

From south to north: How Iran is redefining trade routes in crisis times

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- As geopolitical tensions continue to strain maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, Iran has demonstrated that its foreign trade is far from vulnerable. By rapidly developing northern ports and expanding railway infrastructure, the country is successfully diversifying its trade routes and ensuring the continued flow of essential goods.

According to the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), loading and unloading operations at Iran's northern ports have increased significantly, rising from 18 percent to 30 percent in the current Iranian calendar year. Mohammad Shakibi-Nasab, Deputy Minister of Transport and Urban Development and Managing Director of the PMO, attributed this growth to a strategic shift in response to reduced shipping activity in southern waters. "Following the reduction in the arrival of goods and ships to southern ports, a support package was prepared with the aim of supporting the private sector, preserving human capital, and preventing workforce layoffs," he stated. ▶ Page 4

Hamas official: Disarming Resistance cannot be a precondition for any agreement

TEHRAN- Khaled Qaddoumi, Hamas's representative in Tehran, said disarming Palestinian resistance groups could not be a precondition for any agreement, arguing that strategic issues, including weapons, must ultimately be decided through a collective Palestinian process rather than imposed from outside. ▶ Page 3

Sarah's war against the rest of civilization

By Kurosh Alyani

TEHRAN – Sarah Little writes in The Economist about a "war on women" in Afghanistan. If one looks only at the Taliban's regulations concerning women, the phrase does not seem unreasonable. But this is precisely where the problem begins. Why is what the Taliban does through law, policing and direct command described as "war," while what dominant economic structures in Western societies do through media, culture, fashion, markets, the beauty industry and the production of desire is rarely placed within the realm of war, coercion or even power?

This question cannot be answered through a simple opposition between freedom and repression. That opposition is itself part of the problem. ▶ Page 5

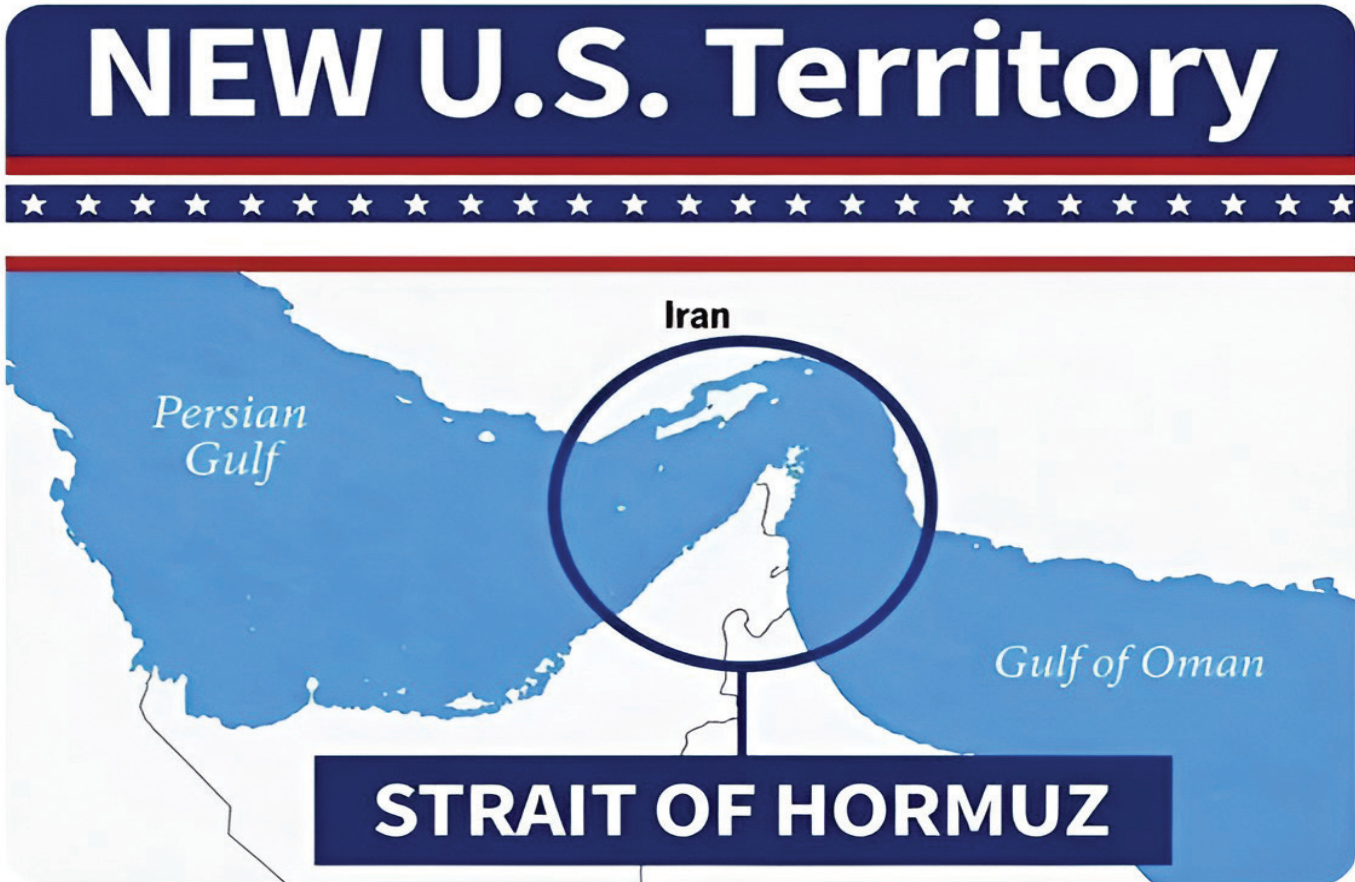
15th 100-Second Film Festival to organize specialized workshops in 9 countries

TEHRAN – The 15th edition of the 100-Second Film Festival will organize a series of specialized international workshops will be held across nine countries, aimed at advancing media literacy, filmmaking, and explaining new narratives.

The specialized cinema and media workshops will be held with the goal of empowering artists and building international networks. Designed around the transfer of technical expertise and the theoretical foundations of modern storytelling, this educational initiative has created a platform for synergy among filmmakers and art-focused bloggers, Honaronline reported. ▶ Page 8



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New US Bone Spur

Claiming ownership of the Strait of Hormuz for Trump, who hides in a food truck out of fear, is a desperate bluff

Iran vows to correct Donald Trump's 'delusion' after he published a map claiming the strategic Strait of Hormuz as American territory

TEHRAN — In a glaring display of imperial bluster detached from geopolitical reality, US President Donald Trump has doubled down on his reckless ambition to declare the strategic Strait of Hormuz a territory of the United States.

Publishing an image on his Truth Social platform depicting a map of the vital maritime passage captioned "New US Territory," Trump has reiterated provocative threats first voiced last week to unilaterally seize sovereign waters following what Washington falsely framed as an Iranian surrender.

This social media stunt comes amid stalled negotiations, yet far from demonstrating real power, it merely exposes the profound desperation of an administration struggling to alter the firm maritime reality enforced by

the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Tehran's diplomatic and military leadership have dismantled Washington's narrative, confirming that the sovereign control of the waterway remains firmly in Iranian hands.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs, responded forcefully to the Truth Social post by asserting that Trump's delusion over the waterway would soon be corrected, noting that either Trump's delusion regarding the Strait of Hormuz will be corrected, or Iran will correct the delusions of this delusional man.

Major General Mostafa Izadi, deputy commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), has also emphasized that the enemy does

not know what to do and remains in a state of helplessness while the Strait of Hormuz remains under the full control of Iranian forces.

Besides, Iranian Parliament Speaker and top negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf affirmed that the Strait of Hormuz will remain closed until the United States fully complies with the conditions of the memorandum of understanding Trump signed with Iran on June 17. The MoU strictly requires lifting the illegal US naval blockade on Iran, removing sanctions, and unfreezing all blocked Iranian assets. ▶ Page 3



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40th-day memorial ceremony for martyred Leader held at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla

TEHRAN — A massive national commemoration marking the 40th day since the burial of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, was held on Tuesday afternoon at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

A vast cross-section of citizens alongside high-ranking officials gathered at the landmark prayer complex. Attendees filled the venue carrying Iran's flags and banners adorned with images of martyrs, imbuing the space with a powerful spiritual atmosphere. ▶ Page 2

A few fistfuls of dollars for GIs

By Fardin Molaei

TEHRAN- Iran has announced a \$30,000 reward for anyone who captures or kills a US military servicemember and hands the individual over to the Iranian armed forces, in a move that has drawn widespread international attention and added a new dimension to the escalating confrontation between Tehran and Washington.

Iranian Army chief Amir Hatami announced the initiative on Sunday at a ceremony honoring journalists, saying it had been prepared in response to 'a large number of public requests to support Iran's armed forces.'

Under the scheme, a person who captures or kills a US servicemember and hands the individual over to the Army would receive \$30,000, Hatami said. The Army chief specifically added that Iranian women who carry out such an operation would receive twice the standard reward. ▶ Page 2

Erbil false-flag attack: Foreign sabotage against Iran-Iraq unity

TEHRAN — The recent drone incident targeting the private office of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Prime Minister Masrour Barzani and the residence of the Security Directorate in Erbil represents a suspicious escalation designed to undermine fragile regional diplomacy. Occurring at a moment when Tehran and Iraqi authorities have made tangible progress on border security agreements, the timing and execution of these strikes point toward a calculated attempt by external actors to derail neighborly ties. ▶ Page 2

Qalibaf: Hormuz to remain closed until US fulfills MoU commitments

TEHRAN- Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said Tuesday that the Strait of Hormuz will remain closed until the United States fulfills its commitments under the Islamabad memorandum of understanding, including lifting the blockade and removing sanctions on Iran's oil exports.

Speaking at a virtual parliamentary session, Qalibaf said Iran was pursuing measures, in line with conditions set by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, to compel Washington to respect Iran's rights through a combination of diplomatic and military efforts.

"Until the US commitments under the [Islamabad] memorandum are implemented, the Strait [of Hormuz] will not be reopened," Qalibaf said. ▶ Page 2

Washington misjudged Iran at every turn, and the region is now realigning without it: Indian analyst



▶ Page 3

40th-day memorial ceremony for martyred Leader held at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla

TEHRAN — A massive national commemoration marking the 40th day since the burial of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, was held on Tuesday afternoon at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

A vast cross-section of citizens alongside high-ranking officials gathered at the landmark prayer complex. Attendees filled the venue carrying Iran's flags and banners adorned with images of martyrs, imbuing the space with a powerful spiritual atmosphere. Chanting slogans in memory of the late Leader, participants emphasized their resolve to continue the path of the martyrs, stand firm against hostile forces, and avenge the blood of those killed.

The gathering at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla marked the opening of a series of nationwide observances directly overseen by the Office of the Leader of the Is-

lamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei. Following Tuesday's gathering in the capital, the commemorations proceed to Qom on Wednesday with a major service scheduled at the Holy Shrine of Lady Fatima Masoumeh (SA) following evening prayers. The observances will conclude in Mashhad on Thursday, with ceremonies at the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza (AS), coinciding with the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hassan Asgari (AS).

These nationwide observances mark the conclusion of the formal 40-day mourning cycle following the historic multi-city funeral processional rites. Ayatollah Khamenei was martyred on February 28, 2026, during joint US-Israeli strikes on Tehran. His body lay in state at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla during the July farewells before being laid to rest beside the sacred sanctuary of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad on July 10.

