causes behind them.

For this reason, the Yemeni Armed Forces (YAF) have come to view military pressure as a means of imposing a corresponding equation: blockade for blockade, pressure for pressure, and escalation for escalation. This also includes preemptively striking Saudi troop and military build-ups before they can be deployed in support of the Saudi-backed forces inside Yemen. ▶ Page 5

Israel expands assaults across Lebanon's Jabal Amel despite US mediation claims

By staff writer

TEHRAN — The Israeli military unleashed a large wave of violence across southern Lebanon on Monday.

According to reports from local media, drones dropped explosives on the Ali al-Taher heights. Artillery batteries pounded Mansouri, Shihin, and Wadi al-Salouqi. ▶ Page 5

Iran, Kazakhstan advance agricultural ties with focus on extraterritorial cultivation

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN – Iran and Kazakhstan have taken concrete steps to deepen agricultural cooperation, with both sides emphasizing extraterritorial cultivation, joint investment, and expanded trade in agricultural products during a high-level meeting on the sidelines of the seventh meeting of the Eurasian Economic Union's Agricultural Policy Council in Almaty. ▶ Page 4



President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) in Tehran and Donald Trump in Paris signing MoU, June 17, 2026

60 Days After the MoU: Why Has Peace Remained Elusive, and What Comes Next?

A senior Iranian official told Reuters on Monday that Iran has decided to shift its policy from defensive to “fully offensive” due to the deadlock in efforts to agree a permanent end to its war with the US.

TEHRAN — A memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between Iran and the United States sixty days ago expired on Monday amid Washington's repeated and systematic violations.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and US President Donald Trump signed the 14-point MoU on June 17, with the primary goal of paving the ground to permanently end the joint US-Israeli war launched on Iran on February 28.

Leaving Iran's nuclear program to be dealt with in subsequent negotiations, the agreement stipulated an immediate end to military operations across all fronts, including Israeli attacks on Lebanon. In the first paragraph of the 14-point agreement, the United States explicitly committed that “The United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran and their allies in the current war are signing this MoU to declare

the immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon.” Furthermore, the deal required an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

It also allowed commercial vessels to transit “with no charge” for 60 days under Tehran's coordination, and reaffirmed that it would not seek nuclear weapons while agreeing to negotiate enrichment details in a final deal backed by the UN Security Council within a maximum 60-day period—extendable by mutual consent—the US promised major obligations.

Specifically, Washington was required to end its naval blockade within 30 days, remove its military forces from near Iran once the final deal was reached,

terminate all sanctions against Iran, issue waivers for Iranian oil exports, allow Tehran immediate access to its frozen assets, and begin work on a reconstruction and development package for Iran worth at least \$300 billion.

However, despite Iran's complete adherence to its diplomatic undertakings, Washington repeatedly violated the agreement through continued military and political support for Israeli aggression. Israel persistently breached the agreement with active US backing, while the US failed on every single promise, refusing to release frozen Iranian assets, lift sanctions, provide oil waivers, remove its naval blockade, or enforce an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. In fact, Trump publicly scoffed at the very idea of paying Iran for reconstruction. ▶ Page 3

Iran rules out talks on extension of Islamabad MoU

TEHRAN – In a weekly press briefing on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei addressed multiple critical issues, firmly ruling out any negotiations on extending the 60 days stipulated in the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) while emphasizing that the United States has violated the agreement from its inception.

Baqaei also reiterated Iran's demand for Qatar to clarify the status of three missing fighter pilots, dismissed reports of back-channel talks between Washington and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as “fabricated,” and asserted that regional states have concluded the United States is an unreliable security partner. ▶ Page 3

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Recent declarations from Washington regarding the scaling down of joint military drills with South Korea—enacted directly in the wake of Seoul's steadfast refusal to participate in the conflict—underscore the acute isolation facing the White House. ▶ Page 2

Tehran municipality official highlights restoration of war-damaged heritage sites

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Ali Shamsipour, head of the Urban Research and Planning Center of Tehran Municipality, has highlighted plans and ongoing efforts to restore heritage sites damaged during the recent war involving the United States and the Israeli regime.

He noted that studies conducted by the center on historical buildings damaged during wars and crises have focused on ways to preserve and restore the sites while also identifying new functions for them.

“The restoration of historical buildings damaged during wars and crises should not erase all traces of the events that affected them,” Shamsipour, said during a press conference on Sunday.

He said documenting the effects of war on historic buildings was an important part of the studies, stressing that restoration should not remove every sign of a historic event. ▶ Page 6

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Iranian Army spokesman warns US against ‘miscalculation’ as MoU expires



IRGC deputy chief: Iran has downed over 200 enemy aircraft since war began



TEHRAN — Iran successfully defeated its adversaries while spending only a fraction of the resources allocated by its opponents on weapons and military operations, a senior commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) stated.

“The system based on Velayat-e Faqih (Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist) was able to manage a war at one-hundredth of the enemy’s expenditure, ultimately securing victory for the fighters of Islam,” IRGC Deputy Commander-in-Chief Major General Mostafa Izadi said on Monday during a ceremony dedicated to honoring journalists. His remarks referenced the 39-day unprovoked conflict involving the United States and Israel that initially commenced on February 28.

General Izadi lauded reporters as the “commanders of the cognitive war” who hold a pivotal position on the battlefield. He emphasized that hostile forces suffered defeat in this domain because those active in soft warfare consistently neutralized adversary plans.

The senior commander noted that hostile actors actively attempted to destabilize the Islamic establishment and empower counter-revolutionary factions, asserting, “We stood firmly against this conspiracy.” Despite numerous concerted efforts to weaken the nation, Iran not only withstood the pressure but emerged more resilient than before, he added.

Highlighting the capabilities of Iran’s armed forces during the US-Israel-imposed conflict, General Izadi reported that more than 200 enemy aircraft were brought down.

Furthermore, he praised the steadfast-

Iran war drains Western missile defenses, Telegraph reports

TEHRAN- A report by The Telegraph reveals that the months-long US war with Iran has depleted vital Western missile defense arsenals to alarming levels, sounding a global security warning for allies worldwide.

Advanced US defense systems such as Patriot and THAAD, built up over years of production and stockpiling, have been severely drained within just a few months of conflict with Iran, according to The Telegraph. Estimates by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) indicate that the United States has expended approximately two-thirds of its Patriot missile inventory and nearly 40 percent of its total THAAD arsenal during the war. Stockpiles of Patriot missiles are reported to have dropped from roughly 2,330 to 800 units, while THAAD interceptors have declined from 452 to approximately 250.

Global ramifications of missile shortages

The repercussions of this large-scale depletion extend far beyond US borders. Nineteen countries—including Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Japan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt—operate Patriot systems, nearly all of which depend on the US production and supply chain. Consequently, any shortage in the United States translates into a global crisis.

Analysts cited by The Telegraph emphasize that this crisis stems from a profound

ness of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah against six opposing Israeli army divisions, describing it as a critically important and valuable achievement.

General Izadi underscored the effectiveness of Iran’s governance in confronting its adversaries, pointing out that the world’s leading military power, alongside regional allies and NATO-backed support, entered the conflict against Iran, yet the nation endured and maintained its resolve.

He attributed this success to Iran’s “strategic patience and stable governance,” which ultimately guided the country to victory. While adversaries continue attempts to isolate Iran through economic pressure and naval blockades, Izadi maintained that “it is the enemy itself that is on the path to collapse.”

The United States and Israel launched their second war of aggression against Iran on February 28, marked by the assassination of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, alongside several high-ranking military commanders.

In retaliation, Iranian armed forces launched 100 waves of counterattacks over 39 days, inflicting significant damage on US and Israeli military assets.

Following the April 8 ceasefire, Washington and Tehran announced a Pakistani-mediated memorandum of understanding (MoU) on June 17 designed to halt military operations across multiple fronts—including Lebanon—reopen the Strait of Hormuz, and lift the naval blockade on Iran. However, subsequent violations of the agreement by Washington prompted a decisive response from Tehran.

strategic shift in the global balance of power. Russia, Iran, China, and North Korea are simultaneously ramping up their ballistic missile production. Estimates suggest that China possesses 3,000 ballistic missiles, while Russia produces approximately 120 such missiles monthly—nearly double the annual production rate of Patriot missiles in the United States.

Direct impact on Ukraine and regional allies

The consequences of this shortfall are particularly evident in Ukraine, which faces widespread Russian missile attacks. According to The Telegraph, Ukraine—which had been receiving roughly 130 Patriot missiles annually from the US—now confronts a sharp reduction in assistance. During the first ten days of August 2026 alone, Russia launched nearly 70 ballistic missiles toward Ukraine, of which only a single projectile was intercepted.

Beyond Ukraine, Persian Gulf states and other US allies have placed substantial orders to replenish their own depleted stockpiles, further compounding pressure on manufacturers. The Telegraph concludes that Washington now faces a strategic gap that will not only undermine its own defensive capabilities but also erode its bargaining power and the confidence of its allies on the global stage.

Iranian Army spokesman warns US against ‘miscalculation’ as MoU expires

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN — Brigadier General Mohammad Akrami-Nia, spokesman for Iran’s Army, has warned the United States against any miscalculations, stressing that Iranian armed forces are more prepared than ever to respond to any new act of aggression.

“We hope that the enemy (the US) does not make another miscalculation and does not once again fall under the influence of the Zionists. However, if this miscalculation occurs, I must state that our readiness is far, far greater than in the past,” General Akrami-Nia made the comments in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times as he visited the English daily newspaper’s office with an accompanying delegation on Monday.

The warning comes as a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at ending fighting between the US and Iran expired on Monday. Iran says it has not decided to restart talks with the US.

The MoU was signed on June 17 by US President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. It followed an earlier truce deal designed to bring an end to the joint US and Israeli aggression on Iran that initially began on February 28. The US repeatedly violated its commitments by launching attacks on Iran.

Following Iran’s robust military response against Israel and US bases in the region, which prompted Trump to end the war after 39 days, subsequent retaliatory operations by Iran against American bases during the post-ceasefire period also compelled the US army to halt its strikes.

Further in his remarks, General Akrami-Nia said the US may resume attacks on Iran based on its previous betrayal of diplomacy.

“The possibility of another act of aggression certainly exists, because even when we were engaged in negotiations with the Americans, they bombed the negotiating table and stabbed



diplomacy and negotiation in the back. This dark record of the Americans is evident before the eyes of the entire world,” he said.

Before the February 28 aggression, Iran and the US were engaged in talks when Trump ordered the war. Even before the 12-day war in June last year, Tehran and Washington were holding talks when Israel launched a war on Iran, and later the US joined it.

Detailing how the Iranian armed forces utilized the ceasefire after the latest war, the Army spokesman said: “We did not waste the moments and days of the ceasefire. We tried to make use of every single moment during the ceasefire to optimize and rebuild our equipment, to procure and purchase new equipment that has now entered the combat organization of the army forces, and to build and take delivery of new equipment in the defense industry.”

Highlighting the boost in military morale and tactical experience, General Akrami-Nia noted: “Spiritual and morale preparations have also, thank God, improved, backed by the experiences of the past two wars. The double self-confidence clearly visible today among the

Air Force fighters and our dear comrades in the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran are all the assets and achievements of this war as well as the twelve-day war.”

Iranian missing pilots

Over the past few days, Qatar has been openly accused of covering up the fate of Iranian pilots who carried out an operation against a US base in the country in the early days of the US-Israeli aggression on February 28.

Last week, Brigadier General Mohammad Bagherzadeh, from the Iranian Armed Forces General Staff, said three Iranian pilots were captured alive by Qatari forces after their Su-24 fighter jets went down during retaliatory strikes against the US base. Later, he called on Qatari authorities to grant access to a specialized delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF) to investigate the status of the three Iranian fighter pilots after Qatar denied any knowledge.