Trump's collapsing popularity exposes strategic failure in the war against Iran



TEHRAN — President Donald Trump's sinking popularity has driven his job approval rating to a historic low of 33 percent, offering a direct political measure of the failure of the joint US-Israeli military strategy against Iran.

As documented in nationwide polling conducted by Reuters/Ipsos, this dramatic decline—matching the lowest point recorded during his first term—exposes the total collapse of Washington's attempt to enforce its regional dictates through coercive military power.

What was initially promoted by coalition planners as a brief, decisive campaign to break Tehran's sovereignty has instead degenerated into an unsustainable war of attrition. Rather than forcing Iranian compliance, the coalition's aggressive aerial bombardment has been effectively absorbed and neutralized by Iran's robust defensive depth, strategic foresight, and sovereign resilience.

At the core of the US-Israeli strategic failure lies a profound underestimation of Iranian military doctrine and defensive capabilities. While Washington and Tel Aviv assumed that initial strikes would cripple national infrastructure and paralyze command networks, Iran deployed its asymmetric capabilities to bottle up vital energy export routes through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran will stand firm on its rights in managing Strait of Hormuz: VP

TEHRAN- Iran has entered a new phase and will stand firm on its rights in managing the Strait of Hormuz, First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the 39th National Conference of Education Ministry Directors, Aref commemorated the victims of the Minab school tragedy, saying the incident may have been one of the most significant factors behind the defeat of the United States and Israel in the Ramadan war.

He said the attack could not be justified even by the most ruthless standards of warfare, adding that there was no justification for the enemy's crime.

Aref also criticized 'the silence of self-proclaimed human rights advocates' over US and Israeli actions in Gaza and Iran, saying it had left a lasting stain on Western civilization.

Referring to 'Iran's success in two recent wars across military, social, public-service, diplomatic, and scientific and technological fronts,' Aref said Iran was not seeking war but was capable of mounting a strong defense.

"We are not warmongers, but we are strong fighters," Aref said, adding that any mistake or act of aggression by the enemy would be met with a response that would make it "tremble" whenever it heard Iran's name.

Turning to the post-war period, Aref said Iran had entered a new phase and would continue to defend its rights concerning the management of the Strait of Hormuz.

He said the enemy's strategy was aimed at triggering social fragmentation, while the government's strategy was to strengthen the country's economic and social resilience.

A few fistfuls of dollars for Gl

From page 1 ► The higher payment, therefore, applies to the Iranian woman carrying out the act, not to the capture or killing of a female American servicemember.

He also announced additional incentives. The weapon used in an operation resulting in the capture or killing of a US servicemember would be purchased by the Army for twice its original price, while the person who used it would receive a replacement weapon. The weapon used in the operation, Hatami said, would subsequently be preserved in a designated museum.

Where would the money come from?

The announcement has also raised a question about the source of funding for the \$30,000 payments and how the Iranian Army would finance the scheme.

Hatami described the initiative as part of "financial jihad," saying many people had sought to contribute financially to the country's armed forces following the recent war.

Hatami's remarks indicate that the initiative is rooted in what Iranian officials describe as popular financial support for the armed forces, with the Army serving as the institution responsible for receiving and processing the captured servicemember or remains.

Iranian officials have repeatedly highlighted voluntary public contributions to the country's defense sector following the 12-day war in June 2025. Support has included donations of cash, gold and other valuables by individuals and groups seeking to contribute to the country's defense capabilities.

In one recent case cited in Iranian media, a woman from Rafsanjan donated gold worth 1 billion toman to support the country's defense capabilities. The donation was handed over to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps Aerospace Force on April 23, according to the report.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) also reported on April 23 that women in Kashan had donated 230 pieces of gold and jewelry worth 100 billion ri-



als in two stages as part of the "Khaybar Conquest" campaign, which was launched to help repair and equip the country's air defense and military systems.

Public fundraising has also extended beyond Iran. In Indian-administered Kashmir, campaigns were launched to raise financial assistance for people affected by the war in Iran, with thousands of Kashmiris contributing what they could as an expression of solidarity with the Iranian people.

Against that backdrop, the \$30,000 reward can be viewed by Iranian officials and supporters as part of a broader model of popular participation in national defense rather than simply as a conventional military expenditure. The announcement reflects an Iranian narrative in which public mobilization and voluntary contributions are presented as an important component of the country's defensive capacity.

World reaction

The announcement quickly attracted attention from international media, with several outlets focusing on the direct nature of the offer and its implications for the wider Iran-US confrontation.

The Telegraph highlighted the \$30,000 amount and the provision under which Iranian women would receive twice the standard reward. It also reported Hatami's

statement that weapons used in such operations would ultimately be preserved in a museum.

The Times of Israel similarly focused on the structure of the initiative, noting that the reward applies to both the capture and killing of American servicemembers and that the payment is doubled for Iranian women who carry out such an operation.

In the United States, Stars and Stripes, which serves the US military community, reported the Iranian offer in the broader context of the US military presence in the region.

Other international reports have focused on the practical question of where the scheme could be implemented. There has been no deployment of US ground forces inside Iran during the current conflict, apart from an April rescue operation involving a downed American airman. Hatami did not publicly specify the circumstances or location in which an American servicemember would have to be captured or killed for the reward to be paid.

That ambiguity has led some reports to interpret the announcement primarily as a political and deterrent message rather than as a clearly defined operational program. IBTimes, for example, noted that the practical details of the reward remained unclear be-

cause the announcement did not specify the circumstances under which payments would be made, while placing the initiative within the broader context of retaliation and deterrence.

The Jerusalem Post linked the announcement to the wider confrontation over the Strait of Hormuz, reporting Hatami's parallel warning that the United States would face consequences if it sought to assert control over the strategic waterway.

Indian media have likewise placed the announcement in the context of the continuing standoff between Tehran and Washington over Hormuz. The Times of India reported the reward against the backdrop of heightened tensions and noted the absence of US ground forces inside Iran. India Today connected the announcement to Hatami's broader assessment of the recent conflict and his statements regarding changes in the regional military balance.

The New Indian Express, meanwhile, highlighted the Iranian Army's statement that the initiative had been developed following a large number of requests from people seeking to provide financial support to the armed forces.

A new dimension in Iran-US confrontation

Taken together, the international coverage has largely treated the announcement not as an isolated development but as another indication of the increasingly confrontational statements surrounding the Iran-US standoff.

The initiative also comes amid a broader Iranian emphasis on popular mobilization as a component of national defense. Iranian officials have sought to portray voluntary public contributions during and after the recent war as evidence of social support for the country's armed forces and as an additional source of resilience.

The announcement has added a particularly new element to an already tense confrontation between Tehran and Washington, while placing renewed international attention on Iran's military posture, popular mobilization and warnings regarding US forces in the region.

Erbil false-flag attack: Foreign sabotage against Iran-Iraq unity

From page 1 ► As Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi explicitly noted, nothing justifies the attack on PM Barzani's office, cautioning that Kurdish partners must remain vigilant against false-flag ploys engineered to sow discord between neighbors. Several analytical factors support the assessment that this operation was staged by hostile third parties. Tehran has consistently prioritized stable, constructive relations with Baghdad and Erbil, meaning an unprovoked attack against top KRG executive offices yields zero strategic benefit for Iran while completely undermining diplomatic goodwill. Furthermore, launching drone assets near border vectors serves as a classic false-flag signature, engineered to prompt immediate public blame before independent investigative committees can establish true launch origins or ac-



tor identities.

With US and Israeli military initiatives encountering severe strategic bottlenecks in their broader pressure campaign against Iran, orchestrating internal regional friction serves direct operational objectives for Washington and Tel

Aviv. Creating a sudden security crisis in Iraqi Kurdistan provides a high-visibility operational distraction, effectively shifting focus away from strategic setbacks elsewhere in the theater. Moreover, reported efforts by Western intelligence agencies and foreign

officials to mobilize anti-Iranian militia factions indicate an active strategy to weaponize northern Iraq. By staging a provocative attack and framing Tehran, foreign intelligence operators seek to ignite anti-Iranian sentiment in Erbil, constructing a public pretext to supply air cover, advanced weaponry, and logistics to separatist militias operating along Iran's western frontier.

Ultimately, the investigative committee established by Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Faleh al-Zaidi must rigorously examine technical signatures and foreign intelligence footprints rather than relying on surface-level assumptions. Erbil and Tehran share a vital imperative to resist external manipulation, disarm destabilizing armed groups, and ensure foreign covert operations cannot subvert regional sovereignty or compromise neighborly stability.

Qalibaf: Hormuz to remain closed until US fulfills MoU commitments

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"Until the US commitments under the [Islamabad] memorandum are implemented, the

Strait [of Hormuz] will not be reopened," Qalibaf said.

He said the commitments included lifting the blockade, releasing Iran's frozen assets, removing sanctions on Iranian oil exports, ending threats and military operations on all fronts, and fulfilling other obligations set out in the memorandum.

Qalibaf said the opportunity created by the memorandum, including the lifting of the blockade and the ceasefire, had enabled Iran to strengthen its economic resilience and rebuild its defensive capabilities. He added that Iran was prepared to deliver a heavier defeat to its adversary in response to any further hostile action or aggression.

The parliament speaker said the opposing side had accepted the memorandum to end the war out of desperation but soon violated its commitments to offset 'a major political defeat.'

He said the time had therefore come for military action to once again complement diplomacy and provide a practical response to violations of the agreement. He stressed that the Iranian people would remain determined to pursue their rights with unity, courage and rationality.

Qalibaf also warned that the adversary's new strategy was focused on increasing economic pressure on Iran and undermining domestic cohesion.

New US bone spur

Claiming ownership of the Strait of Hormuz for Trump, who hides in a food truck out of fear, is a desperate bluff

From Page 1 ▶ Trump's absurd aspiration to claim sovereign jurisdiction over the Strait of Hormuz follows a familiar pattern of coercive overreach, highly reminiscent of his contentious desires to acquire Greenland and assert dominion over Canadian territories. Just as those unilateral schemes drew widespread international condemnation and ferocious opposition from sovereign nations refusing to be treated as imperial property, his current claims over Hormuz represent an outlandish fantasy completely disconnected from international law.

However, unlike Western territories, the Strait of Hormuz is an inviolable regional lifeline guarded by a determined sovereign nation whose military capabilities have effectively stymied Western aggression. Trump's social media proclamation is nothing more than a manufactured public relations gimmick designed to construct a fabricated sense of victory over Iran, attempting to mask the undeniable consensus among international observers that the United States and Israel have suffered a catastrophic strategic defeat in the war they unilaterally launched on February 28.

The real-world consequences of this failed military adventure have imposed staggering economic and political costs upon the United States. Months into the conflict, American consumers are grappling with severe inflationary pressures, soaring energy prices, and supply chain disruptions resulting from Washington's futile attempts to dictate terms in the Persian Gulf.



As detailed in a comprehensive PolitiFact Analysis, the sheer extent to which the conflict has consumed the Trump presidency is evident in his public messaging, where he expended 55,901 words discussing the war in Iran between January 5 and July 27 across press conferences, executive order signings, and public messages. To divert public attention away from mounting military setbacks and economic distress at home, Trump has repeatedly pivoted to domestic

vanity construction projects, including a lavish White House ballroom expansion and renovations to the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. PolitiFact found that Trump dedicated an astounding 44,901 words to these personal real estate projects across 84 events, frequently prioritizing discussions of architectural finishes over pressing economic and foreign policy crises.

When pressed by reporters regarding the public's growing anger over the escalating economic costs and military paralysis of the war, Trump routinely brushed aside legitimate concerns, claiming he was simply too busy getting things done to explain his strategy.

Ultimately, Washington's reliance on social media map labeling and domestic architectural

distractions cannot alter the operational reality on the water. By standing firm on its demands for an end to illegal blockades, punitive sanctions, and asset freezes, Iran has demonstrated the utter futility of Western coercion. Trump's posturing over the Strait of Hormuz will neither change its legal status nor restore lost American leverage; instead, it serves as a monument to Washington's strategic exhaustion, leaving the Islamic Republic of Iran in firm, sovereign control of its territorial waters while the United States remains trapped in the economic and geopolitical fallout of its own making.

Trump's latest "New US Territory" claim also brings back the controversy over the bone spurs that allowed him to avoid military service during the Vietnam War. The issue remains a sensitive part of Trump's past because critics have questioned whether the medical diagnosis was genuine and have linked it to his family's influence. Now, in an ironic twist, the Strait of Hormuz could become Trump's new "bone spur" — but this time it would not help him avoid a war. Instead, Hormuz could become the place where he suffers defeat and humiliation in his war against Iran. The bone spurs once kept Trump away from the battlefield; Hormuz may now be the place that exposes the limits of his power.

Hamas official: Disarming Resistance cannot be a precondition for any agreement

From Page 1 ▶ Speaking at a press conference in Tehran on Monday, Qaddoumi reviewed the latest developments in the Palestinian territories, including the situation in Gaza, the ceasefire, disarmament, developments in the occupied West Bank and Al-Quds, and internal political developments in Israel.

Qaddoumi said the selection of a figure from Gaza as the head of Hamas's political bureau underscored the central role of the territory in Palestinian resistance.

Turning to the ceasefire, Qaddoumi said the agreement had included provisions for a halt to hostilities, the entry of food, medical supplies and fuel, the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the facilitation of humanitarian operations. However, according to him, a significant part of those commitments had not been implemented.

According to Qaddoumi, ceasefire violations were recorded daily and included military advances, attacks on homes across the Gaza Strip, arrests, artillery fire and other destructive actions. He also said the number of aid trucks entering Gaza had fallen short

of the levels stipulated under the agreement, while the entry of commercial goods and fuel remained severely restricted.

Qaddoumi also criticized restrictions on the Rafah crossing, saying that even when the crossing was open, the movement of people and humanitarian assistance had not taken place fully and in accordance with the agreement.

On the question of disarmament, Qaddoumi said Hamas viewed the issue as a matter of principle, arguing that resistance was linked to the continued presence of an occupying force. At the same time, he said Hamas was prepared to respond positively to proposals aimed at ending the war and the killing of civilians.

He stressed that the question of weapons should not be imposed as an external condition and should instead be addressed as part of a broader national Palestinian decision-making process covering Gaza's political future, governance, security and the possibility of elections.

Qaddoumi also described developments in



the West Bank and Quds as unprecedented, citing "continued settlement expansion, attacks by Israeli settlers and efforts to alter the historical and religious character of Quds."

He said Hamas did not expect Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's position to change through US pressure but would continue negotiations in pursuit of Palestinian rights. If the agreement was violated, he said, the movement would continue its resistance "on all fronts."

LATEST NEWS

■ Qalibaf to visit Iraq to discuss strategic ties

Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf is set to visit Iraq on Wednesday at the head of a high-ranking parliamentary delegation.

The visit will focus on regional developments, strengthening strategic cooperation between Tehran and Baghdad, and exploring joint efforts to help promote stability and security in West Asia.

■ Iran's diplomat: Trump's illusion on Strait of Hormuz will be corrected soon

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, stated on X that just as US President Donald Trump correctly wrote the name "Persian Gulf" on his recently shared map, his delusion regarding the Strait of Hormuz will likewise be rectified in due course.

His remarks referred to a post by Trump on his social media platform, in which the US president published a map of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. The map prominently featured the correct designation "Persian Gulf."

However, Trump accompanied the post with a claim that the Strait of Hormuz would soon be designated as "new US territory," a

statement that drew immediate pushback from Iranian officials.

■ Notion of weak Iran completely shattered: Araqchi

The perception of Iran as a weak country has been completely dispelled, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said, arguing that Tehran's post-war foreign policy will be fundamentally different from the period before the conflict.

In an interview with the Iranian government's website, Araghchi said the US-Israeli war of aggression demonstrated Iran's resilience and changed the international perception of the country.

■ Araghchi, Fidan discuss regional developments

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan discussed bilateral ties, regional developments and diplomatic efforts to ease tensions, with Araghchi highlighting Iran's ongoing consultations with Oman on safe navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.

■ Number of martyrs in recent US, Israel war against Iran reach 3,168

The deputy for social affairs of the Martyrs Foundation of Iran announced that the number of verified martyrs in the 40-day

US-Israel regime war against Iran against has reached 3,166, including civilians and military personnel.

Also, during the 12-day war last year, 1,049 martyrs were verified, Farideh Oladqaba further said in a press conference on Tuesday, August 18.

■ Western anti-Iran actions repeat historical mistakes, says Iranian Embassy

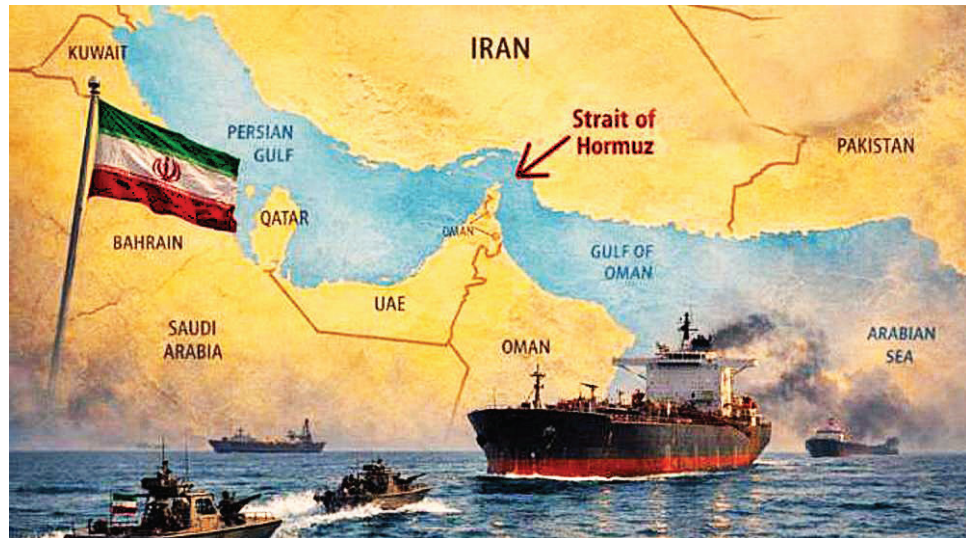
On the anniversary of the US-led coup in Iran on August 19, 1953—known as the 28th of Mordad in Iran—the Embassy of Iran in London posted an image on its X account. The image displayed the titles "Boot," "Hammer," and "Epic Fury," which refer to various Western operations against Iran throughout history. The embassy said, "Boot, hammer, and epic fury; repeated historical mistakes. It is you who will be buried beneath the boots of Iranian soldiers."

■ Iran's defense ministry vows to continue martyred leader's path

The Iranian Defense Ministry pledged to further strengthen national defense capabilities along the path charted by martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. In a statement marking the 40th day since his burial, the ministry emphasized advancing defense industries in line with emerging threats.



Washington misjudged Iran at every turn, and the region is now realigning without it: Indian analyst



By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN — The US-Israeli military campaign against Iran amounted to one of the most consequential strategic miscalculations of recent memory, one that has left Washington's regional security architecture in disarray and accelerated a realignment it was meant to prevent, according to Vijay Prashad, a historian and executive director of the Tricontinental Institute for Social Research.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Prashad said the deepest flaw in US and Israeli planning was a fundamental misreading of Iranian society, a misreading that could have been avoided had Washington studied the Iran-Iraq war of 1980 to 1988. The Iranian society, he said, rests on a foundation of patriotism and dignity that colonial occupation never managed to destroy, unlike much of Asia and Africa, where colonialism inflicted lasting damage on national identity. That resilience, he argued, was on full display during the war with Iraq, when Baghdad's use of chemical weapons against Iranian forces, backed by the West and the Persian Gulf Arab states, still failed to produce Iranian surrender.

"Surrender, in other words, is not an easy option for Iran," he said.

A second and equally consequential miscalculation, Prashad said, was Washington and Tel Aviv's belief that the killing of General Qasem Soleimani, the weakening of Hezbollah and the killing of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the devastation of Palestinian resistance factions and the collapse of Bashar al-Assad's government in Syria had dismantled Iran's ability to retaliate beyond its own borders. That assumption, he said, was upended when Iran struck US military targets across the Persian Gulf Arab states with precision, destroying an inadequately defended radar installation in Kuwait "almost instantly" and when it moved to restrict passage through the Strait of Hormuz, a capability Washington did not believe Tehran possessed.

"So there were two central miscalculations: one concerning Iran's willingness to surrender, and another concerning Iran's options beyond defending its own borders," he said.

Prashad noted that Iran still retains a further option it has not exercised: signaling to armed groups in Iraq to strike US bases there, a step that would mark a further rung on what he described as a still-unfinished escalation ladder. He pointed to Iraq's relative silence throughout the crisis, despite a government broadly sympathetic to Tehran, as a factor worth watching closely.

Prashad rejected the notion that Iran's ability to impose costs on a technologically superior adversary makes it an exceptional case, pointing instead to a pattern of American military failures in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The United States can be savage, but it cannot win the war," he said. "I would ask: name an example where it won a war decisively. I don't see one." He drew a direct contrast between Iran and Syria, describing Assad's decision to flee the country rather than fight as a sign of collapsed societal morale, whereas Iran's Supreme Leader "went to his office knowing full well that he could be bombed," a gesture Prashad characterized as emblematic of a high-morale society unwilling to capitulate. He cited Afghanistan's Taliban, who defeated US forces despite lacking weapons capable of reaching American aircraft, and China's refusal to alter its currency policy under US pressure, as further evidence that "superior weaponry does not guarantee victory. What is required is high morale, and a leadership willing to pay the ultimate price."

On the nuclear question that Washington and Israel presented as the war's central justification,

Prashad said large sections of the American and European establishment know that Iran has no nuclear weapons agenda and that its uranium enrichment activities remained within the legal parameters of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and International Atomic Energy Agency rules.

He likened the nuclear pretext to longstanding US claims that Cuba poses a military threat, arguing that Washington deploys such justifications knowingly, regardless of their factual basis, to curb the independence of states it opposes. He contrasted Libya's decision to surrender its nuclear program, after which the state was destroyed, with North Korea's decision to retain one, which has shielded it from attack, arguing that Iran has rejected that binary altogether on ethical grounds articulated repeatedly by its leadership.

"Had Iran possessed a nuclear weapon, it is unlikely it would be facing this scale of bombardment," the analyst said. He also pointed to Israel's own undeclared nuclear arsenal, confirmed by whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu, and suggested that a genuine nonproliferation effort would begin with pressing Israel to join a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone that Iran itself has promoted.