According to the Iranian Army, a four-man Iranian strike team executed a successful operation against the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar in early March, which houses American troops and

military equipment. Two Su-24 tactical bombers of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force that carried out the operation were hit by enemy air fire. Of the four crew members, pilot Majid Kazemi was martyred during the incident.

Regarding the fate of the three other pilots, the Army spokesman called on Qatar to pursue the case more seriously.

He said despite the follow-ups conducted by the Army and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Qatari side has yet to clarify the status of these three pilots. “We have warned several times that Qatar must handle this matter responsibly and act with greater seriousness in clarifying the situation of these pilots, but to this day, their status remains unknown.”

He noted that the Qataris claim that they have no information regarding the pilots’ status, but there remains a possibility that they are still alive, while accusing the US of obstructionism in this regard. “Certainly, given the history of hostility and animosity that the Americans have harbored and continue to harbor toward the Iranian nation, they could also play a destructive and negative role in this matter.”

Trump seeking scapegoats after failed military gamble on Iran

TEHRAN - The unfolding geopolitical fallout from the unprovoked US-Israeli military aggression orchestrated against the Islamic Republic of Iran has exposed profound, irreparable fractures within Washington’s network of international alliances, revealing a unilateral intervention bogged down in strategic failure and desperate miscalculations.

Recent declarations from Washington regarding the scaling down of joint military drills with South Korea—enacted directly in the wake of Seoul’s steadfast refusal to participate in the conflict—underscore the acute isolation facing the White House. Far from the swift, decisive intervention initially envisioned by the architects of the campaign, the aggression has devolved into a protracted entanglement that mirrors the textbook hallmarks of a classic forever war, leaving leadership scrambling for offramps, pointing fingers, and searching desperately for scapegoats.

Prominent international relations scholars, including Professor Robert Kelly of Pusan National University, have highlighted the transparent mechanics behind these developments in statements to Al Jazeera. Commenting on the situation to the Doha-based news network, Kelly noted that Trump’s decision to scale back planned military



drills with South Korea is directly linked to his failure to win the war on Iran. Describing the intervention, Kelly stated that “Trump started that war” and expected it to go pretty quickly, anticipating a kind of “drive-by-conflict” similar to previous short-lived maneuvers, only for it to blow up into a massive, slow-motion, tit-for-tat spiral.

Furthermore, Kelly emphasized that the conflict is now beginning to look like what Americans call a “forever war,” with Trump “stuck” and searching for someone to blame. Pointing out how US allies have consistently served as convenient instruments for that purpose, Kelly remarked that Trump has attacked NATO similarly in the past. Highlighting Seoul’s position, Kelly observed that the South Kore-

ans did not really participate in the war and were not consulted, illustrating the immense struggle leadership faces in trying to extract itself from the quagmire.

Stuck in an escalating spiral of unintended consequences, the US administration has increasingly turned to its traditional playbook of coercion, threats, and recrimination against international partners who decline to endorse unilateral adventures. South Korea’s principled choice to remain outside a conflict that threatens regional peace, energy supplies, and global economic stability has been met with retaliatory administrative maneuvers under the flimsy guise of strategic realignment. This pattern of diplomatic friction is hardly novel; past friction with European allies within the North Atlantic Treaty Organiza-

tion followed a nearly identical trajectory whenever sovereign nations balked at joining ill-conceived foreign campaigns. By demanding uncritical alignment and punishing non-compliance, Washington demonstrates a fundamental inability to accept multilateral autonomy or respect the legitimate security priorities of its sovereign allies.

The intense friction over joint military exercises highlights an even deeper structural crisis regarding alliance management and regional diplomacy. South Korea, situated in an extraordinarily delicate security environment in East Asia, has zero incentive to embroil itself in a distant, resource-draining conflict in West Asia that directly undermines international law, regional peace, and global stability. Seoul’s refusal to participate in the so-called denuclearization campaign—which serves as a thin diplomatic euphemism for aggressive economic warfare and military pressure against Tehran—reflects a growing global consensus rejecting unilateral militarism and hegemony. Deprived of genuine multilateral support and trapped by the escalating costs of its own policy failures, the US administration continues to hunt for external scapegoats to mask the fundamental miscalculations that plunged the entire region into crisis.

60 days after the MoU: Why has peace remained elusive, and what comes next?

From Page 1 ▶ The betrayal culminated on July 7 when Trump unilaterally declared that the agreement was “over,” prompting the US to resume launching military attacks against Iran that directly targeted civilian infrastructure and killed dozens of innocent people. In response to these egregious violations, Iranian officials stated that because the US had “violated and suspended” all of its commitments, Tehran had “likewise suspended commitments” under the MoU.

Rather than engaging in good-faith diplomacy, Trump had signed the MoU primarily to lower surging oil prices and defuse widespread domestic criticism surrounding his notorious war on Iran. It is widely understood that Trump launched the war on February 28 based on false assurances from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Mossad spy agency, who promised that military action would quickly lead to the collapse of the Islamic Republic and destroy Iran's military capabilities. None of this occurred. Instead, the war severely exposed the vulnerability of the US military, demonstrated its complete failure to protect its regional allies, and highlighted Iran's undeniable military strength. While the February 28 war had been temporarily paused by a Pakistani-mediated ceasefire on April 8—which Trump was prompted to announce following Iran's powerful



retaliatory strikes against Israel and American military bases in the region—Washington failed to learn from its miscalculations and instead intensified its hostile rhetoric.

To defend its sovereignty and counter US bad faith, Iran maintained firm strategic control over the Strait of Hormuz, taking a heavy toll on the United States. Iran's decisive measures led to rising fuel costs and a severe cost-of-living crisis across the US, driving Trump's public popularity to a record low and posing a serious risk to the Republican camp ahead of upcoming US mid-term congressional elections.

Criticism against Trump's failed military strategy toward Iran has grown rapidly, with American lawmakers repeatedly condemning the continuation of the war due to its immense fi-

nancial and material toll on the US. Prolonged combat has depleted US stocks of interceptor missiles, severely drained American strategic oil reserves, and forced key military hardware, including aircraft carrier strike groups, to remain deployed at sea months longer than planned, leaving Washington with few military options left to try.

Despite having virtually no military options left, Trump demanded during an interview with Fox News on Monday that Iran “put up the white flag of surrender” in the US-Israeli war. American officials speaking to US media, along with international analysts, recognize that Trump's belligerent threats are merely aimed at creating a fabricated sense of victory over Iran to divert attention from his failed war, as he desperately seeks an off-ramp to extricate the US from the quagmire of war with

Iran. Iran had entered talks with the US to translate its military success on the battlefield into political gains at the negotiation table. However, Trump sought only to ease domestic political pressure, control rising energy prices, and impose a mindset of bullying and coercion, which remains the primary stumbling block preventing the success of the MoU. Iran has made it clear that while it remains willing to talk, it will never succumb to American bullying.

Faced with a total deadlock in diplomatic efforts to agree on a permanent end to the war, Iran has officially shifted its strategic posture. A senior Iranian official told Reuters on Monday that Iran has decided to shift its policy from a defensive posture to a “fully offensive” one. The official stated that “Iranian entities must be prepared to escalate tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and wider region, as Iran will be ready to make decisions and take action on difficult decisions.” The official added that Tehran would conduct a “timely and precise” military attack to break the US naval blockade if diplomacy fails. Having set a strict deadline of a few weeks for Washington to fully implement all provisions of the MoU as a precondition for further talks, Iran stands fully prepared to leverage its strategic dominance to defeat foreign coercion and defend its national rights.

asures are necessary to defend the homeland, ensure security, and neutralize enemy threats, adding that strategic surprise operations may be undertaken when required.

In his concluding remarks, the IRGC deputy political chief addressed the outbreak of war on June 13, 2025, initiated by the enemy, followed by the Zionist regime's entry into a 12-day conflict. He cautioned against any misperception that the Zionist regime possesses the capability to confront Iran, emphasizing that even during the 12-day war, the regime only entered the fray with US backing—fundamentally lacking the capacity for war with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

during their tenure and represented the best choices within the Armed Forces.

The IRGC deputy political chief further emphasized that the appointment decrees issued by the Leader were meticulously tailored to current exigencies. He highlighted key terms such as “maximum deterrence,” “intelligence network,” “popular mobilization,” and “every Iranian a Basiji,” noting that these concepts reflect transformative approaches and the updating of the country's defense doctrine.

Javani asserted that the Armed Forces stand fully prepared to take whatever mea-

LATEST NEWS

■ Iranian diplomat: Islamabad MoU in ‘coma,’ revival up to US

A senior Iranian diplomat has stated that the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding is not dead but in a “coma,” from which it could be revived if Washington changes its approach. Abbas Baqerpour, director general of Legal Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, said Tehran is ready for revival provided the US abandons its “habit of breaching commitments.” He added that Iran has proven its readiness to defend itself decisively if this path yields no results.

■ IRGC vows decisive response to any threat or aggression

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps has vowed to use all capabilities to defend Iran's territorial integrity, independence, and national interests, promising a decisive response to any threat or act of aggression. In a statement marking the anniversary of Iranian POWs' return from the Iran-Iraq war, the IRGC emphasized that inspired by the POWs' resilience and under the Leader's guidance, elite forces stand fully prepared alongside other Armed Forces to safeguard the Islamic Revolution.

■ Enemies seek to destabilize Iran through economic, social pressure: VP

Iranian Vice President Mohammad-Reza Aref has warned that enemies aim to weaken national unity through economic pressure and social divisions following military defeats. He emphasized that the government has prioritized enhancing national resilience. Aref stressed that media must counter psychological warfare and present the “first narrative,” adding that gradual economic reforms, including subsidies and gasoline prices, should be implemented with expert guidance and effective public communication.

■ Velayati: US families paying price of leaders' ‘gamble’

Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior adviser to the Leader, has stated that US families are now paying the price of Washington's “gamble” against

Iran. In a post on X, he contrasted US officials' threats of sanctions and naval blockades with concerns raised by a US senator over rising living costs. “Regional equations have changed,” Velayati wrote, “and today the American family is paying in cash for the gamble of its leaders.”

■ Iran marks 36th anniversary of POWs' return from Iraq

Monday marks the 36th anniversary of the beginning of the multi-stage repatriation of tens of thousands of Iranian captives held by Iraq's Baath regime. On August 17, 1990, 969 Iranian captives were exchanged for 1,340 Iraqi captives. By September 15 of that year, 37,532 Iranian captives had been released and returned to Iran in several stages, nearly two years after the war ended following UN Security Council Resolution 598.

■ Tehran announces programs marking 40th day of martyred leader's burial

Tehran Province's Islamic Propagation Coordination Council has announced programs to mark the 40th day since the burial of the martyred Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. Commemorative ceremonies will be held on Tuesday at Imam Khomeini Grand Mosalla, and on Thursday across all martyrs' cemeteries, mosques, and shrines. Programs include decorating urban areas, broadcasting Surah Al-Fath from minarets, and delivering speeches on the Leader's legacy before Friday prayers.

■ Iran offers aid to Indonesia after deadly earthquake

President Masoud Pezeshkian has expressed condolences to Indonesia following a devastating earthquake and announced Tehran's readiness to dispatch humanitarian aid. In a message to President Prabowo Subianto, Pezeshkian conveyed sympathy over the loss of life and injuries, offering Iran's full preparedness to provide relief and medical assistance. He expressed hope for the swift restoration of stability to the affected regions.

■ Iran army: Loyalty to homeland, obedience to Velayat-e Faqih keys to overcoming all impasses

The Islamic Republic of Iran Army has emphasized that loyalty to the homeland and obedience to Velayat-e Faqih are the keys to overcoming all impasses. In a statement marking the anniversary of POWs' return, the Army said it has attained a level of strength at which any threat will be rendered ineffective against the defensive barrier of faith and expertise.