Turning to the shifting regional order, Prashad said Washington's greatest loss from the conflict has been its confidence in its own capacity to provide a security shield for the Arab states on the southern shores of Persian Gulf. He traced this back to the illegal US bombing of Iran in 2025, after which Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed a defense agreement that drew little international attention at the time. That arrangement expanded last month in Mecca when Turkey, a NATO member, joined Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in what has become known as the Mecca Agreement, a framework Prashad said Tehran was informed about in advance and does not regard as directed against it.

He rejected characterizations of the agreement as a "Sunni NATO," calling that framing "orientalist and inaccurate," and said it instead reflects an assumption shared by its signatories that the United States is withdrawing from the region, citing planned base removals in Qatar and Kuwait. "Where, then, does that leave the US security umbrella? It is effectively gone," he said.

The analyst linked the agreement to a China-brokered rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran that began with a Beijing meeting between the two countries and progressed to direct phone contact between senior officials, a development he said Washington found unacceptable because its regional security architecture has long depended on sustained Iran-Saudi tension.

Asked whether the war should be understood as an undifferentiated regional confrontation, Prashad said Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen each followed distinct dynamics that nonetheless fed into one another, from Israel's long-standing ambition to annex Palestinian territory to Hezbollah's entry into the conflict in solidarity with Gaza and the subsequent collapse of Assad's government amid weakened Hezbollah support and low Syrian morale.

Prashad concluded that Iran has succeeded in shifting the terms of international debate away from questions about its nuclear program and toward questions of Strait of Hormuz access, tolls and sanctions, a transformation he said Washington itself now largely accepts. "The entire framework of the debate has shifted," he noted. That shift, he stressed, has not come without cost, citing the deaths of children and the loss of lives that would otherwise have been lived as the price Iran has paid to change the conversation. "That is an enormous price to pay," he opined.

South Pars first refinery ready for sustainable gas production

TEHRAN- The acting manager of South Pars First Refinery announced the successful completion of the refinery's major overhaul within one week and said: The refinery is now ready for sustainable production during the cold season.

According to Mehr News Agency, quoting the Public Relations Department of South Pars Gas Complex, Akbar Gholami, referring to the implementation of the refinery's major overhaul from July 10 to 16, stated: During this period, with precise planning and mobilization of specialized facilities and capacities, a series of important repair, preventive, and operational activities were carried out with the aim of increasing equipment reliability, enhancing operational readiness, and ensuring production continuity.

He added: During this operation, the catalysts of the mercaptan removal units of two gas trains were replaced, and calibration of safety valves of operational units was performed to increase safety and ensure proper equipment performance.

The acting manager of South Pars First Refinery continued: Replacement of the jacket line of the sulfur recovery unit, periodic and annual maintenance of export and propane compressors of two gas trains, and periodic maintenance of steam boilers and water desalination units of the utility units were among other important measures taken during this overhaul period.

Gholami, referring to the importance of stable energy and electricity supply for the refinery, said: In the electricity sector, review and preventive maintenance of power generators, replacement of chargers of power stations, and replacement of UPS units of LARs 3 and 4 were carried out, and the PPM (planned preventive maintenance) process of electrical and instrumentation equipment at the LAR stations of gas trains was implemented with the aim of preventing failures and increasing equipment reliability.

He also reported on leak repair operations on the caustic lines of the gas odorizing unit and stated: Repair and replacement of defective parts of amine and glycol pumps were carried out in this maintenance program, which plays an important role in increasing the readiness and reliability of process equipment.

Reliance on capability of domestic specialists and domestic manufacturing capacity

The acting manager of the First Refinery, em-



phasizing the approach of the South Pars Gas Complex in maximizing the use of domestic capacities, stated: The implementation of this volume of specialized activities in a short period is the result of coherent planning, technical knowledge of specialized personnel, and the utilization of domestic companies and manufacturers.

Gholami added: In this major overhaul, the capabilities of domestic specialists and Iranian goods and equipment were given special attention, and efforts were made by utilizing the capacity of domestic manufacturers and suppliers, in addition to reducing dependence on foreign sources, to pave the way for the development of domestic manufacturing capabilities and the continuation of sustainable production.

Referring to the activity of 200 skilled and efficient personnel during the overhaul period, he said: These personnel, with round-the-clock efforts and adherence to safety requirements, played a role in the successful implementation of the maintenance program, and the entire set of activities was carried out with the aim of restoring equipment to optimal operational conditions and increasing the refinery's readiness.

The acting manager of South Pars First Refinery reminded: The implementation of these repair and preventive measures is an effective step in increasing equipment reliability, reducing the risk of unplanned shutdowns, and preparing the refinery for the coming cold months.

Gholami said: With the successful completion of the major overhaul and the restoration of equipment and operational units to optimal conditions, South Pars First Refinery is ready to play its role with maximum capacity and confidence in the path of continued production, processing, and stable delivery of natural gas to the national grid.

Iran, Belarus to expand agricultural cooperation

TEHRAN- Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister for planning and Economy Affairs met with the Minister of Agriculture and Food of Belarus, emphasizing the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of agricultural fertilizers, machinery, and joint investment.

According to Mehr News Agency, Akbar Fathi, Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister for planning and Economy Affairs, met and held talks with Yuri Gorlov, Minister of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus, on the sidelines of the 7th meeting of the Policy Council of Agriculture and Industry of the Eurasian Economic Union, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

During the meeting, the capacities and areas for developing agricultural and economic cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Belarus were reviewed, and both sides emphasized the need to strengthen bilateral interactions and utilize existing capacities to develop trade and investment in the agricultural sector.

Cooperation in supplying potash and phosphate fertilizers

One of the main axes of the negotiations was the continuation and development of cooperation between the two countries in the supply and trade of potash and phosphate fertilizers. In this regard, existing capacities for expanding trade cooperation, as well as examining areas for joint investment in the production and supply of agricultural inputs, were taken into consideration.

The Iranian side, referring to the importance of sustainable supply of inputs needed by the agricultural sector, emphasized the use of capacities of EAEU member states to diversify input supply sources and develop long-term cooperation.

Also during this meeting, capacities for joint cooperation in the field of agricultural machinery and equipment were discussed and exchanged.

Both sides emphasized identifying the capacities of manufacturing companies and private sector activists of the two countries and paving the way for the development of exchanges, technology transfer, and joint investments in the field of agricultural machinery and equipment.

Expanding trade in agricultural and food products

The development of trade in agricultural and food products between Iran and Belarus was another focus of this meeting. Within this framework, existing capacities for increasing trade exchanges in the fields of poultry meat, dairy products, and various fruits were reviewed, and the need to facilitate trade and create suitable grounds for greater presence of producers and exporters of the two countries in each other's markets was emphasized.

Also, the issue of developing trade relations and utilizing the capacities of existing agreements and mechanisms to increase the volume of agricultural and food product exchanges between the two countries was taken into consideration.

Emphasis on joint investment and deepening agricultural relations

At the end of this meeting, both sides emphasized the continuation of consultations and follow-up on the issues raised with the aim of developing joint investments, increasing agricultural trade, strengthening cooperation in the field of inputs and agricultural machinery, and creating new opportunities for private sector cooperation.

The meeting was held within the framework of the programs of the 7th Policy Council of Agriculture and Industry of the Eurasian Economic Union and in line with strengthening the agricultural diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and developing economic interactions with the member states of this union.

From south to north: How Iran is redefining trade routes in crisis times

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- As geopolitical tensions continue to strain maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, Iran has demonstrated that its foreign trade is far from vulnerable. By rapidly developing northern ports and expanding railway infrastructure, the country is successfully diversifying its trade routes and ensuring the continued flow of essential goods.

According to the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), loading and unloading operations at Iran's northern ports have increased significantly, rising from 18 percent to 30 percent in the current Iranian calendar year. Mohammad Shakibi-Nasab, Deputy Minister of Transport and Urban Development and Managing Director of the PMO, attributed this growth to a strategic shift in response to reduced shipping activity in southern waters. "Following the reduction in the arrival of goods and ships to southern ports, a support package was prepared with the aim of supporting the private sector, preserving human



capital, and preventing workforce layoffs," he stated.

The PMO's support package has proven effective. Despite the prolonged siege conditions, no significant layoffs have occurred among private sector companies active in the ports. Shakibi-Nasab emphasized that the core of the initiative was workforce protection, and the organization is now planning further measures to strengthen the resilience of private firms by increasing their share of generated revenues.

In parallel, the Trade Promotion

Organization (TPO) has been pursuing an aggressive agenda to develop alternative logistics routes. Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, head of the TPO, confirmed that railway capacity has doubled compared to the same period last year, while northern ports have seen a capacity increase of over 60 percent. "In this short period of time, significant measures have been taken in the logistics sector, and alternative routes are being rapidly developed," he said.

Acknowledging that sea routes remain more cost-effective and con-

venient, Dehnavi noted that Iran's extensive land borders with neighboring countries provide a valuable advantage. "The development of other routes can compensate for part of this shortfall," he explained.

To further facilitate trade, the government has introduced a 180-day extension of the import deadline, direct currency transactions, and reforms to the order registration process. The Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade has prioritized the supply of raw materials to domestic industries, ensuring that production and employment are maintained despite external pressures.

While challenges remain—including border congestion and increased costs in some areas—Iran's proactive approach to diversifying its trade corridors underscores a clear message: the country is not helpless in the face of maritime disruptions. With northern ports gaining capacity and railways expanding at record speed, Iran is building a more resilient and adaptable trade infrastructure for the future.

Non-oil export stands at \$15b in near 5 months

TEHRAN- The head of Iran's Customs Administration said: Non-oil exports from the beginning of this Iranian year (March 21) until August 16 have reached nearly \$15 billion, and imports have reached \$17 billion, although compared to the same period last year, there has been an average decline of 24 percent.

According to IRNA, Foroud Asgari said on Tuesday at the 43rd meeting of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce Board of Representatives, referring to the latest status of the country's foreign trade: In the import sector, policies have been implemented in such a way that goods with foreign currency priority are at the top, and for this reason, imports of some unnecessary or low-priority items have decreased.

Asgari, referring to the decline in mobile phone imports, stated: In the first five months of last year, about 3,160,000 mobile phones were imported into the country, but this year, imports of this product reached 1 million devices, which in terms of value has decreased by about 70 percent.

The head of Iran's Customs Administration emphasized: Currently, the priority of the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade is to supply raw materials needed by production units, and for this reason, the focus of import policies is on goods that directly play a role in the production cycle.

Referring to car import statistics, he said: So far, 25,000 cars have been cleared, which shows a 67 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

The head of Iran's Customs Administration referred to the situation of essential goods in the country's ports and said: Of the total imports of 39 million tons, about 9.5 million tons are related to essential goods, of which 4.5 million tons are currently available in 13 ports of the country.

According to him, of this amount, about 3 million tons of essential goods are stored in Imam Khomeini Port and about 1 million tons in 12 other ports.

Asgari added: Currently, 145,000 tons of goods are being unloaded, and about 500,000 tons are waiting for unloading at anchorage.

Emphasizing the need to facilitate port and customs operations to meet the country's needs in a timely manner, he noted: Iran's Customs is trying to ensure that the clearance process for essential goods and priority items continues without interruption.

The head of the Customs Administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran, explaining the set of measures taken to facilitate foreign trade and reduce barriers to goods clearance, announced the formulation and follow-up of new packages in the customs sector, the extension of emergency permits until the end of September, and some reforms aimed at accelerating the delivery of goods to production units.