■ Iran, Iraq move to remove banking barriers

Senior Iranian and Iraqi officials have discussed ways to remove banking obstacles and facilitate access to Iranian foreign-exchange resources held in Iraq. Central Bank Governor Abdolnasser Hemmati met with his Iraqi counterpart and Finance Minister in Baghdad, stressing the need for easier banking procedures for Iranian traders. Both sides agreed to continue consultations and expand economic cooperation.

■ IRGC spokesman denies Trump's claim of backchannel talks

IRGC Spokesman Brigadier General Hossein Mohebbi has denied US President Donald Trump's claim of backchannel talks with IRGC officials, calling it a delusion stemming from US failure in the war. Mohebbi stated that there are no talks whatsoever between IRGC and US officials, describing Trump's claims as “merely fantasies caused by nightmares resulting from defeat and desperation.”

■ Iranian, Chinese deputy FMs meet in Beijing

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi met with Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Miao Deyu in Beijing to discuss bilateral, regional, and international issues. Gharibabadi highlighted the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations, emphasizing mutual support at critical historical junctures. The officials exchanged views on regional peace, the Strait of Hormuz situation, and cooperation within the UN and Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Iran rules out talks on extension of Islamabad MoU

TEHRAN – In a weekly press briefing on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei addressed multiple critical issues, firmly ruling out any negotiations on extending the 60 days stipulated in the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) while emphasizing that the United States has violated the agreement from its inception.

Baqaei also reiterated Iran's demand for Qatar to clarify the status of three missing fighter pilots, dismissed reports of back-channel talks between Washington and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as “fabricated,” and asserted that regional states have concluded the United States is an unreliable security partner.

No extension of Islamabad MoU

Addressing the most pressing issue of the briefing, Baqaei categorically rejected any discussion on extending the 60-day time-frame referenced in the Islamabad memorandum. He clarified that the document itself contains no explicit clause establishing a 60-day deadline; rather, it envisioned a 60-day dialogue period covering sanctions removal and the nuclear file, with provisions for extension if no agreement materialized.

“Negotiations never began because the United States committed gross and widespread breaches of the memorandum just weeks after its signing on June 18,” Baqaei stated. “Consequently, the 60-day issue is entirely irrelevant.”

The spokesman emphasized that Iran formulates its policies based on national interests and strategic assessments, not under external pressure or artificial deadlines. “Iran is not a party that adjusts its policies under pressure and ultimatums,” he asserted, stressing that the Islamic Republic has repeatedly demonstrated its refusal to succumb to coercive tactics.

Baqaei noted that Iran's Armed Forces remain in a state of full vigilance, closely monitoring all movements. He added that strengthening ties with regional neighbors remains an ongoing priority for Tehran's foreign policy.

US war objectives: A study in confusion

Responding to claims that Washington had shifted its priorities regarding Iran, Baqaei characterized the reported changes as evidence of persistent confusion within the US administration. He maintained that the war of aggression against Iran had no legitimate basis, serving only to advance the ambitions of “an occupying regime in the region.”

Baqaei recalled that Washington initially justified military action by citing an imminent threat from Iran—a claim the Pentagon itself subsequently rejected. “They have trapped themselves in a quagmire,” he observed. “To justify their failures, they are forced to change their objectives.”

He noted that US concerns have now pivoted to the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway that was open before the aggression. “The best course for the United States is to extricate itself as soon as possible before becoming more deeply entangled,” Baqaei advised. “Acknowledging a mistake could pave the way for a correct decision, though we doubt American officials possess such courage.”

Regional states reject US as a reliable partner

Underscoring a ‘significant strategic development,’ Baqaei added: regional countries have concluded that the United States is an “unreliable and untrustworthy partner.” He cited the two recent US-Israeli wars against Iran as a catalyst for this realization.

“The countries of the region have come to understand that US military presence has been a burden rather than a security factor,” Baqaei stated. “This has prompted many to reconsider their reliance on outside powers and move toward greater self-reliance.”

He noted that Iran had long invited regional states to strengthen mutual trust and develop indigenous security mechanisms. “These two factors—US unreliability and the demonstrated ineffectiveness of foreign military presence—have brought regional countries to the very conclusion we have advocated for years,” he said.

Fate of missing Iranian pilots

Baqaei reiterated Iran's demand for Qatar



to clarify the status of three Iranian fighter pilots who went missing during operations responding to US-Israeli attacks. He affirmed that the Islamic Republic would pursue their fate through all available bilateral, multilateral, and legal mechanisms. “As long as their status remains unclarified, they are presumed to have been captured alive,” Baqaei stated.

He detailed the Foreign Ministry's early actions, noting that correspondence with the International Committee of the Red Cross and diplomatic contacts through Iranian and Qatari embassies were initiated from the very first days of the war.

Dismissal of backchannel talks reports

Baqaei firmly rejected media reports alleging secret backchannel negotiations between the United States and IRGC leadership through officials in Iraq's Kurdistan Region. He described the reports as “totally fabricated” and part of psychological warfare aimed at creating division among Iran's decision-making bodies.

“News of a secret meeting between Iran and the US in Erbil is entirely baseless,” Baqaei declared. “Such reports reflect desperation and are designed to sow discord.”

He emphasized that Iran's various institutions have demonstrated unprecedented cohesion and solidarity regarding war and peace issues over the past six months. “The negotiating team enjoys the trust of all system institutions, including defense sectors,” Baqaei said, stressing that decision-making remains an institution-based process incorporating all relevant considerations.

Iran-Pakistan relations and mediation efforts

Addressing Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Raza Naqvi's recent Tehran visit, Baqaei dismissed speculation about “special messages” from Pakistani leaders.

Baqaei confirmed that Pakistan continues to seek a mediating role in Iran-US issues, given its involvement in shaping the Islamabad memorandum. However, he criticized repeated US breaches of commitments, noting that such actions have undermined mediation efforts.

The spokesman clarified that while European countries have expressed readiness to offer good offices, no new mediator has emerged in Iran-US relations. “The fundamental problem lies not in mediation but in Washington's approach, its miscalculations, and its insistence on failed policies,” he stressed.

European human rights criticism rejected

Baqaei rejected recent European statements concerning human rights in Iran, asserting that European countries lack the moral standing to lecture Iran on the issue. He criticized European inaction regarding Palestine and their positions toward US-Israeli aggressions against Iran, characterizing such statements as reflecting double standards.

Addressing a dispute involving two French embassy staff members, Baqaei confirmed that their reported involvement in activities supporting Iranian civil society constituted a violation of diplomatic norms and the Vienna Convention. The French ambassador was summoned, and Iran formally protested. The two individuals subsequently left Iran and will not be permitted to return, according to Baqaei.

Iran urges agricultural cooperation among EAEU member states

TEHRAN- Iran's Deputy Minister of Agriculture emphasized the development of agricultural cooperation, expansion of agricultural trade, and utilization of the capacities of the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union.

According to IRNA report from the Ministry of Agriculture, Akbar Fathi, at the seventh meeting of the Agricultural Policy Council of the Eurasian Economic Union held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, while pointing to the importance of developing regional cooperation in the agricultural sector, deemed it necessary to strengthen economic, trade, and investment relations between Iran and the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union.

He referred to Iran's capacities in various fields of agriculture, food industries, greenhouse products, machinery, processing industries, and halal food production, and stated: The development of agricultural cooperation among the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union can pave the way for increasing trade exchanges, developing joint investments, and creating new markets for agricultural products.

The Deputy for Planning and Economy of the Ministry of Agriculture described the expansion of agricultural trade and facilitation of exchanges among the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union as important axes of future cooperation and added: In this regard, identifying market capacities of member states, removing trade barriers, strengthening communication between private sectors, and establishing effective mechanisms to increase exports and imports of agricultural products are essential.

He also declared the optimal use of production factors and resources, especially lands, expansion of processing and complementary industries, enhancement of added value, reduction of losses, and completion of agricultural and food value chains as opportunities for agro-industries, and said: Providing legal frameworks, facilitating financing, and offering scientific, technical, and commercial consultations can help expand the activities of private agro-industries and improve their

profitability.

Fathi also, pointing to the capacity of the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union in the fields of natural resources, agricultural lands, and production, emphasized the necessity of targeted use of extraterritorial cultivation capacity and joint investment.

He added: Implementing joint production and agricultural projects in countries with capacity can, while helping to ensure sustainable supply of products and needed inputs, provide the ground for more active presence of the private sector and development of economic cooperation among regional countries.

The Deputy for Planning and Economy of the Ministry of Agriculture, in another part of his remarks, deemed it necessary to strengthen agricultural diplomacy and continue specialized dialogues among regional countries to achieve common goals, and stated: Iran is ready to utilize existing capacities to develop bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector and cooperate with member states of the Eurasian Economic Union in the path of increasing trade, investment, technology transfer, and development of agricultural value chains.

He referred to halal food production in Iran and added: The halal brand guarantees the health and quality of food; all agricultural and food products in Iran are produced and supplied in halal form, which fortunately, due to health assurance, its demand in global markets is increasing.

Fathi continued: Recognition of halal food within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union provides an opportunity for access to the population of member states as well as access to global markets, especially Southeast Asia and West Asia.

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, in conclusion, emphasized the importance of continuing specialized meetings, following up on agreements, and transforming existing capacities into operational and economic projects, and said: The development of agricultural cooperation can play an effective role in deepening economic relations and securing common interests of regional countries.

Iran, Armenia explore livestock imports, border investment in agricultural talks

TEHRAN- Iran's Deputy Minister of Planning and Economy of the Ministry of Agriculture, in a meeting with the Minister of Economy of the Republic of Armenia, emphasized the development of bilateral cooperation in the import of light livestock and utilization of Armenia's pasture capacities.

According to Mehr News Agency, Akbar Fathi, Deputy Minister of Planning and Economy of Iran's Ministry of Agriculture, on the sidelines of the seventh meeting of the Agricultural Policy Council of the Eurasian Economic Union in Almaty, Kazakhstan, met and held talks with Gevorg Papoyan, Minister of Economy of the Republic of Armenia, regarding ways to develop economic and agricultural cooperation between the two countries.

In this meeting, existing capacities for expanding bilateral cooperation in the agricultural and livestock sectors were reviewed, and both sides emphasized the necessity of utilizing mutual capacities to increase economic interactions, develop product trade, and joint investment.

One of the main axes of this meeting was examining the capacity for importing light livestock from the Republic of Armenia. In this regard, existing capacities for developing cooperation in the livestock sector, supplying needed livestock, and establishing appropriate mechanisms to facilitate exchanges were reviewed, and the necessity of pursuing the matter through specialized channels while observing health and veterinary standards and requirements was emphasized.

Also in this meeting, the issue of joint investments in border areas, especially capacities available at zero-border points, was considered.

Both sides emphasized identifying economic and agricultural capacities of border areas and preparing the ground for the presence of the private sector of the two countries to implement joint projects — a matter that can lead to the development of production activities, increased exchanges, and strengthening of eco-



nomtic ties between the border regions of the two countries.

Development of cooperation in the field of greenhouse cultivation was another axis of the negotiations. In this framework, existing capacities for investment and development of greenhouse units and utilization of the knowledge and experience of the two countries in this sector were reviewed.

Also, the utilization of the pasture capacity of the Republic of Armenia for developing cooperation related to livestock and animal products was discussed and exchanged, and the necessity of expert examination of existing capacities and formulation of executive mechanisms for economic and sustainable utilization of these capacities was emphasized.

At the end of this meeting, both sides emphasized the continuation of consultations and follow-up on the discussed issues with the aim of developing agricultural trade, facilitating livestock cooperation, attracting joint investment, developing greenhouses, and activating the capacities of border areas.