Appreciating the efforts of merchants and those involved in this sector under difficult circumstances, he stated: All emergency permits that were valid until June 14 have been extended until the end of September with government approval.

Asgari added: This includes various approvals that have been approved or communicated in the form of 65-item, 12-item, and 11-item customs packages, and economic operators can take advantage of these capacities until the end of September. In recent months, efforts have been made to remove some of the obstacles in the path of foreign trade and goods clearance by using legal capacities and obtaining permission from compe-

tent authorities, so that goods can enter the production and consumption cycle more quickly.

He continued: In this process, there was good empathy and cooperation among the authorities responsible for issuing legal permits, including the National Standards Organization, the Ministry of Health, the quarantine sector, environmental agencies, and other bodies, and this coordination helped resolve some administrative bottlenecks in the goods clearance process.

The head of Iran's Customs Administration, referring to some obstacles arising from procedures, legal requirements, and systems, said: In cases where existing formalities led to delays in the trade process, we tried to provide operational solutions to overcome these obstacles by obtaining permission from higher authorities, including in the areas of tracking codes, goods valuation, tariffs, order registration, and other issues that economic operators face in the systems.

Asgari stated: Within this framework, 6,300 cars were released from the country's customs without tracking codes, for which necessary permits were obtained from the Supreme National Security Council and the Central Bank to allow these vehicles to be cleared.

He continued: Also, in some cases, due to special circumstances, the required permits were obtained for the clearance of goods from various regions and entry points, and these measures overall helped smooth out some commercial processes.

Formulation of a proposed customs package before the crisis

The head of Iran's Customs Administration, stating that customs had previously anticipated the possibility of some crisis conditions and their effects on trade, said: Accordingly, a set of proposals and solutions was prepared in the form of an expert package to identify potential obstacles to foreign trade and goods clearance and to decide on removing them.

He added: This package was compiled and submitted to relevant officials for review and decision-making. Its text was also sent to a number of representatives and private sector activists, including chamber of commerce officials, so that they would be informed of customs' direction for facilitating trade.

According to him, these proposals have a total of about 30 clauses, most of which relate to the government and are scheduled to be reviewed in the Economic Commission meeting. The goal is for goods to reach factories, production units, or consumption points as quickly as possible and to prevent unnecessary stoppages, cost increases, and accumulation at entry points.

The head of Iran's Customs Administration stated that one of the key axes of this package is the principle of non-stoppage of goods at border entry points, and said: Based on this approach, only primary controls such as quarantine, health, and environmental checks are performed at the border, and other permits and complementary processes can be pursued subsequently without unnecessarily holding up the goods.

He added: Numerous meetings have been held with officials of relevant bodies, including in the areas of standards and health, and the necessary approvals have been arranged. According to Asgari, if this bill is finalized and goes through legal procedures, a major transformation will occur in the goods clearance process.

Asgari, referring to one of the important problems at the country's entry points, stated: One of

the reasons for goods stoppage is the multiple sampling by various agencies. Accordingly, it was proposed that a specific timeframe be set for sampling, and that samples taken at the border be examined and tested during the transit period or at the destination.

He explained: For example, if goods enter through the border and are transited to a destination like Isfahan, the tests related to the sample taken should be conducted while the goods are in transit. If the relevant authority fails to conduct the test or announce the result within the stipulated time, the goods should not remain at the border for an extended period. In some cases, it has also been proposed that goods be transferred to the owner's warehouse with a non-consumption undertaking, both to reduce warehousing and waiting costs and to maintain the oversight capability of the responsible authorities.

The Deputy Minister of Economy also said: Another proposal is that for goods such as wheat and similar items that require input from multiple agencies, instead of each agency taking separate samples, a single sampling be conducted at the time of the ship's or truck's presence at the border, and the result be made available to all relevant agencies.

Referring to goods subject to health and special storage requirements, he said: Some goods, if left in public warehouses or unsuitable environments, suffer quality degradation or spoilage. Accordingly, it has been proposed that such goods be kept in cold storage or the owner's warehouse under the supervision of the permitting authority until formalities are completed. This measure both helps preserve the quality of the goods and prevents additional costs from being imposed on the economic operator.

Asgari referred to another important issue for economic operators and said: One of the issues that has always caused problems for traders is the precedence of order registration over goods arrival. While the speed of goods entry into the country and logistics processes in many cases outpaces administrative bureaucracy, it is possible that goods enter a free zone, port, or border, but the order registration process has not yet been finalized.

He added: Our proposal is that if goods have entered the country and their order registration has been issued after entry, clearance should be possible provided that the necessary regulations and controls are observed. According to the head of Customs, this issue is particularly important for goods that require further scrutiny in terms of value, year of manufacture, or certain specifications, and could resolve some of the administrative bottlenecks.

The head of Iran's Customs Administration also announced the proposal of three important axes in the Economic Commission and said: One of the main axes is imports without foreign currency transfer, another is supply from one's own foreign currency, and also imports against exports.

He noted: In some cases, the requirement to obtain a source code or banking tracking codes prolongs the trade process. Therefore, proposals have been put forward in this regard that go beyond existing procedures, and decisions are to be made on them with the presence of relevant bodies including the Central Bank. In the sector of imports without foreign currency transfer and some similar methods, the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade has also provided cooperation, and this matter is being pursued with the proposal of relevant officials so that ultimately an implementable and reliable decision is made for economic operators.

Iraqi resistance group sets conditions over weapons

Kataeb Hezbollah demands full exit of US forces, dissolution of Peshmerga and expulsion of Turkish forces in northern Iraq

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – An official from the Iraqi resistance group Kataeb Hezbollah has issued a sharply worded statement setting out conditions for any future cooperation with the Iraqi government over the question of weapons held by the resistance forces.

Abu Mujahid al-Assaf, a security official for Kataeb Hezbollah, said the Islamic Resistance would only consider rapprochement with a government prepared to fundamentally alter Iraq's security and political landscape.

His demands included indeed the complete withdrawal of American forces from Iraqi territory, airspace, and waters, guarantees that they would not return, and an end to U.S. influence over Iraq's political and economic decisions.

The demands come amid a broader and longstanding dispute in Iraq over the future of armed groups outside the conventional military and security structures of the state. Kataeb Hezbollah is widely considered an anti-American resistance movement and one of the most powerful in Iraq.

The question of how, or whether, groups similar to Kataeb Hezbollah should surrender, integrate, or retain their weapons has remained one of the most politically sensitive issues in the country.

In his statement, al-Assaf presented the issue not simply as a question of disarmament but as a test of Iraqi sovereignty. The resistance movement, he argued, would not discuss its weapons while American forces remained in Iraq or while Baghdad's political and economic decisions were subject to U.S. influence.

"The complete and real withdrawal of the American enemy forces from Iraqi land, sky, and waters" was the first condition listed by al-Assaf. He added that Baghdad must ensure the occupying forces "do not return", while also freeing Iraq's political and economic decision-making from "American dominance".

Amid broad public anger, the future roles of U.S. forces in Iraq have been the subject of negotiations between consecutive governments in Baghdad and Washington.

Al-Assaf's second demand was directed at Turkey. He called for the "expulsion of Turkish forces occupying northern Iraq", echoing long-



standing objections from the Iraqi governments to Turkish military operations and bases in northern Iraq.

Turkey has maintained a military presence in northern Iraq for years as part of operations against the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which Ankara considers a terrorist organization.

The issue has repeatedly complicated relations between Baghdad and Ankara. Iraqi officials have objected to Turkish military activity on Iraqi territory while Turkey argues that its operations are necessary to counter the PKK.

The statement went further in its criticism of Iraq's Kurdish forces. Al-Assaf demanded the dissolution of the Peshmerga forces, saying they are "the most armed and dangerous militia to the unity of Iraq, in addition to their suspicious ties with the Zionist-American enemy."

The statement then turned directly towards the Iraqi prime minister.

Al-Assaf said Kataeb Hezbollah had spent more than 100 days tolerating Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi's "empty posturing", hoping that the "young" leader would come to understand the domestic, regional, and international forces shaping Iraq. He said the movement had also expected the prime minister to heed the advice of experienced politicians.

Instead, al-Assaf argued, there had been no meaningful change.

"We have not seen any development from him in understanding the complex circumstances passing through Iraq and the region," he said, accusing al-Zaidi of listening instead to people hostile to Iraq and to the U.S. special presidential envoy Tom Barrack to Syria and Iraq, whom the statement labelled as "the pickpocket".

Trump's threat to bomb Oman triggers backlash across Arab world and US

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Donald Trump triggered international backlash after threatening military strikes against Oman, reportedly punishing the Persian Gulf nation for negotiating a maritime traffic arrangement with Iran.

Speaking Monday in a telephone interview with Fox News correspondent Trey Yingst, Trump warned that "if Oman gets in the way, we'll bomb the shit out of them."

He later told reporters in the Oval Office that Muscat had not "behaved very well" and claimed the U.S. would "handle them very easily."

'Opposing Iranian-Omani management of Hormuz'

The administration's aggression may stem directly from Oman's diplomatic contacts with Tehran. According to a Tuesday report by the Associated Press citing regional officials, Trump threatened Oman because the country is finalizing an unannounced deal with Iran to coordinate ship traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

According to AP, the Trump administration strongly opposes key elements of the arrangement, particularly joint Iranian and Omani management of the exit route out of the strategic passage. U.S. officials reportedly believe Oman has not taken a sufficiently firm stance against Iran.

The administration also objects to Oman collecting voluntary fees from commercial vessels for maritime security and environmental protection, according to AP.

Arab commentators slam the silence of their governments

The Omani government maintained its customary diplomatic silence, but Omani public figures reacted with sharp defiance.

Editor Hatem Al-Ta'i of Al-Roya described the threats as political bullying that exposes Washington's inability to reopen the waterway by force.

Writer Abbas Al Zadjali noted that respect cannot be built through threats, pointing out that Trump previously warned Oman in May to "behave just like

The personal nature of the criticism marks a significant escalation in the statement. Rather than limiting its objections to government policy, Kataeb Hezbollah accused the prime minister of failing to understand the balance of forces inside Iraq and of aligning himself with figures the movement considers hostile to the Iraqi resistance.

The most eye-catching language appeared in the statement's third section, where al-Assaf accused the government of "storming homes and terrifying the families of martyrs, the wounded, resistance fighters, and elders, with direct supervision from the American enemy."

"Our patience has begun to run out," he said, describing the actions as "provocative and irresponsible."

He then invoked a proverb: "The sister's son has seven stabs at his uncle's chest," saying that the government's actions had ultimately "ended up in our chests, which are filled with the scars of wounds from Iraq's enemies."

This was followed by an explicit warning. "We have begun working on the principle of: An eye for an eye, and the initiator is the more unjust," al-Assaf said.

The warning was directed particularly at the attacks on the families of those who had fought and died for Iraq. Such families, he said, should not be targeted or intimidated, arguing that the consequences of such actions would extend beyond the immediate confrontation.

The official also contrasted the lives of the prime minister and members of the armed resistance, accusing al-Zaidi of having enjoyed wealth and security while members of Kataeb Hezbollah and other resistance fighters had shed blood defending Iraq.

"You were engaging in trade, enjoying safety and luxury, and filling your safes with billions, while our blood was bleeding to preserve the country's sovereignty, statehood, and sacred sites," al-Assaf said.