This meeting was held on the sidelines of the seventh meeting of the Agricultural Policy Council of the Eurasian Economic Union in Almaty, in line with the development of agricultural diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, strengthening economic relations with member states of the Eurasian Economic Union, and utilizing joint capacities for sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

Iran, Kazakhstan advance agricultural ties with focus on extraterritorial cultivation

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN – Iran and Kazakhstan have taken concrete steps to deepen agricultural cooperation, with both sides emphasizing extraterritorial cultivation, joint investment, and expanded trade in agricultural products during a high-level meeting on the sidelines of the seventh meeting of the Eurasian Economic Union's Agricultural Policy Council in Almaty.

The recent meeting between the Iranian Ministry of Agriculture delegation and their Kazakh counterparts comes as bilateral agricultural trade has surged, with Kazakhstan reporting a 55.8 percent increase in agrifood trade with Iran in 2025, accounting for 79 percent of total bilateral trade. Kazakh agricultural exports to Iran rose by an impressive 97 percent during the same period.

Kazakh Agriculture Minister Aidarbek Saparov described Iran as “one of the most promising markets for expanding Kazakhstan's agrifood exports,” emphasizing his country's commitment to stable supply volumes and expanded product range.

Iranian Deputy Agriculture Minister Akbar Fathi, leading the Iranian delegation, confirmed Tehran's interest in increasing imports of Kazakh agrifood products and expanding practical cooperation in priority areas.

Extraterritorial cultivation takes center stage

A key focus of the discussions was extraterritorial cultivation, with both sides emphasizing Kazakhstan's fertile lands and suitable rainfall as ideal for producing grains, oilseeds, and corn.

This aligns with Iran's broader strategy to secure food supplies through overseas farming. Under the Seventh National Development Plan (2023-2027), Iran has targeted two million hectares of extraterritorial cultivation to ensure food security, with Kazakhstan identified as a priority destination. The plan calls



for approximately 400,000 hectares of extraterritorial cultivation this year alone.

Iranian officials have previously described Kazakhstan as one of Iran's top priorities for extraterritorial cultivation, citing the country's abundant arable land and favorable climatic conditions. The approach is designed to address Iran's limited water and soil resources, climate change challenges, and growing population pressures.

The discussions also covered expanding exports of Iranian fruits, dried fruits, and greenhouse products to Kazakhstan, creating new market opportunities for Iranian agricultural producers. Fathi emphasized that developing agricultural cooperation among EAEU member states could pave the way for increasing trade exchanges, developing joint investments, and creating new markets for agricultural products.

Private sector momentum and trade targets

The Almaty meeting follows significant bilateral momentum established during Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's December 2025 visit to Kazakhstan. During that visit, the two countries signed 14 bilateral agreements covering transportation, transit, logistics, cultural exchanges, and healthcare, alongside a joint statement committing to deeper collaboration.

A roadmap aiming to boost bilateral trade to \$3 billion was prepared during the presidential visit, with

both sides emphasizing mobilization of private sector capacities. Current bilateral trade stands at approximately \$350-430 million, with significant growth potential identified across multiple sectors.

The private sector has responded positively. During the December 2025 visit, Iranian and Kazakh private-sector representatives signed nine cooperation agreements, including three memorandums of understanding between chambers of commerce and six company-level deals spanning agriculture, mining, copper production, and food processing. One of the agreements is valued at more than \$1 billion.

Speaking at the Iran-Kazakhstan business conference in Astana, President Pezeshkian described Kazakhstan as a “strategic partner” and emphasized Iran's commitment to building a sustainable network of cooperation and mutual investment between private sectors of both nations.

Transport corridors and logistics infrastructure

Beyond agriculture, both sides are working to strengthen transport and logistics links that underpin trade expansion. The International North–South Transit Corridor (INSTC) has emerged as a critical priority, with freight volume along the corridor rising 12 percent to 3.5 million tons in 2025, while rail freight between the two countries grew by 69 percent.

In June 2026 talks, Kazakhstan's Deputy Prime Minister Serik Zhu-

mangarin proposed developing a joint roadmap for modernizing transport infrastructure to increase the corridor's annual capacity to 20 million tons. Kazakhstan is also considering providing Iranian companies with port capacity in Aktau and Kuryk on the Caspian Sea to expand logistics operations.

The China–Kazakhstan–Turkmenistan corridor, which connects to Iran's rail network at the Incheh Borun border crossing, has been identified as another route with strong commercial potential if transport costs can be reduced and incentives expanded.

Halal food and market access

The discussions also addressed the halal food market, with Iranian officials highlighting that all agricultural and food products in Iran are produced and supplied in halal form, with global demand for halal-certified products increasing significantly. Recognition of halal food within the EAEU framework could provide access to the union's 180-million-plus consumer market, as well as markets in Southeast Asia and West Asia.

Both sides agreed to intensify practical cooperation on seed production, modern agricultural technologies, and advanced farming solutions. Investment cooperation remains another key focus, with both sides interested in joint projects that could create new production and logistics chains in the agri-food sector.

The meetings and specialized programs conducted in Almaty reflect both countries' commitment to strengthening agricultural diplomacy, developing export markets, increasing agricultural trade, and utilizing the joint capacities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Photo: Kazakh Agriculture Minister Aidarbek Saparov meets with Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister Akbar Fathi, on the sidelines of the seventh meeting of the Eurasian Economic Union's Agricultural Policy Council in Almaty.

CBI governor consults in Iraq on financial claims, technical co-op, strategic economic ties

TEHRAN- On the second day of his visit to Iraq, Abdolnaser Hemmati, the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), met and held talks with Faleh Sari, Iraq's Minister of Finance, regarding outstanding financial claims, as well as technical and economic cooperation.

During the meeting, which was reported by IRNA from the Central Bank, the two sides emphasized the strengthening of economic ties and the need to utilize the technical capabilities of Iranian contractors in Iraq's reconstruction and development projects.

With the aim of accelerating the process of pursuing Iran's financial claims, specific technical proposals were presented by the Central Bank of Iran to the Iraqi government and were reviewed.

Iran's economy minister dismisses U.S. treasury secretary's “unprecedented” threat as sign of policy frustration

TEHRAN- In response to U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's recent warning that Washington would impose measures against Iran “never seen before,” Iran's economy minister characterized the remarks not as a display of American strength but as an indication of policy frustration after repeated pressure campaigns have failed to yield their intended results.

The minister's remarks come as follows:

The U.S. Treasury Secretary's recent remarks and his attempt to portray Iran's economy as being in “unprecedented isolation” are less a sign of strength than an indication of policy frustration after failing to achieve the intended objectives against the Iranian people. When successive instruments of economic pressure have been tested without producing the expected results, repeating economic threats in increasingly sweeping terms does not alter the realities on the ground.

At the conclusion of the meeting, both parties stressed the continuation of cooperation to realize mutual interests and to uphold the dignity of the peoples of Iraq and Iran.

On the first day of his trip, which began on Sunday, August 16, Hemmati also met with Mustafa Nizar al-Ani, Iraq's Minister of Trade. This meeting, held in the context of strengthening bilateral cooperation for the development of trade, investment, and monetary relations, saw both sides emphasize the extensive capacities available for expanding economic relations.

They held consultations on operationalizing previous agreements and raising the level of banking interactions between the two neighboring countries.

The Iranian people are no strangers to such rhetoric or to repeated claims of unprecedented pressure. For years, each new round of pressure has been presented as “unprecedented.” Yet Iran has remained standing, continued to trade and produce, and maintained plans for its economic future. This does not mean that the economic impact of external pressure is being denied or minimized. The government's responsibility is to mitigate the effects of any external pressure through sound economic policymaking, structural reforms, and support for production and household livelihoods. The difference today is that Iran's economy is increasingly moving toward greater domestic capacity, a more diversified trading-partner base, stronger use of regional economic opportunities, and reduced vulnerability to external pressure.

The United States should understand that the same nation that defended its country with solidarity and resilience on the battlefield and

in the streets will not surrender to economic pressure and threats either. The government and the people are not two separate fronts in this arena. The government's responsibility is to build a stronger economy and protect people's livelihoods and businesses, while public trust and support will remain the principal source of strength for that effort.

Iran's response to economic threats is not a war of words or reciprocal threats. It is to build an economy that becomes less vulnerable to sanctions with each passing day. The greater the external pressure, the more urgent it becomes for us to pursue economic reform, strengthen domestic production, expand regional trade, develop financial and commercial channels, and make greater use of the country's internal capacities.

Another reality should not be overlooked: efforts to disrupt trade and energy flows in one of the world's most strategically important economic regions do not come

without costs to the global economy. Those who speak of Iran's “economic isolation” should also be prepared to account for the consequences of their policies for global markets, international trade and energy security.

We see the future of Iran's economy not in Washington, but in Iran's factories, Iranian businesses, the capabilities of the country's young population, economic ties with neighboring countries and trading partners, and structural reforms at home.

The Iranian people have not grown tired of hearing repeated threats; they have become accustomed to them. What matters is that, rather than becoming trapped in a war of words, we demonstrate through economic activity, reform and the strengthening of national economic capacity that the era in which such rhetoric could influence the decisions and resolve of the Iranian people has passed.

Yemeni-Saudi escalation: The core problem and key solution

From page 1 ▶ The stated aim of all these equations is to push Saudi Arabia to fulfill the obligations of peace, end the ongoing aggression and blockade, and address all outstanding issues arising from the war.

The most striking paradox is that many international and Arab positions detach Yemeni operations from their context and treat them as the starting point. At the same time, they ignore the circumstances that produced them. When the YAF responds to the blockade, escalation, or Saudi military build-ups, statements of condemnation follow, along with warnings about threats to “security,” “peace,” and “navigation,” while the underlying reasons that prompted the YAF to respond receive nothing like the same attention.

This double standard places the victim in an unfair equation. Sanaa is repeatedly asked to stop its response, while the same pressure is not brought to bear on the Saudi Kingdom which bears primary responsibility for the aggression and blockade and for the humanitarian and economic catastrophe they have produced.

The continuation of this regional and international double standard also reflects an attempt to establish a narrative in which the Yemeni response is the problem, while the causes of that response are not open to discussion, or, when they are, they are presented in a manner deeply unfair to Yemen and Yemenis.

Whenever the YAF applies pressure to secure their rights, they are falsely accused of “serving the Iranian agenda,” followed by waves of condemnation and denunciation.

Instead of addressing the roots of the problem and fulfilling the obligations of peace, Riyadh has moved toward widening the circle of escalation and forming countless alliances and coalitions that serve no purpose other than prolonging the crisis without resolving it.

Saudi Arabia continues its efforts to expand its network of “defensive” alliances, even though historically it has been in the position of attacking and waging aggression rather than



defending itself, including its agreements with Turkey and Pakistan.

From Riyadh’s perspective, these moves are an attempt to strengthen deterrence and reshape the regional balance of power. Sanaa, however, maintains that bringing additional regional parties into the conflict will neither create deterrence nor change the essence of the problem.

The YAF, it says, will not be deterred or halt their operations, drawing on the grievances of an entire people, an unprecedented mandate, and recent experience with the “Prosperity Guardian,” the “U.S.-Israeli alliance” and others against Yemen.

This means that expanding military alliances cannot deter the Yemenis or dissuade them from continuing legitimate actions aimed at restoring their just and rightful rights.

Should these alliances pave the way for escalation, they will not be able to impose a new reality that the Americans, British, and the Israeli regime failed to impose. Instead, they will push Sanaa to develop broader, more consequential, and more painful equations of response and deterrence.

Saudi Arabia should reconsider its calculations and study previous experiences, which have demonstrated that military force and pressure have failed to break the will of the Yemenis. They have also shown that increased pressure may, in turn, produce an increased response rather than surrender. Events have demon-

strated this, and it has been reaffirmed at various levels of the leadership in Sanaa.

About a month of Saudi measures included comprehensive escalation, through aggression, blockade, and military mobilization in Marib, Mokha, Hadramout, and elsewhere. This was met with Yemeni retaliatory operations targeting ships and Saudi oil facilities, as well as military build-ups in Mokha, Marib, and Hadramout.

The UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, delivered a briefing that appeared aligned with the Saudi-American narrative.

In his latest briefing to the Security Council, his focus was on the outcome, which Sanaa says is a legitimate Yemeni response to a “threat,” while failing to name or even refer to Saudi Arabia. Nor did the briefing give the causes and underlying factors the space and attention they warranted. Instead, it appeared to seek to grant the Saudi Kingdom a certificate of absolution and innocence for its aggression and blockade against Yemen, along with their consequences and the responsibilities and obligations arising from them.

As if to avoid criticism, the briefing relegated humanitarian and economic issues, foremost among them the airport, port, salaries, and roads, to the margins, presenting them as negotiable issues subject to bargaining, procrastination, and delay that could last even longer than the war itself. Yet for millions of Yemenis, these are fundamental obligations that can no longer

tolerate further stalling after four years of de-escalation.

The result is that such a briefing and such an approach do little to address the essence of the problem. Instead, they attempt to contain its consequences, condemn the Yemeni response, warn of its “risks,” and then call on the parties, without naming Saudi Arabia as a principal party, to negotiate, without establishing a clear end to the causes that produced the escalation in the first place.

It is mistaken to interpret Yemeni operations as an end in themselves or to link them to other contexts in the region and the world. The Yemeni struggle was shaped over 12 years of aggression, blockade, and extreme economic and humanitarian pressure. Sanaa ultimately became convinced that the use of force was a necessary option to compel the Saudis to fulfill the obligations of peace under the roadmap produced through Omani mediation and UN sponsorship, or to make Riyadh bear the cost of continuing its aggression and blockade.

Sanaa stresses that the operations will not end through the announcement of more alliances and threats, but by ending the causes that prompted them. If Saudi aggression and blockade end, pressure on border crossings, the economy, and resources ceases, and the outstanding humanitarian and economic issues are resolved, Sanaa says it will halt its operations against Saudi Arabia.

In practical terms, Riyadh has several options, foremost among them two: either continue its policy of pressure and military alliances, a course that has already proven its failure and futility and will raise the cost of confrontation for Saudi Arabia without achieving its objectives, or return to de-escalation understandings, fulfill the required obligations, address the roots and causes of the problem, and resolve the outstanding issues of the war.

The latter is the most realistic, most beneficial, and least costly option, because the cost of war will remain higher than the cost of peace, and experience has demonstrated this.

Israel expands assaults across Lebanon’s Jabal Amel despite US mediation claims

From page 1 ▶ Two artillery shells struck the terrain between Zebqin and Yater. A reconnaissance drone dropped a sound bomb on Haddatha, followed by intense machine gun fire directed at local residents.

Washington claims its diplomatic frameworks are working. The reality on the ground exposes a deliberate, U.S.-backed campaign to depopulate Lebanese border towns and entrench an illegal military presence.

Ground incursions and mounting casualties

Shortly after 10:00 AM, Israeli military vehicles crossed into the northern and western outskirts of Mays al-Jabal. Infantry units swept through the Wadi al-Jamal and Doubayeh areas.

They fired heavy machine guns at civilian homes, terrorizing families who refused to abandon their land. Moments later, occupation forces pushed further into Bani Hayyan.

This is a systematic military operation. Drones circled the coastal city of Tyre. A quadcopter struck a residential building in Kafra, injuring two civilians. Warplanes bombed the outskirts of Al-Qantara near the strategic Wadi al-Hujair valley just after midnight.

Lebanese civilians are paying the ultimate price. Israeli strikes on Ansar and Deir al-Zahrani on Saturday massacred 11 people, including women and children.

The Lebanese Health Ministry confirms

the death toll from Israeli aggression since March 2 has reached 4,346. Over 12,300 others have suffered injuries.

Diplomatic theater and political desperation

The U.S.-mediated June 26 framework agreement has proved entirely hollow. The seventh round of talks in Rome collapsed this month without a breakthrough.

The agreement essentially demands the disarmament of the Lebanese Resistance while permitting Israeli forces to occupy lands they seized between late 2023 and November 2024.

Hezbollah rejects the terms entirely. The movement has noted that the framework merely legitimizes foreign occupation under an American diplomatic veneer, attempting to achieve at the negotiating table what the Israeli military failed to secure on the battlefield.

Tel Aviv tried to disrupt the ceasefire understandings under the now-expired Memorandum of Understanding between Iran and the United States. Israel resumed attacks almost immediately after Washington’s signing.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces a general election on October 27. Many argue that he needs a prolonged war to appease his bloodthirsty far-right coalition partners and secure his own political survival.

Iran demands global tribunals after Ben-Gvir urges daily slaughter quota in Gaza

TEHRAN — The horrifying proposal to institutionalize the slaughter of Palestinians has ripped away any remaining diplomatic veneer shielding Israel.

During a weekend podcast hosted by Rom Braslavski, Israel’s National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir openly campaigned for a fixed assassination quota. He blatantly said that Israeli forces should execute 30 to 40 people in the Gaza Strip every single night.

His rationale deliberately ignored military objectives. “There are people there who are not worthy of life,” he declared. “They shouldn’t live. They’re not even people.”

The broadcast triggered absolute revolution. Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, Kazem Gharibabadi, anchored the diplomatic pushback by characterizing the appearance as an unvarnished confession of war crimes. Taking to X, Gharibabadi dissected the minister’s demands for daily exterminations and territorial annexation.

“The minister of domestic security of the Zionist regime of Israel has set a ‘nightly quota’ for killing in Gaza: 30 to 40 people,” Gharibabadi wrote. “This Zionist criminal simultaneously speaks of expelling Palestinians and settlement construction through-out Gaza.”

He demanded these admissions be archived for “the Day of Judgment and the trial of these criminals.”

These confessions mirror the reality on the ground. Despite a supposed ceasefire, the Gaza Health Ministry confirms relentless Israeli strikes have killed over 1,250 Palestinians since the “truce” began. Ben-Gvir envisions a fully occupied enclave stripped of its indigenous population.

The Gaza Rights Center stated the comments squarely fit international definitions of incitement to genocide, urging the International Criminal Court to integrate the audio into ongoing probes. The Council on American-Islamic Relations compared the cabinet’s driving ideology directly to Nazi doctrines.

The podcast contained other macabre exchanges. When the host asked to personally execute Palestinian prisoners, Ben-Gvir enthusiastically agreed.

Some users circulated translated clips on X of the minister calling the prospect of facilitating those executions one of his “greatest dreams.” Additionally, some users pointed to the exchange as definitive proof of deeply entrenched sadism driving the occupation.

For many, the horrific arithmetic of 30 to 40 nightly deaths is the quiet policy of the ongoing genocide, finally spoken aloud.

Legal status of Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement under international law

By Seyed Yaser Ziaee
Professor of international law

The legal status of paramilitary organizations varies across domestic legal systems. This commentary seeks to examine the legitimacy and lawfulness of resistance movements, focusing on the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement’s status within the Arab country’s legal and political order.

To that end, it is necessary to begin with a brief overview of the resistance movement’s origins and institutional character. The emergence of Hezbollah was the culmination of several intersecting historical developments. These included the longstanding socioeconomic marginalization of Lebanon’s Shia population, concentrated in the impoverished region of Jabal Amel, stretching from the Israeli border to the Litani River; Israel’s occupation of the Shebaa Farms and the Kfar Shuba hills following the 1967 Six-Day War; the repercussions of the military activities conducted from southern Lebanon by members of the Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah) beginning in 1970; the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975; Israel’s invasion of southern Lebanon in 1978 (the Litani Operation); and the subsequent deployment of Syrian military forces in Lebanon. These developments prompted Lebanese Shia leader Imam Musa al-Sadr to establish the military wing of Harakat al-Mahrumin (the Movement of the Deprived). This armed organization was later renamed Afwaj al-Muqawama al-Lubnaniyya (the Lebanese Resistance Regiments), better known by its Arabic acronym, Amal. Israel’s 1982 invasion of Lebanon

(“Operation Peace for Galilee”) subsequently facilitated the formation of a coalition comprising the Islamic Amal Movement under the leadership of Sayyid Hussein al-Musawi, a splinter faction of Amal, the Iraqi Hizb al-Da’wah, guided by Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, as well as other groups, including the Association of the Ulama of the Beqaa, the Islamic Committees, Islamic Jihad, and certain members of Fatah affiliated with the Abu Jihad faction. All these developments laid the foundations for the emergence of an organization that formally announced its establishment under the name Hezbollah in 1984. Since its inception, Hezbollah has operated through integrated legal, political, and military structures. Although it has never formally constituted itself as a registered political party under Lebanese law, it has consistently participated in elections to the Lebanese Parliament through the Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc electoral list.

For several decades, Hezbollah has enjoyed both explicit and implicit recognition and support from successive Lebanese governments. Over this period, successive ministerial statements have consistently affirmed the legitimacy of resistance in various formulations, referring, inter alia, to the “right of Lebanese citizens to resist the Israeli occupation,” the “legitimate right of the Lebanese people to resist” (Omar Karami Government, 1991), resistance as a “national and political duty” (Rafik Hariri Government, 1995), the “necessity of liberating southern Lebanon through the courageous resistance” (Salim al-Hoss Government, 1998–2000), and once



again the “right of Lebanese citizens to resist the Israeli occupation” (Tammam Salam Government, 2014–2016). Beyond these ministerial declarations, the 1969 Cairo Agreement between Lebanon and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) authorized Palestinians residing in Lebanon to conduct military and guerrilla operations, provided that such activities respected Lebanon’s sovereignty and national security. A different legal framework, however, emerged with the 1989 Taif Agreement, which brought an end to the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990). The agreement called for the disbandment of all militias and the transfer of their weapons to the Lebanese State. Consistent with this approach, the Siniora government in 2006 endorsed the principle that national defense should remain the exclusive responsibility of the State. Both the Taif Agreement and the Siniora government’s position were subsequently reflected in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006), which called for the disarmament of all armed groups operating within Lebanon.

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



Uniformed Hezbollah scouts shoulder bright yellow coffins adorned with portraits, navigating a dense, grieving crowd beneath red and yellow flags. This solemn funeral procession in Beirut’s southern suburb on August 16, 2026, honors Hezbollah member Ali al-Haj Hassan, his wife, and their four children, following their martyrdom in a recent Israeli airstrike (AP).

Iran’s top flight begins with strong starts for the title contenders

TEHRAN – The 2026/27 season of Iran’s Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) has begun with an immediate reminder of the competition’s unpredictability, as the 26th edition kicked off with strong performances from several of the country’s biggest clubs.

The opening round, played on August 14–15, produced 17 goals, with three home wins, three away victories and three draws.

Esteghlal made the biggest statement of the opening weekend. The Tehran giants defeated Mes Shahr-e Babak 4–0, combining attacking efficiency with a clean sheet. Saeid Saharkhizan scored twice, while Mohammadhossein Eslami and Esmail Gholizadeh completed the emphatic victory. The result put Esteghlal at the top of the early standings on goal difference.

Persepolis also started the campaign with three points, beating Shams Azar Qazvin 2–0 away from home. Mohammadmehdi Mohebbi and Mohammad Omri scored in the first half, giving new head coach Mehdi Tartar an encouraging start to his tenure.

Persepolis’ two-goal first half was also described as the best opening 45 minutes in the club’s history in the league.

Sepahan and Tractor, two other major contenders, also began with victories. Sepahan defeated Chadormalou 2–0 in Yazd, while Tractor beat newly promoted Paykan by the same score.

These results suggest that the traditional title contenders are determined to establish themselves at the top from the opening weeks.

The opening round was also significant because the previous league season had ended prematurely, leaving the question of the championship unresolved.

The new campaign therefore represents more than simply the start of another season: it is a fresh beginning for Iranian club football after an unusual and disrupted year.