He concluded the reminder with a reference to men who were prepared to act regardless of political pressure: "You are facing men who do not fear the blame of any blamer for the sake of God."

The statement stopped short of announcing a specific military action against the government. But its language suggests that Kataeb Hezbollah is attempting to establish political and security red lines while simultaneously warning that continued pressure on its members could provoke retaliation.

The final section of the statement shifted to an appeal to senior political figures. Al-Assaf called on "senior brothers and their wise leaders" to intervene and correct the prime minister's mistakes.

The objective, he said, should be to restore stability, preserve Iraq's dignity, and prevent the country from being drawn into actions that serve its enemies.

That appeal illustrates the complicated position facing the Iraqi government amid efforts by the United States to dissolve the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF). The PMF was formally incorporated into Iraq's security apparatus after the rise of Daesh, with its soldiers playing a major role in the campaign against the terrorist organization.

Kataeb Hezbollah is demanding changes to Iraq's relationship with foreign powers before it will contemplate cooperation with the government on disarmament. Its conditions are sweeping: American forces must leave; U.S. influence over Iraqi decision-making must end; Turkish troops must be expelled; and the Peshmerga must be dissolved.

At the same time, the increasingly personal criticism of the prime minister and the warnings of retaliation suggest that the dispute is no longer confined to questions of long-term state policy.

For now, Kataeb Hezbollah has made clear that it does not regard the weapons question as a simple matter of surrendering arms. In al-Assaf's formulation, the issue is inseparable from Iraqi sovereignty, resistance to foreign military forces, and the political balance inside the country.



everybody else, or we will have to blow them up."

Academic Abdullah Baabood observed that Washington effectively demands total obedience, forcing partners into a rigid "with us or against us" choice.

Across the Middle East, media coverage focused heavily on the failure of regional bodies to defend a member state.

Kuwaiti magazine Kawalees criticized the total absence of a collective Arab denunciation.

Political analyst Dr. Fouad Ibrahim told Nabaa TV that the silence of the [Persian] Gulf Cooperation Council demonstrates

its complete subordination to Washington.

UAE political scientist Abdulkhaleq Abdulla argued on X that the [P]GCC Secretariat should reject the threat in the strongest terms.

Jordan's Ammon News and Egyptian commentator Moataz Matar highlighted the blatant double standard: Arab capitals issue immediate protests over Iranian rhetoric, yet offer complete silence when an American president threatens an Arab nation.

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

Sarah's war against the rest of civilization

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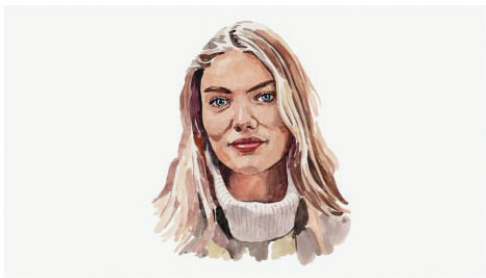
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By Invitation | Mother, daughter, misery

Women are treated horribly in Afghanistan—and in many other places

The Taliban represent the farthest end of a global continuum of restrictions on female lives, writes Sarah Little

Share



From page 1 ► Every society contains two major institutions of power: government and economy. One generates political power; the other economic power. The two are not always aligned. They may reach an accommodation, one may dominate the other, or, when accommodation fails, they may come into conflict. Much of what we call "social order" is produced by the relationship between these two forms of power.

The United States is a prominent example of the dominance of economic power over political power. Economic power is so extensive and organized that politics, across much of the field, operates within boundaries already shaped by economic interests. Taliban-ruled Afghanistan represents something close to the reverse: a politically assertive authority presiding over a weak local economy that has limited capacity to discipline political power or force it into accommodation.

The difference, then, is not between a "controlled society" and a "free society". It is between two configurations of power.

Political power has a short and hard arm. It issues orders, makes laws, prohibits, deploys police, imprisons and punishes. The path of command is usually identifiable. Someone says what must be done, and someone else is expected to comply.

Economic power has another kind of arm: long, extensive and, along much of its length, invisible. Between the holder of economic power and the person who eventually performs the desired behavior lies a chain of intermediaries: media, advertising, fashion, cinema, entertainment, the beauty industry, labor markets, systems of status, social media, algorithms and the vast machinery of cultural production.

Economic power does not need to send an of-

ficer to my door every morning to tell me what to wear, what to eat, which bodies I should find attractive, which parts of my own body I should dislike, what I should regard as success, or what should make me feel ashamed. It can construct a world of meaning within which I will do these things myself.

The more successful this long arm becomes, the less visible it is.

At the beginning of the chain lies an economic interest. Media translate it into a value. Culture turns the value into a norm. The norm becomes desire in everyday life. At the end of the process, the individual says: "I chose this."

This is where the idea of agency becomes complicated.

Suppose the same cultural apparatus that tells a woman that the hijab in Afghanistan is an instance of the management of the female body also announces that boots are fashionable for women this year. A woman wears boots through the hottest months of summer. She pays for them herself. She bears the physical discomfort herself. No armed officer is standing over her. She may even take pleasure in the feeling that she has chosen her own style and exercised her agency.

I do not regard these two forms of violence as equivalent.

On the contrary, violence that a person accepts voluntarily may be considerably more dangerous. Under overt coercion, there is still something called "I" standing opposite the command. I know who is demanding what from me, and even if I cannot resist, I can identify the source of the force. But when power has planted its demand within me, it no longer needs an officer to enforce it.

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

Despite al-Jolani's appeasement, Israel strikes Syrian airfield, warning Ankara

TEHRAN — Israeli jets pounded the Abu Duhur military airbase in eastern Idlib early Tuesday. Eight consecutive strikes cratered the runway and obliterated storage facilities.

The bombardment came just hours after a Turkish military delegation inspected the site for rehabilitation, demonstrating Tel Aviv's absolute disregard for Syrian sovereignty and Ankara's footprint in the region.

The 3 a.m. attack underscores that no matter how much the new administration in Damascus capitulates to Western demands or signals restraint, Israel will not halt its systematic destruction of Syrian military infrastructure.

Syrian state media confirmed extensive damage to the airfield, located 300 kilometers from Israeli-occupied lands.

Syria's Foreign Ministry called the strikes an unjustified act of aggression and a flagrant violation of Syrian sovereignty and territorial integrity. It warned of a dangerous escalation that threatens regional security. Turkey also condemned the attacks.

The strikes forced a public rebuke from Washington. U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Syria Tom Barrack confirmed Israeli culpability on Tuesday, calling the attack an "unnecessary escalation that does not advance regional stability."

Barrack openly admitted the Ahmed "al-Jolani" al-Sharaa government has not adopted a predatory posture toward Tel Aviv.

He noted Damascus has repeatedly shown a preference for de-escalation. Yet the United States continues to arm and support the military carrying out these daily incursions.

Since the fall of the previous government in December 2024, Israel has torn up the 1974 ceasefire agreement, annexed territory beyond the occupied Golan Heights, and bombed the remnants of the Syrian air force.

Efforts to negotiate a so-called security arrangement have produced no tangible results, while Damascus's policy of accommodation has failed to deter further Israeli aggression.

Israel appears intent on keeping Syria militarily vulnerable and subject to continued attacks.

The Palestinian resistance also condemned the Idlib strikes. In a formal statement on Tuesday, Hamas called the bombardment "systematic state terrorism and a flagrant violation of Syrian sovereignty."

"The continuation of the fascist occupation government's policy of arrogance against the region's countries and peoples, and the violation of their sovereignty, will only lead to further tension and instability in the region," the movement stated.

It demanded that the international community take effective action to restrain the occupation and hold its leaders accountable before international courts.

Bam Khatoon start AFC Women’s Champions League 2026/27 on high

TEHRAN - Bam Khatoon put on a commanding performance to beat Tajikistan's FC CSKA Dushanbe 3-0 in their AFC Women's Champions League 2026/27 Preliminary Stage clash on Monday.

Iran side took a two-goal lead in the first half and wrapped up the match after keeping a resurgent Dushanbe in check to get their Group E campaign off to a confident start.

Striker Sara Didar gave Bam Khatoon the upper hand in the ninth minute when she picked up a cross from Fatemeh Shaban on the right and half-volleyed past a hesitant Ayishatu Simpson in goal.

The Dushanbe keeper, however, pulled off a fine save from a Shaban free-kick in the 19th minute while Cecilia Nyama tested custodian Raha Yazdani moments later at the other end with a close-range effort that lacked power.

Simpson palmed away a stinging effort by Roujin Tamrian in the 32nd minute but failed to prevent Maryam Dini - who latched on to Shaban's cross - from steering a point-blank header into the back of the net five minutes later.

Bam Khatoon will meet Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr Club on Thursday while Dushanbe will look to improve on their performance against Jordan's Etihad Club.

Gol Gohar discover rivals at AFC Champions League Two 2026/27

TEHRAN - The 32-strong cast for the AFC Champions League Two 2026/27 discovered their opponents following the Group Stage Draw in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Tuesday.

The 22nd edition of Asia's second-tier men's competition will kick off its thrilling group battles - to be played in a home-and-away round-robin format - on September 15.

Gol Gohar Sirjan are drawn in Group B along with Al Jazira Club (UAE), Al Muharraq SC (BHR) and FC Arkadag (TKM).

The Group Stage is scheduled to conclude on Dec. 9, 2026 before moving into the Round of 16 between February 9 and 18, 2027. The Quarter-finals and Semi-finals are set for March 2-18 and April 6-14 respectively, with the Final penciled in for May 15, 2027.

Draw Result

Group A: Al Wahda FC (UAE), PFC Nasaf (UZB), Kuwait SC (KUW), Al Khaldiya SC (BHR)

Group B: Al Jazira Club (UAE), Gol Gohar Sirjan SC (IRN), Al Muharraq SC (BHR), FC Arkadag (TKM)

Group C: Al Taawoun FC (KSA), Al Rayyan SC (QAT), Al Faisaly (JOR), Al Nahda Club (OMA)

Group D: Al Hussein (JOR), Al Shorta (IRQ), Al Seeb Club (OMA), East Bengal FC (IND)

Group E: FC Seoul (KOR), Melbourne Victory FC (AUS), The Cong - Viettel FC (VIE), Persib Bandung (IDN)/Manila Digger (PHI)

Group F: Adelaide United (AUS), BG Pathum United (THA), Lion City Sailors FC (SGP), Tai Po FC (HKG)

Group G: FC Machida Zelvia (JPN), Shanghai Shenhua FC (CHN), Preah Khan Reach Svay Rieng FC (CAM), Tampines Rovers FC (SGP)

Group H: Gangwon FC (KOR), Kuching City FC (MAS), Kitchee SC (HKG), Phnom Penh Crown FC (CAM)

Iran to face Algeria at 2026 FIVB U17 World Championship opener

TEHRAN - The second edition of the FIVB Volleyball Boys' U17 World Championship is set to get underway in Doha, Qatar, with 24 of the world's best young volleyball teams competing for the global title from Aug. 19 to 29. The tournament represents an important opportunity for the next generation of players to gain experience on the

international stage and establish themselves as future stars of the sport.

Iran will be among the teams looking to make a deep run in the competition. The Iranian U17 side, coached by Arash Sadeghiani, have been placed in Pool E and will begin their campaign on Wednesday against Algeria. The match is scheduled for 14:00 local time in Doha and will provide Iran with an immediate opportunity to make a positive start to the tournament.