With the Tehran derby between Esteghlal and Persepolis scheduled for Matchweek Five, the title race is already attracting attention.

Yet the first round has also offered an important reminder: impressive opening results can create momentum, but the long road to the championship has only just begun.

Mario Tokic to join Esteghlal coaching staff

TEHRAN – Croatian coach Mario Tokic, who is being considered as an assistant to Sohrab Bakhtiarizadeh at Esteghlal, is set to travel to Tehran soon.

Tokic emerged as a candidate for the Esteghlal coaching staff after the proposed move for Joaquin Gi fell through.

The Croatian is expected to arrive in Tehran shortly and join the Blues as an assistant coach.

Tokic previously worked alongside former Persepolis head coach Branko Ivankovic with the Oman national team, adding international experience to his coaching résumé.

Persepolis complete signing of Danial Eiri joins

TEHRAN – Iranian defender Danial Eiri has officially completed his move to Persepolis, with the Tehran giants confirming the signing of the young international on a long-term contract.

The 23-year-old center-back joins Persepolis from Nassaji Mazandaran after the two clubs reached an agreement over his

transfer. Eiri has signed a four-year contract with an option for an additional season and will wear the Reds’ shirt during the 2026/27 campaign.

Eiri, who has established himself as one of the promising young defenders in Iranian football, attracted attention with his performances for Nassaji and his involvement with the national team.

His arrival gives Persepolis head coach Mehdi Tartar another option in central defense as the club look to strengthen their squad for the new season.

The transfer follows negotiations between the two clubs, with Eiri previously under contract at Nassaji.

Following an agreement with Persepolis, however, the defender has now officially become a member of Tartar’s squad.

Persepolis will hope Eiri’s youth, physical presence and international experience can bolster their defensive options throughout the campaign.

Iran U17 team beat Italy in friendly

TEHRAN – Iran’s U17 men’s national volleyball team defeated Italy 3–1 in a friendly match in Doha as they continued their preparations for the upcoming FIVB U17 World Championship.

Arash Sadeghiani’s side secured their second consecutive victory in warm-up matches ahead of the tournament, which will be held in Doha, Qatar, from Aug. 19 to 28.

Iran made a strong start against Italy, winning the opening set 25–20 before extending their advantage with a 25–21 victory in the second.

Italy responded in the third set, taking it 25–21, but Iran held their nerve in a closely contested fourth set to seal a 26–24 win and complete a 3–1 victory.

The result gives Iran further confidence ahead of their World Championship campaign. The team had previously beaten Egypt 3–1 in their first friendly after arriving in Doha.

Iran have been drawn in Pool E alongside Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Algeria. They will open their campaign against Algeria on Aug. 19 before facing Pakistan on Aug. 21 and Chinese Taipei on Aug. 23.

Iranian teams to learn fate at AFC Champions League on Tuesday

TEHRAN – Tractor and Esteghlal football teams from Iran will learn their 2026/27 AFC Champions League on Tuesday.

The draw will take place at the Grand Hyatt Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The 24th edition of Asia’s elite men’s club tournament under the ACL banner will feature an expanded number of 32 clubs in the League Stage – an increase from the 24 that featured in each of the preceding two seasons.

Intended to provide more opportunities for elite clubs to compete against the Continent’s best, the format change means that 18 clubs across seven MAs each from the West and East regions have entered the competition.

Four clubs from each region start at the Preliminary Stage, where two places in the League Stage are on offer; the remaining 14 enter at the League Stage, which is slated to kick off on Sept. 14, 2026.

Also, a total of 25 sides—12 from the West region and 13 from the East—have been granted direct entry to the Group Stage of the ACL Two 2026/27, which is slated to begin its first matchday on Sept. 15, 2026.

They will be joined by the four losing clubs from the ACL Elite Preliminary Stage as well as the three clubs that progress from the ACL Two Preliminary Stage.

Gol Gohar will represent Iran at ACL Two.

Tehran municipality official highlights restoration of war-damaged heritage sites

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Ali Shamsipour, head of the Urban Research and Planning Center of Tehran Municipality, has highlighted plans and ongoing efforts to restore heritage sites damaged during the recent war involving the United States and the Israeli regime.

He noted that studies conducted by the center on historical buildings damaged during wars and crises have focused on ways to preserve and restore the sites while also identifying new functions for them.

“The restoration of historical buildings damaged during wars and crises should not erase all traces of the events that affected them,” Shamsipour, said during a press conference on Sunday.

He said documenting the effects of war on historic buildings was an important part of the studies, stressing that restoration should not remove every sign of a historic event.

“Some traces of that damage can be preserved as historical memory,” he said.

Elsewhere in his remarks on center’s responsibilities, he said turning a research idea into an implemented project is a lengthy process that involves designing the research project, conducting the study, preparing a report and eventually putting its findings into practice. The process can sometimes take several years, he added.



Some completed studies have been translated into operational programs, including research on urban sports that resulted in the development of an action plan for Tehran Municipality, Shamsipour said.

He added that the center’s approach was to ensure that research goes beyond the reporting stage and is converted into applicable knowledge and effective decisions for urban management.

Calls for clearer responsibility for Tehran’s historical heritage

Shamsipour also called for greater attention to Tehran’s historical identity and clearer responsibilities for protecting and managing its historical buildings, sites and urban areas.

He said responsibility for many historical buildings is currently

divided among different government bodies, with no single authority fully accountable for their protection.

Municipalities can only be fully accountable for the preservation and maintenance of a city’s historic heritage if the necessary powers and responsibilities are also assigned to them, Shamsipour added.

Shamsipour also said the center had undertaken several research projects on neighborhood-based planning, including initiatives focusing on mosques.

Some of the projects have been completed, while others are still being implemented or undergoing further study.

Regarding the center’s academic publications, Shamsipour said not all studies are necessarily turned into books because some are conducted primarily

for managerial and policymaking purposes.

The center’s editorial and translation committee nevertheless seeks to publish academic books and reference works on urban management, he said.

“The center’s main objective is to extract “urban knowledge” from research projects and turn it into practical solutions for addressing real problems facing the metropolis.”

Referring to challenges such as traffic congestion and air pollution, he said the evaluation of urban management measures should consider the entire chain of research, decision-making, implementation and impact assessment.

During a visit in June to the UNESCO-listed Golestan Palace, which was damaged by shockwaves from US-Israeli missile strikes, Shamsipour had also called for a broader understanding of heritage resilience.

He said resilience should extend beyond the physical preservation and restoration of monuments to encompass their social, cultural and human dimensions.

Attacks on cultural sites can create new layers of historical memory and cultural significance, he said, adding that places associated with wartime events may themselves eventually become part of a nation’s cultural heritage and collective identity.

Iranian culinary team wins multiple medals at Armenian festival



chefs and their top rankings demonstrate the valuable human resources available to the country in food tourism and reflect the position of Iran’s culinary art and culture internationally,” he said.

Mohseni-Bandpei said food is part of intangible cultural heritage and an important element of social identity, adding that it has significant potential to connect nations and promote tourism destinations.

He said presenting Iran’s diverse culinary traditions internationally could help develop food tourism while creating opportunities for cooperation among tourism professionals, chefs, the private sector and local communities in different countries.

The deputy tourism minister also said the festival should be viewed as more than a culinary competition, describing Iran’s participation as an opportunity to present aspects of the country’s culture and identity through food and strengthen cultural and tourism ties between Iran and Armenia.

According to the announced results, Zahra Rostami from Kermanshah province took first place in the cooking competitions after scoring 98 out of 100 and winning a gold medal.

Mehran Ferdousian from Semnan province, with a score of 95, and Marzieh Rahbar from

Gilan province, with 88, also won gold medals for Iran.

Among Iranian winners were Shayan Shoushtari from Tehran, with 78 points and Zahra Amin-Dar, with 72, won silver medals.

Also, Farhoud Zaafari Hashjin, a judge and member of the competition’s jury, also received a gold medal for judging at the festival’s closing ceremony.

Mohseni-Bandpei noted that Iran and Armenia are currently among each other’s major tourism destinations, saying expanded cultural cooperation could further strengthen ties between the two countries.

Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

No Persian meal is complete without an abundance of herbs. Every table is usually set with Sabzi-Khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten raw and by the handful. Persian cuisine is, above all, about balance — of tastes and flavors, textures and temperatures.

Archaeological survey in Taft identifies ruined structures, stone tools



eries and other cultural evidence.

The identification and documentation of a considerable number of historic castles was among the most significant results of the survey, the official said, highlighting the area’s role in past settlement networks and defensive systems.

Fakhraabad castle, described by the official as one of the largest castles in Yazd province, was among the most notable structures documented during the project.

The survey also identified several archaeological mounds that

could provide information about ancient settlements and cultural developments in the area. Further research could shed light on the history of human settlement in this part of Taft county, Falahati said.

A number of stone tools were also discovered during the survey. According to Falahati, the finds could provide new insights into the prehistoric period in southwestern Yazd province.

The locations of all identified remains were recorded using positioning systems, while individual files were compiled for each site, including descriptive

reports, photographic documentation, technical surveys, geographic coordinates and assessments of conservation conditions.

Moreover, natural and human threats to the sites were also assessed to support future conservation, research and management plans, Falahati said.

With the fieldwork completed, the project has entered its data-processing phase, including map preparation, completion of the spatial database and compilation of the final report.

Given the number and diversity of sites identified and the size of the survey area, the project is expected to contribute to a better understanding of settlement patterns, the use of natural resources, historic communication routes and cultural developments in Taft county, Falahati said.

Taft, in central Yazd province, is known for its historic and cultural heritage. The area was also associated with Sufi poet Shah Nimatullah Wali in the 15th century.

Six Iranian universities in Shanghai ranking 2026

TEHRAN – Shanghai University ranking 2026 has placed six Iranian universities among the top 1,000 institutions worldwide, unchanged compared to the past year.

Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) considers every university that has any Nobel Laureates, Fields Medalists, Highly Cited Researchers selected by Clarivate, or papers published in Nature or Science. In addition, universities with a significant number of papers indexed in the Science Citation Index-Expanded (SCIE) and Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) in the Web of Science are also included. In total, more than 2500 universities are actually ranked, and the best 1000 are published.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences and the University of Tehran, with a global ranking of 501-600, are jointly placed first in the country, IRNA reported.

Amirkabir University of Technology, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Sharif University of Technology, and Tarbiat Modares University rank third to sixth, respectively.

ARWU uses several academic or research performance indicators to rank world universities, including alumni and staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, Highly Cited Researchers, papers published in Nature and Science, papers indexed in major citation indices, and the per capita academic performance of an institution.

Harvard University tops the ranking list for the 24th year, followed by Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Other top 10 universities are Cambridge (4th), Berkeley (5th), Princeton (6th), Oxford (7th), Columbia (8th), Chicago (9th), and California Institute of Technology (10th).

Recent rankings

The 2026-2027 edition of the U.S. News Best Global Universities Rankings has included 80 Iranian universities among the world's 2,250 top universities.

The institutions from 105 countries have been ranked based on 13 indicators that measure their academic research performance and their global and regional reputations, which helps students to explore the higher education options that exist beyond their own countries' borders and to compare key aspects of schools' research missions.

University of Tehran (with a global ranking of 314), Islamic Azad University (460), Sharif University of Technology (578), Tehran University of Medical Sciences (585), University of Tabriz (663), Mashhad University of Medical Sciences (783), Tarbiat Modares University (783), Amirkabir University of Technology (791), and Tabriz University of Medical Sciences (801) ranked first to tenth in the country, respectively, Mehr news agency reported.

The following is the ranking of these univer-



sities based on their global subject standings.

University of Tehran: Polymer Science (5), Green and Sustainable Science and Technology (17), Water resources (35), Pharmacology and Toxicology (59), Agricultural Sciences (65), Energy and Fuels (66), Engineering (68), Food Science and Technology (76), Plant and Animal Science (77), Mechanical Engineering (78), Civil Engineering (92), and Artificial Intelligence (104).

Islamic Azad University: Polymer Science (12), Green and Sustainable Science and Technology (26), Energy and Fuels (44), Mathematics (47), Mechanical Engineering (56), Food Science and Technology (59), Civil Engineering (66), Water Resources (69), Engineering (77), Pharmacology and Toxicology (77), Public, Environmental and Occupational Health (102), and Artificial Intelligence (107).

Sharif University of Technology: Mechanical Engineering (73) and Civil Engineering (109).

Tehran University of Medical Sciences: Polymer Science (32), Pharmacology and Toxicology (49), Public, Environmental and Occupational Health (86), and Food Science and Technology (96).

University of Tabriz: Water Resources (55), Polymer Science (66), and Food Science and Technology (69).

Mashhad University Medical Science: Public, Environmental and Occupational Health (77), and Pharmacology and Toxicology (97).

Tarbiat Modares University: Water Resources (90); Amirkabir University of Technology: Polymer Science (49).

Tabriz University of Medical Sciences: Polymer Science (21), and Pharmacology and Toxicology (94).

The 2025 World University Rankings (WUR) report by the Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC) has included 76 Iranian universities, an increase from 72 in 2024.

Among the top universities of Islamic countries, Saudi Arabia ranks 229. Qatar (301-350), Malaysia (351-400), Iran, and the UAE (jointly rank 401-500) are placed next.

In the research criterion, Tehran University of Medical Sciences ranks first in the country. The university's global ranking is 373, up from 501-600 in 2024.

In the education criterion, Graduate University of Advanced Technology (129), Iran University of Medical Sciences (214), Tehran University of Medical Sciences (255), Golestan University of Medical University (273), and Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (340) are placed first to fifth.

In the international activity criterion, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (440), University of Tehran (465), and Amirkabir University of Technology (611) rank first to third.

In the innovation criterion, Amirkabir University of Technology ranks 774, and Sharif University of Technology ranks 804.

In the social impact criterion, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Iran University of Medical Sciences, and Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences rank 307, 410, and 427, respectively.

The 23rd edition of the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings (WUR), 2027, has placed 11 Iranian universities among the world's top institutes, up from nine universities in 2026.

Sharif University of Technology (ranking 390) and Amirkabir University of Technology (483) are placed second and third.

The 16th edition of the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026 has included 10 Iranian universities in three broad subject areas.

The 2026 edition of the QS World University Rankings by Subject features 55 narrow subjects across five broad subject areas.

are participating in the preparation and installation process, IRNA reported.

So far, 12 out of 31 provinces have announced their readiness, and the goal is to equip all 12,000 schools with 5-kilowatt systems by mid-September. There are about 100,000 public schools in the country, more than 60 percent of which have the capacity to install solar panels.

In November 2025, Majid Parsa, head of the Tehran Education Department, announced that 1,200 schools across Tehran province were set to be equipped with rooftop solar panel systems by the end of the past Iranian calendar year (20 March 2026). The initiative followed an agreement with the Tehran Governor's Office to install five-kilowatt systems on each participating school.

Parsa noted that the project would initially be implemented on a trial basis to assess performance, maintenance and grid integration. "The Education Department has already equipped five schools with pilot solar systems, which have shown promising results," he said at the time. He added that solar-powered schools could play a vital role in energy conservation, providing clean electricity for their own use and potentially supplying surplus power to the national grid.

SOCIETY

AUGUST 18, 2026

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Genetic map for endangered species being developed

TEHRAN – The Department of Environment (DOE) is developing a genetic map of endangered wildlife species to increase their chance of survival, create a breeding plan, manage their population, and address the risks facing them in their natural habitats.

Effective conservation of endangered species is almost unattainable without a precise understanding of population genetics. To this end, genetic and molecular studies of key wildlife species in the country have been put on the agenda, ensuring that management decisions are based on accurate scientific data, IRNA quoted the head of the National Museum of Natural History and Genetic Resources, Leila Ezzeddinlou, as saying.

Preserving genetic diversity within and between populations, preventing declines in effective population size, avoiding inbreeding and genetic erosion, conserving genes adapted to diverse environmental conditions, and providing genetic resources for species restoration, propagation, and introduction or reintroduction programs are among primary objectives of these studies, she added.

Referring to three research agreements signed between the DOE, the College of Agricultural and Natural Resources of the University of Tehran, and Gorgan University, the official said that as part of the cooperation, a project is underway to investigate the genomic diversity and phylogeny of Levant viper and Latifi's viper populations, employing conservation and therapeutic approaches based on genomic markers.

Moreover, the development of genetic profiles and maps for the Asiatic cheetahs, black bear, and Persian yellow deer, as keystone and threatened species, has kicked off.

The other part of the agreements focuses on the assessment of genetic variation, inbreeding, and kinship relationships within the Persian zebra population, which is being conducted in collaboration with Yazd's provincial DOE department. The initiative plays a key role in managing small populations and preventing the loss of genetic biodiversity, she highlighted.

From accelerated extinction to successful revival of species

Despite worrisome facts about the speed at which species are disappearing, there has been good news of endangered species making a comeback, highlighting the role of



conservation efforts in preventing extinction and helping vulnerable wildlife recover.

According to the latest report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, about 154 vertebrate animal species, and around 25 percent of plant species in the country are at risk of extinction, with 117 species being classified as critically endangered in the national list. Persian zebra, Asiatic cheetah, black bear, great bustard, and yellow deer are among animals that are in danger of extinction.

Among extinct animals, the Hyrcanian tiger and Persian lion are the two feline species that have disappeared forever in the country. Fortunately, Persian zebra and Persian yellow deer are examples of successful conservation efforts where scientific measures and local community participation have resulted in the species' recovery, doe.ir quoted Hamid Zohrabi, an official with the DOE, as saying.

Referring to successful recovery stories of species in Iran, Zohrabi noted that for years, it was thought that the yellow deer species was extinct in the world. However, about 65 years ago, some yellow deer were observed in Dez and Karkheh forests, the primary habitats of the Persian yellow deer.

Their conservation program commenced immediately by breeding them in captivity and transferring them to natural habitats for better reproduction, Zohrabi noted.

The birth of the first Persian yellow deer in the current Iranian year, which started on March 21, in Karkheh National Park, southwestern Khuzestan province, has raised hopes for the revival of this unique animal species.

The Persian zebra is a subspecies of onager, which is critically in danger of extinction. With the birth of a foal in Yazd province, the current population of Persian zebra is estimated to be more than 50, indicating improved habitat conditions and effective conservation management of the endangered animal.

Knowledge-based firms to attend Russia's MIMS Automobility expo



TEHRAN – A delegation comprising representatives of Iranian knowledge-based companies will travel to Russia to attend the International Trade Fair for Automotive Production, Aftermarket and Service Industry, known as MIMS Automobility.

The event is one of the largest and most prestigious specialized exhibitions in Russia and the Eurasian region, showcasing automotive parts and spare parts, equipment for vehicle repair and maintenance, and after-sales services, IRNA reported.

The 30th edition of the MIMS Automobility will be held from August 25 to 28 at the Expoforum Convention and Exhibition Centre in St. Petersburg.

This exhibition is one of the important events of the automotive and auto parts industry in this country and is recognized as an opportunity for companies, manufacturers

and distributors of auto parts and the automotive industry in Russia and the surrounding regions to display products, business communication and introduce innovations.

Power equipment (engine, gearbox and exhaust); car chassis (axle, steering wheel, brakes, wheel, vibration damper); body (metal parts, roof system, window, frame and bumpers); standardization parts (seat belt components, bolts and safety components, seals, air bags, rollers); interior components (seats, upholstery, heater, air conditioning, internal filters, electrical parts); alternate and main components of the driving system (hybrid, electric motor, natural gas, liquid gas), and charging equipment (inlet, cable, connector) are some of the main topics of the exhibition in the components and parts sector.

Motor electronics (battery, control parts, control system for automatic driving system, bus systems); vehicle light systems (overhead lights, daytime running lights, lights); electrical system (cables, wires and sensors); driver assistance system and vehicle safety (air bag box, camera system, odometer systems); and electronics of comfort and convenience parts (automatic air conditioning, head of seats, electric seat adjustment system, keyless movement system, control system) are some of the main topics of the exhibition in the electronics and systems sector.

Over 2,400 school building projects implemented in a year

TEHRAN – The Organization for the Renovation of Schools announced that 2,407 school construction projects were completed last year (March 2025-2026), and plans are in place to build over 2,300 classrooms this year.

Hamidreza Khan-Mohammadi, the head of the organization, also spoke about the development of solar power plants in schools, stating that the implementation of a solar power project with a total capacity of 1,260 megawatts has begun across 12,000 schools, Mehr reported.

"So far, work has been carried out on approximately 2,500 power plants, and equipment for another 5,000—out of a total of 12,000—has been procured and prepared," he added.

Regarding the commitments made by school-building benefactors, he stated: "Last year, the total value of pledges by benefactors stood at 286 trillion rials (around 155 million dollars), and to date, new commitments amounting to 97 trillion rials (around 52 million dollars) have been registered."

Benefactors contribute to building half of schools

In February 2025, the government spokesperson, Fatemeh Mohajerani, said some 51 percent of the schools in the country are constructed with the help of benefactors.



"The participation of school-building benefactors has significantly increased in recent years so that about 48 to 51 percent of the schools are built thanks to their financial assistance," IRIB quoted Mohajerani as saying.

Benefactors' participation in constructing schools shows their commitment and will to improve educational opportunities and develop educational infrastructure; their efforts can have positive, profound impacts on the education, students, and the future of the country, she noted.

The official went on to say that the current administration focuses on expanding educational infrastructure and building new schools, to replace the prefabricated ones, with the help of benefactors, even in areas where

there are only one or two students.

"Education, educational equity, and the elimination of educational deprivation are among the top priorities of the current administration," she highlighted.

Solar-powered schools

A national plan to equip around 12,000 schools across the country with solar power plants began in June with the installation of a 5-kilowatt system in a technical-vocational school in Tehran.

Schools affected by war, boarding schools, schools in border areas, and in underprivileged regions are given priority. Donors have taken responsibility for covering costs, and the Clean Energy Organization is providing the required equipment to the selected schools. Also, the provincial officials and electricity departments



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The most foolish of people is the one who thinks that he is the most intelligent.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:08 Evening: 19:09 Dawn: 3:55 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:26 (tomorrow)

Woman fired from Burger King for saying “Free Palestine” honored with mural in Gaza



Artists depicted Arianna Hamilton in her Burger King uniform after her firing sparked widespread attention and support.

A Pennsylvania woman who lost her job at Burger King after telling a customer “Free Palestine” has received a wave of financial and public support, with her online fundraiser approaching \$250,000, Yahoo News reported.

Arianna Hamilton, who worked at a Burger King in Breinigsville, Pennsylvania, was fired earlier this month following a viral interaction with Rami Feinstein, an Israeli-American musician. According to accounts of the exchange, Feinstein initially told Hamilton he was from New Jersey before identifying himself as Israeli. Hamilton responded by saying, “Free Palestine.”

Hamilton later defended the comment in a video, saying she was exercising her right to free speech and that her intention was not to discriminate against or spread hatred toward anyone. She said she wanted to call attention to the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

After losing her job, Hamilton launched a GoFundMe campaign titled “Support Arianna After Job Loss for Free Speech.” The fundraiser initially sought \$140,000 to help Hamilton cover rent, utilities, groceries and other basic expenses while she looked for new employment.

The campaign quickly surpassed that goal. It had raised more than \$240,000 from thousands of donors as of Friday, with the fundraising target subsequently increased to \$250,000. Hamilton

has said that money remaining after her basic needs are covered will be donated to Palestinian families.