Iran's group-stage opponents also include Chinese Taipei, Pakistan, and Algeria. The competition features a revised format in 2026. The 24 teams have been divided into six pools of four, with the top two teams from each pool automatically advancing to the Round of 16. The four best third-placed teams will also progress, meaning that every match in the preliminary phase could prove crucial in determining the knockout-stage lineup.

For Sadeghiani's young squad, the opening encounter against Algeria offers the perfect opportunity to build momentum. Iran have already shown promising form during their preparations in Doha, defeating Italy 3-1 in a warm-up match shortly before the tournament. The result followed another victory in their preparation schedule and provided the team with confidence ahead of their opening World Championship fixture.

Iran have traditionally enjoyed considerable success in age-group volleyball, making their participation in the U17 World Championship particularly significant. The inaugural edition in 2024 was won by Italy, who defeated Argentina in the final, while Iran will now aim to challenge the strongest teams and secure a place in the medal rounds.

After Algeria, Iran will face Pakistan on Aug. 21 before completing the pool stage against Chinese Taipei on Aug. 23.

Hopefuls discover path to glory

TEHRAN - The stage is set for a thrilling AFC Champions League Elite 2026/27 following the League Stage Draw in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Tuesday.

The upcoming edition of Asia's top-tier men's club competition will feature an expanded cast of 32 sides for the first time since the revamp to its current name in 2024/25.

Reigning champions Al Ahli Saudi FC, aiming to become the first team to lift the trophy three times in a row, will face two-time winners Al Ain FC (UAE), 2011 champions Al Sadd SC (QAT), Shabab Al Ahli (UAE), PFC Neftchi (UZB), Al Gharafa SC (QAT), Al Wasl FC (UAE), Pakhtakor (UZB) and Al Shamal SC (QAT).

Four-time Asian champions Al Hilal SFC will be challenged by Al Ain, Al Sadd, Shabab Al Ahli, PFC Neftchi, Al Gharafa, Al Wasl, Pakhtakor and Al Shamal.

Korea Republic champions Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC's bid for a third continental title will begin against Shanghai Port FC (CHN), Kashima Antlers (JPN), Vissel Kobe (JPN), Johor Darul Ta'zim FC (MAS), Kashiwa Reysol (JPN), Beijing FC (CHN), debutants Kyoto Sanga FC (JPN) and Gamba Osaka (JPN).

Besides Jeonbuk, former winners and Japanese champions Kashima Antlers will mark their return to the top tier of Asian club football for the first time since 2019 with ties against Daejeon Hanacitizen (KOR), Port FC (THA), FC Pohang Steelers (KOR), Ratchaburi FC (THA), Buriram United (THA), Newcastle Jets FC (AUS) and Cong An Ha Noi FC (VIE) as their other League Stage opponents.

The action will kick off on September 14, with the League Stage scheduled to conclude in February 2027. The top eight finishers of each League Stage advance to the Round of 16, to be played from March 1 to 17, 2027, before a centralized Finals - comprising all matches from the Quarter-finals onwards - is contested in Saudi Arabia between April 23 and May 1, 2027.

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Cultural heritage is Iran’s strategic asset, official says

TEHRAN – Iran should regard its cultural heritage as a strategic national asset that can strengthen historical identity, foster national pride and cohesion, and help unlock the country's tourism and economic potential, Vice President for Parliamentary Affairs and Strategic Affairs Mohsen Esmaeili said on Monday.

Esmaeili made the remarks at a specialized meeting held at the National Museum of Iran to mark the recent inscription of Alamut Castle and Related Fortifications on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

He described the inscription as an important achievement for Iran's identity and civilization, saying international recognition of a heritage site was comparable to issuing an official identity document for a country and its people.

“Iran has always been and remains proud, but being and demonstrating are two different matters,” he said, according to Mehr news agency. “We may speak about ourselves, but when an official document is issued and the world acknowledges it, that is a source of pride.”

Esmaeili said the international registration of historical sites should be viewed as part of Iran's broader national identity framework. Given Alamut Castle's historical significance and potential, he said, its inscription deserved to be marked by a major national celebration.

The official linked the issue of cultural heritage to what he described as a growing global identity crisis, particularly among younger generations. He said many scholars around the world were examining the causes of this crisis and ways of addressing it.

Iran is also facing the issue, he said, adding that one way to help address it is by reminding younger



generations of the country's national history and cultural roots.

Esmaeili referred to his reading of works on Iranian history, including a book by British academic Michael Axworthy, whom he described as a prominent scholar who had also served as head of the Iran desk at Britain's Foreign Office.

He said Axworthy's writings on Iran had prompted him to consider whether Iranian institutes and centers of Iranian studies had produced similarly comprehensive research on the country.

Esmaeili said the book highlighted Iran's historical and cultural influence, including the influence of Persian on other languages, as well as the country's surviving tangible heritage.

Iran's civilizational heritage, however, extends

beyond monuments and archaeological sites, Esmaeili said, emphasizing the importance of the country's intangible cultural heritage.

He cited major Persian literary figures including Hafez, Saadi and Rumi as examples of the depth of Iran's intangible cultural heritage.

Esmaeili also called for stronger legal foundations to protect the country's cultural heritage.

“Today, more than ever, we must view cultural heritage as a strategic asset,” he said. “It can simultaneously consolidate the nation's historical identity, strengthen national pride and cohesion, activate the country's tourism and economic potential, and create a living and meaningful connection between the younger generation and Iran's past and future.”

Archaeologists resume excavations at Qal-e Kord Cave, a key Paleolithic site

TEHRAN - The seventh season of archaeological excavations at Qal-e Kord Cave in Avaj County, Qazvin province, has begun, as researchers seek to reconstruct more precisely the sequence of human occupation and the formation of cultural layers at the prehistoric site.

Maryam Mahdavi, director general of Qazvin's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, announced the start of the new excavation season on Wednesday, Miras Aria reported.

She said the seventh season is being conducted under a permit from the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, with financial support from the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department and in coordination with the Archaeological Research Institute.

The project is led by Milad Hashemi Sarvandi, a faculty member of the Archaeology Department at Tarbiat Modares University.

According to Mahdavi, the current season includes continued excavation in parts of previously opened trenches as well as the opening of new areas. The main objective is to establish a more

precise reconstruction of the sequence of human occupations at the cave and to better understand the processes that led to the formation of its cultural layers.

Previous excavations have identified the cave as one of Iran's oldest known archaeological sites and have opened new avenues for research into the country's Paleolithic period.

Archaeological evidence from the cave indicates repeated human occupation extending back more than 400,000 years. Stone tools recovered from the site have been associated with early human species, including Homo heidelbergensis and possibly Homo erectus, while later evidence points to Neanderthal occupation.

Researchers have also recovered animal remains, including those of extinct prehistoric horses, deer, brown bears and rhinoceroses, providing clues about the environment and subsistence practices of the cave's prehistoric inhabitants.

The first season of joint Iranian-French excavations at Qal-e Kord in November 2018 resulted in the discovery of more than 6,000 cultural ar-

tefacts, along with animal bones and numerous stone tools attributed to the Middle Paleolithic period.

Research on the cave has contributed to a broader understanding of human occupation in the Zagros region, including the presence and activities of Neanderthals in the mountainous areas of Iran.

The Paleolithic Period, or Old Stone Age, was an ancient stage of human development characterized by the use of rudimentary chipped-stone tools. The popular Paleo diet, also known as the Stone Age diet, is based on foods that humans are presumed to have consumed during this period.

The Paleolithic Period is generally divided into three phases: Lower, Middle, and Upper Paleolithic. However, anthropologists avoid assigning rigid chronological boundaries to these divisions because technological developments emerged at different times and in different regions. There was also considerable overlap between phases, as new technologies took time to spread, meaning some human groups adopted more advanced tools and techniques earlier than others.

Second Announcement



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Iran wins medal, honorable mentions at Intl. Geography Olympiad

TEHRAN – Iranian students succeeded to win a bronze medal and three honorable mentions at the 22nd International Geography Olympiad (iGeo) held from August 11 to 17 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The International Geography Olympiad is the world's premier academic competition for secondary school students. It is held under the auspices of the International Geographical Union (IGU) and organized by the IGU Olympiad Commission. This year's competition brought together more than 180 participants from over 50 countries.

Helia Khodabandelou grabbed the bronze medal, while Setayesh Haqnazari, Artina Heidari, and Sana Karbalaee received international diploma of honors.

The iGeo consists of three main parts: Written Response Test (40 percent) which involves analytical questions covering physical, human, and regional geography; Multimedia Test (20 percent), including map interpretation, graphs, photos, and data analysis; and Fieldwork Exercise (40 percent), including real-world data collection and analysis (at Istanbul sites this year).

The four students attended the Open International Geography Olympiad (OpenGeo) 2026, winning four medals, including a silver medal and three bronze medals for the first time. Heidari won the silver medal; Haqnazari, Karbalaee Vali, and Khodabandelou received the bronze medals, IRIB reported.

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

Recent achievements

Iranian students clinched medals and an honorable mention at the 9th International Economics Olympiad (IEO 2026) held from



July 12-20 in Shenzhen China, and the 38th edition of International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI) held from August 9 to 16 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

This year, 270 students from 54 countries attended the IEO competition. MobinKarimiDizicheh secured silver medal. He received an honorable mention and also won Best in Finance, Borna news agency reported.

Mohammad-Hossein Rahiminejad, Alireza Atashi, and Ehsan Zolfaghari won the bronze medals.

IEO is an annual competition for high school students around the world in the areas of Economics and Finance. The Olympiad is supported by Eric Maskin, winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2007.

Meanwhile, a total of 386 students from more than 97 countries participated in this year's IOI competition.

Hamed Ghaffari-Aghdas and Arash Ostadsharif-Memar grabbed the silver medals, while Mohammad Shayan won the bronze medal. Moreover, Bahamin Shafaqi received an honorable mention.

The IOI is one of the several international science Olympiads held annually around the world. Exceptional high school students from various countries compete in the prestigious algorithmic competition to sharpen their informatics skills – such as problem

analysis, design of algorithms and data structures, programming, and testing.

Iranian students won a gold medal, two silver medals, and a bronze medal at the third edition of the International Olympiad in Artificial Intelligence (IOAI 2026), held from August 2-8 in Astana, Kazakhstan.

IOAI is the International Science Olympiad in AI for high school students. It aims to inspire young people globally in science, focusing on AI. The competition provides a platform for top AI students selected through national competitions to compete, exchange ideas, and build connections, fostering a dialogue on AI's opportunities and ethical challenges among students and the community.

Shayan Rezaeizadeh grabbed the gold medal, Mohammad-Reza Darvishi, and Mohammad-Amin Nazmfar won the silver medals, while Mani Monjipor received the bronze medal, IRNA reported.

This year's competition brought together over 120 teams, more than 500 students from 103 countries and territories around the world to compete in AI and machine learning (ML) challenges.

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

Chemistry Olympiad (IChO).

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

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

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

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

The five-member team of Iranian students has demonstrated a remarkable achievement, garnering three gold medals and two silver medals at the 56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO).

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

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

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

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

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

Iranian, Indonesian universities ink MOU to boost scientific ties

TEHRAN – Sharif University of Technology and Institut Teknologi Bandung of Indonesia have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to deepen scientific, research, and educational cooperation, exchange professors, researchers, and students, and implement collaborative research projects.