The support has also extended beyond the United States. Artists in Gaza have painted a mural honoring Hamilton, depicting her wearing her Burger King uniform and headset alongside a crossed-out Burger King logo and the words “Free Palestine.” Images and videos of the mural have circulated on social media, with supporters describing it as a gesture of solidarity with Hamilton and her public stance on Gaza.

The death toll from the Israeli war of genocide on the Gaza Strip since Oct. 7, 2023, has risen to 73,389, with 174,266 others wounded, the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

The ministry said 1,260 Palestinians had been killed and 4,154 wounded since the ceasefire took effect on Oct. 10 last year.

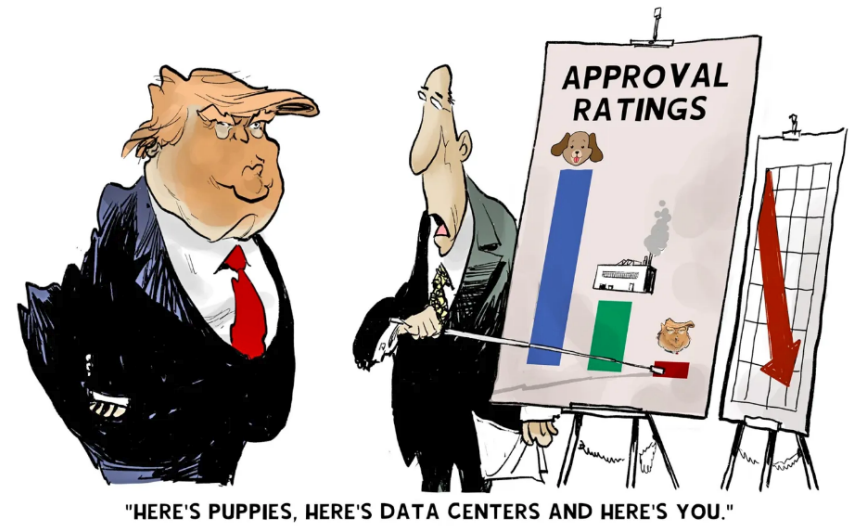
A number of victims remain trapped under rubble and on roads, with ambulance and civil defense crews unable to reach them, it added.

The Israeli war of genocide has left Gaza facing a severe humanitarian crisis, with widespread destruction of homes and infrastructure and essential services severely disrupted.

The crisis has been compounded by Israeli occupation restrictions on the entry of humanitarian aid and materials needed for reconstruction, despite provisions in the ceasefire agreement calling for their unrestricted entry.

Cartoon of Day

SHENEMAN



Puppies, data centers, and Trump
Cartoonist: Drew Sheneman from the US

Iran, Uzbekistan discuss expanding joint artistic cooperation

TEHRAN – In a meeting between the cultural attaché of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Uzbekistan, Hassan Safarkhani, and the president of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan, professor Akmal Nuriddinov, the two sides discussed expanding joint cooperation between the artistic institutions of the two countries.

The session was held at the Academy’s premises, aiming at strengthening and developing the cultural and artistic relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Uzbekistan, ILNA reported.

During the meeting, Nuriddinov emphasized the extensive capacities of the Uzbekistan Academy of Arts and the Academy of Arts of the Islamic Republic of Iran and stated: “The development of institutional cooperation, the holding of in-person and virtual exhibitions, specialized and scientific meetings, the implementation of research projects, and providing the groundwork for direct communication between artists and art administrators of the two countries can lead to a more precise understanding of the real capacities of Iran and Uzbekistan in the fields of visual arts, handicrafts, and other branches of art.”

Referring to Iran’s historical and civilizational background and its distinguished standing in various artistic fields — including painting, calligraphy, architecture, and music — Nuriddinov also took note of the developments and valuable achievements of contemporary Iranian art, and regarded the new and growing capacities of Uzbek art as a suitable foundation for expanding bilateral cooperation.

Pointing to the policies of the Uzbekistan government regarding the



expansion of cultural relations with various countries, especially neighboring states, he assessed cooperation with the artists and artistic institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran as an important opportunity for the growth and flourishing of art in both countries. He expressed hope that he would travel to Iran in the near future and, while visiting artistic centers and collections, meet and hold discussions with the artists and art administrators of the country in person.

For his part, Safarkhani referred to the online exhibition of Nuriddinov’s works at the website of the Iranian Academy of Arts, held last month, as a turning point in the process of initiating and deepening artistic cooperation between the two countries, and proposed that the works of two to three prominent artists introduced by the Iranian Academy of Arts also be exhibited in Uzbekistan in the format of a virtual exhibition.

This proposal was welcomed by

the President of the Uzbekistan Academy of Arts, and it was decided that the details of the artists and the selection of their works would be provided to the Academy in the shortest possible time, so that the necessary measures could be taken to hold the virtual exhibition of Iranian artists.

In another part of the meeting, the cultural attaché of the Iran in Uzbekistan emphasized the necessity of drafting and signing a memorandum of understanding for cooperation between the Uzbekistan Academy of Arts and the Iranian Academy of Arts.

He listed the proposed areas of cooperation as including the joint holding of art exhibitions, scientific and cultural meetings, research projects and programs, the granting of study opportunities, educational cooperation, participation in regional and international art events, and other areas of mutual interest.

Accordingly, it was decided that the draft memorandum of understanding would be prepared by the Iranian side and provided to the President of the Uzbekistan Academy of Arts, so that after review, revision, and the incorporation of the Uzbek side’s considerations, the final text would be ready to be signed by the heads of the two institutions.

At the end of the meeting, the two sides, emphasizing the deep historical, civilizational, and cultural commonalities between Iran and Uzbekistan, regarded the expansion of exchanges among artists, professors, researchers, and cultural and artistic administrators of the two countries as a fundamental necessity for deepening bilateral relations.

Emphasis was also placed on continuing communication between the Uzbekistan Academy of Arts and the Iranian Academy of Arts, and on transforming existing capacities into operational and joint programs.

Genevieve Mackenzie’s storybook about children with ADHD available in Persian

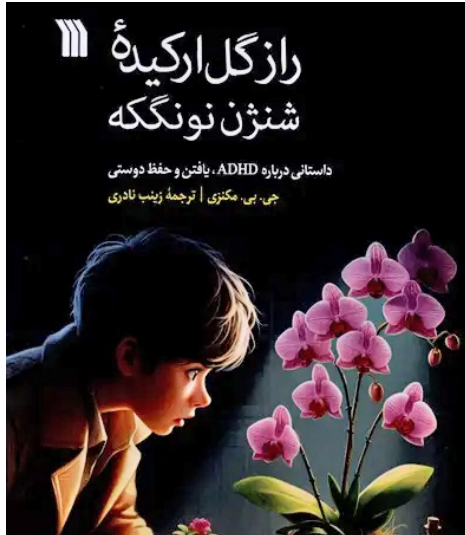
TEHRAN – The Persian translation of the book “The Mystery Behind the Shenzhen Nongke Orchid” by Genevieve Mackenzie has been released in the Iranian book market.

Translated by Zeinab Naderi, the book has been brought out by Soroush Publications in 104 pages, Mehr reported.

“The Mystery Behind the Shenzhen Nongke Orchid” follows the story about a boy, Nicolai, that deeply desires friendships, despite the fact that his attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) creates obstacles in establishing friendships. But Nicolai excels at Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) and has one friend, Sarah. She acts as a friendship coach throughout identifying the thief that stole the orchid. Nicolai uses MMA in the face of ADHD and successfully works together with Sarah to solve the mystery and develop new friendships.

Genevieve Mackenzie completed her doctorate in Developmental Psychology and Education in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development (AP&HD) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

Her thesis centered on ADHD and reading comprehension among adolescents but has published articles centering on Abnormal, Educational, De-



velopmental and Cognitive Psychology. She has authored several peer reviewed articles in her field and is also the author of another children’s books “Breaking the Code”.

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and emotional dysregulation that are excessive and pervasive, impairing in multi-

ple contexts, and developmentally inappropriate. ADHD symptoms arise from executive dysfunction.

Impairments resulting from deficits in self-regulation such as time management, cognitive inhibition, task initiation, and sustained attention can include poor professional performance, relationship difficulties, and numerous health risks, collectively predisposing to a diminished quality of life and a reduction in life expectancy. It is associated with other mental disorders as well as non-psychiatric disorders, which can cause additional impairment.

The precise causes of ADHD are unknown in most individual cases. Meta-analyses have shown that the disorder is primarily genetic with a heritability rate of 70–80%, where risk factors are highly accumulative. The environmental risks are not related to social or familial factors; they exert their effects very early in life, in the prenatal or early postnatal period. However, in rare cases, ADHD can be caused by a single event including traumatic brain injury, exposure to biohazards during pregnancy, or a major genetic mutation. As it is a neurodevelopmental disorder, there is no biologically distinct adult-onset ADHD except for when ADHD occurs after traumatic brain injury.

“The Murder of Mr. Haversham” to return to stage for fourth run

TEHRAN — “The Murder of Mr. Haversham,” a mystery comedy produced by Sajjad Afsharian and directed by Faraz Gholami, will return to the Tehran stage for its fourth run at the Shahrzad Theater Hall on August 26.

Translated into Persian by Shahab Nezamdoust, the play will mark its latest engagement following three previous runs at the Labkhand Theater Complex, Malek Theater and Iranshahr Theater.

The production features an ensemble cast including Ahmad Samimi, Iman Nazifi, Amin Zare, Ali Chaychi, Golnoush Ghahremani, Erfan Ranjbar, Maryam Basirifar, Mohammad Omid, Shayan Heydari, Shakiba Elkaei and Sogol Zare.

The production has established itself as a popular example of contemporary comic theater in Tehran, combining the conventions of a classic murder mystery with physical comedy and a succession of increasingly absurd situations.

The original name of the play is

“The Play That Goes Wrong” written by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer, and Henry Shields of Mischief Theatre Company.

Written in 2012, it is a farcical murder mystery, a play within a play, about the Cornley Drama Society that are putting on a 1920s murder mystery “The Murder at Haversham Manor,” but as the title suggests, everything that can go wrong... does! The accident-prone thespians battle against all odds to make it through to their final curtain call, with hilarious consequences.

Before the play starts, the audience sees the backstage staff doing last-minute adjustments to the set, including trying to mend a broken mantelpiece and find a dog that has run off.

During the performance, a plethora of disasters befall the cast, including doors sticking, props falling from the walls, and floors collapsing. Cast members are seen misplacing props, forgetting lines, missing cues, breaking character, mispronouncing

words, stepping on fingers, being hidden in a grandfather clock, being knocked unconscious, and being manhandled off stage.

Gholami’s production relies on situational comedy and carefully timed performances to transform the murder mystery into a lively theatrical comedy. The humor grows from the characters’ reactions to the investigation and the escalating confusion surrounding the case, rather than from the murder itself.

The return of the play to the stage comes after audiences responded positively to its previous performances. Its blend of mystery, comedy and ensemble acting has enabled it to move between several theater spaces while retaining its original cast and creative team.

“The Play That Goes Wrong” won the Best New Play at the Broadway World UK Award and the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Comedy in 2015.

It has been translated and produced in over 30 countries, including

China, Spain, Greece, France, Italy, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, Argentina, Turkey, and Russia, among others.

Mischief Theater is a British theater company that was founded in 2008 by a group of students from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art in West London, and directed by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer, and Henry Shields. The group originally began by doing improvised comedy shows, but by 2012, they expanded into comedic theatrical performances that included choreographed routines, jokes, and stunts.

The company is primarily known for their comedic performances as the fictional theater company, the Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society, enacting amateur performances that go wrong. In addition to “The Play That Goes Wrong,” other works by the company include the TV series “The Goes Wrong Show”. Several of the stage performances by the company have been shown in the West End of London, and also in theatres across the United Kingdom, North America, and Europe.