The MOU aims to bolster scientific and academic interactions between the two universities, explore the potential for technological collaborations and technology commercialization. Accordingly, the faculties and academic staff of the two universities can identify areas of shared research interest and collaborate on implementing specific research projects, IRNA reported.

It centers on exchanging scientific resources and information, holding joint conferences, educational workshops, and symposia, conducting short-term scientific visits, as well as developing joint educational programs and curricula.

The agreement also grants postgraduate students the opportunity to study abroad, access library resources at partner universities, and conduct field research.

Tehran, Jakarta to beef up ties in technological co-op

On the sidelines of the 13th BRICS Education Ministers' Meeting, held from August 5 to 7 in Odisha, India, Acting Minister for Science, Research and Technology of Iran, Masoud Shams-Bakhsh, and Indonesian Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, Brian Yuliarto, held a meeting to explore avenues for the development of scientific and technological cooperation.

Both sides discussed ways to develop scientific collaborations, particularly in emerging technologies.

During the meeting, Yuliarto expounded on the scientific capacities of Indonesia, specifically in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, voicing

Jakarta's readiness to implement collaborative research projects, exchange professors and postgraduate students, grant sabbatical leaves, and organize short-form courses in cooperation with Tehran.

The Indonesian official invited Minister of Science, Research and Technology, Hossein Simaei-Sarraf, and Shams-Bakhsh to pay a visit to Indonesia

For his part, Shams-Bakhsh highlighted that long-standing cultural, historical, and religious ties between the two countries have established a natural, deep, and lasting foundation for the expansion of educational and research cooperation between the two countries.

Increasing the number of scholarships, expanding scholarship exchanges, developing joint educational courses, conducting research on climate change, food security, renewable energies, and agriculture were among key focuses of the talks.

The two sides also discussed the inclusion of more Iranian universities in the BRICS Network University, relying on Indonesia's experiences. They highlighted the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to implement the reached agreements as soon as possible

On July 15, the Iran National Science Foundation (INSF) and the Indonesia National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) conducted a joint webinar, titled 'Advancing Iran-Indonesia Research Collaboration: Strategic Opportunities Ahead', on Wednesday to explore avenues for the expansion of scientific and research cooperation between the researchers, scientists, and the scientific institutions of the two countries.

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

Also, experts and professors from both

countries in the health, water security, and environment sectors delivered lectures.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Iran proposes BRICS environmental network to address ecological damage

TEHRAN – Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment, has called for closer environmental cooperation among BRICS member states, describing their combined capacities in natural resources, biodiversity, coastal and marine ecosystems, and other environmentally valuable areas as a “historic opportunity” to address the growing global environmental crisis.

Speaking at the 12th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, Ansari proposed placing environmental security alongside energy and food security, establishing a BRICS network to monitor and assess environmental damage resulting from armed conflicts and climate change, creating a rapid-response mechanism for marine pollution and hazardous-material spills, and expanding the exchange of technologies and expertise for restoring damaged ecosystems.

She also called for stronger cooperation between BRICS countries and specialized international organizations to address the environmental consequences of crises and to pursue accountability for those responsible for environmental destruction, based on the principle that “the polluter must pay.”

Ansari further proposed launching discussions on a common BRICS framework for environmental protection during armed conflicts.

Emphasizing the direct link between peace, security and environmental protection, she called for a joint mechanism among BRICS members to monitor and respond to environmental damage caused by armed conflicts and climate-related crises.

“Environmental protection is not merely a theoretical issue; it is directly linked to the peace and security of countries and peoples,” Ansari said.

On 28 February 2026, the Islamic Republic of Iran was subjected to widespread, unlawful and uncivilized military aggression by the United States and the Zionist regime. This aggression, in addition to the martyrdom of the Supreme Leader and innocent people, particularly the innocent children of the Minab school, as well as extensive damage to civilian and non-military infrastructure, has also caused significant environmental impacts and risks that concern the entire world.

“Energy facilities, industrial infrastructure and other vital installations in times of war are not merely buildings and equipment; they are part of an interconnected system whose destruction can result in the release of pollutants, chemicals, fuel and other hazardous substances into the air, soil and water, while also aggravating the effects of natural phenomena such as global warming and dust storms.”

From this perspective, the environment is a silent victim of war—a victim whose consequences do not stop at Iran's borders, she stressed.

Persian Gulf vulnerable to consequences of wars

Highlighting the particular importance of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, Ansari said the two bodies of water are among the world's most sensitive and fragile marine ecosystems.

“This issue is of even greater significance with regard to the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

The Persian Gulf is one of the most sensitive and fragile marine ecosystems in the world. Its semi-enclosed and shallow waters, valuable aquatic resources, coral habitats, mangrove forests, sandy coastlines, and habitats of marine and migratory species are all vulnerable to pollution and disruptions caused by military activities.

Moreover, these two marine areas have already suffered extensive environmental damage as a result of the consequences of previous wars and the presence of military fleets of extra-regional powers over the past three decades.”

“This reality conveys a clear message to the international community: War in one region does not necessarily remain confined to that region; its environmental consequences can persist across generations and throughout the planet.”



Accountability for environmental destruction

International law has long emphasized the fundamental principle that States must prevent the infliction of transboundary environmental harm.

The principle of prevention of transboundary harm, the duty to cooperate, environmental impact assessment, and the principle of reasonable and responsible use of shared natural resources now constitute important elements of international environmental law.

At the same time, international humanitarian law imposes limitations on the methods and means of warfare and provides protection to the natural environment against certain forms of severe, widespread and long-term damage.

These principles convey a common message: War cannot constitute a licence for the unrestrained destruction of nature.

More importantly, the environment must not be regarded in military calculations merely as “collateral damage.”

When an unlawful military aggression results in the pollution of shared waters, the destruction of marine habitats, the release of toxic substances, or the destruction of vital environmental infrastructure, its consequences can directly affect human health, food security, economies and the livelihoods of millions of people. She added that BRICS could become an effective platform for cooperation among countries of the Global South in protecting the environment, ensuring that no ecosystem in the 21st century becomes a “silent victim” of political and military conflicts or violations of international law.

Utilizing the potential of BRICS

BRICS today brings together major, diverse and influential countries of the Global South—countries that collectively encompass a significant share of the world's natural resources, biodiversity, coastlines, oceans and valuable ecosystems, Ansari highlighted.

“Utilizing the potential of BRICS to establish a new approach to South-South cooperation is both a historic responsibility and a historic opportunity, and we must seize it.”

Ansari added that “Our priority areas could include the following:

- Placing “environmental security” alongside energy security, food security and the security of human societies as an undeniable necessity.

- Establishing a BRICS network for monitoring and assessing environmental damage resulting from armed conflicts, as well as natural developments associated with climate change, by making use of scientific capacities and advanced technologies.

- Establishing a cooperation mechanism for rapid response to marine pollution, hazardous-material spills, forest and natural-habitat fires, and dust storms, particularly in sensitive areas.

- Exchanging experiences and technologies among Member States in the restoration of ecosystems damaged as a result of war and armed conflict.

- Strengthening cooperation among Member States and with relevant specialized international institutions to jointly address the impacts and consequences of phenomena affecting the environment, to condemn aggression, and to hold the aggressor accountable on the basis of the principle that the polluter is responsible for providing compensation.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



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AUGUST 19, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Modesty is the key to all goodness.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:08 Evening: 19:08 Dawn: 3:56 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:27 (tomorrow)

Christopher Beckwith's "Empires of the Silk Road" published in Persian

TEHRAN – The Persian translation of the book “Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present” by Christopher I. Beckwith has been released in the bookstores across Iran.

Translated by Sahrbano Saremi, the book has been brought out by Qoqnoos Publishing House in 464 pages, ILNA reported.

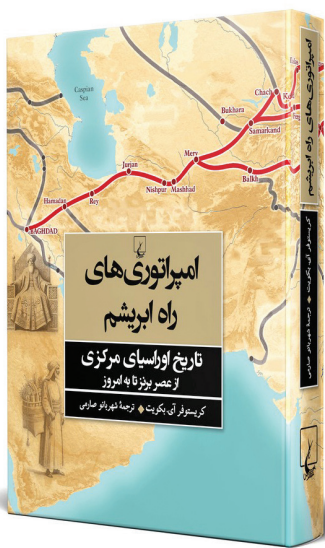
Originally published in 2009, the first complete history of Central Eurasia from ancient times to the present day, “Empires of the Silk Road” represents a fundamental rethinking of the origins, history, and significance of this major world region.

Christopher Beckwith describes the rise and fall of the great Central Eurasian empires, including those of the Scythians, Attila the Hun, the Turks and Tibetans, and Genghis Khan and the Mongols.

In addition, he explains why the heartland of Central Eurasia led the world economically, scientifically, and artistically for many centuries despite invasions by Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Chinese, and others.

In retelling the story of the Old World from the perspective of Central Eurasia, Beckwith provides a new understanding of the internal and external dynamics of the Central Eurasian states and shows how their people repeatedly revolutionized Eurasian civilization.

Beckwith recounts the Indo-Europeans’ migration out of Central Eurasia, their mixture with local peoples, and the resulting development of the Graeco-Roman, Persian, Indian, and Chinese civilizations; he details the basis for the thriving economy of premodern Central Eurasia, the economy’s disintegration following the region’s partition by the Chinese and Russians in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the damaging of Central Eurasian culture by Modernism; and he discusses the significance for world history of the partial reemergence of Central Eurasian nations after the collapse of the Soviet Union.



“Empires of the Silk Road” places Central Eurasia within a world historical framework and demonstrates why the region is central to understanding the history of civilization.

Christopher I. Beckwith, 80, is an American philologist and distinguished professor emeritus in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University Bloomington, Indiana.

He has a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese from Ohio State University (1968), a Master of Arts in Tibetan from Indiana University Bloomington (1974) and a Doctor of Philosophy in Inner Asian Studies from Indiana University (1977).

Beckwith is a researcher in the field of Central Eurasian studies. He researches the history and cultures of ancient and medieval Central Asia. Concomitantly he specializes in Asian language studies and linguistics, and in the history of Central Eurasia. He teaches Old Tibetan, Central Eurasian languages, and Central Eurasian history and researches the linguistics of Aramaic, Chinese, Japanese, Koguryo, Old Tibetan, Tokharian, Old Turkic, Uzbek, and other languages.

Cartoon of Day



The Famine Continues

Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

15th International 100-Second Film Festival to organize specialized workshops in 9 countries

TEHRAN – The 15th edition of the International 100-Second Film Festival will organize a series of specialized international workshops across nine countries, aimed at advancing media literacy, filmmaking, and explaining new narratives.

The specialized cinema and media workshops will be held with the goal of empowering artists and building international networks. Designed around the transfer of technical expertise and the theoretical foundations of modern storytelling, this educational initiative has created a platform for synergy among filmmakers and art-focused bloggers, Honaron-line reported.

In the intensive segment of the project, 40 filmmakers and bloggers of diverse nationalities will take part. The course curriculum, developed under the guidance of Mohsen Saberi, Sajjad Soleimannejad, and Hossein Naghavi, centers on modern documentary filmmaking, ideation in short films, and the application of artificial intelligence in cinema, to convey new standards of content production to the participants.

The project’s educational network will be implemented on an international scale. Fatima Ahmadova in Russia, Fahim Haider in Pakistan, Renato Valloni in Brazil, Maria Lara in Argentina, Afnan Mir in India, Sirine Khadhraoui in Tunisia,



and Omid Sedoui in Indonesia will lead the specialized workshops in their host countries. Combining technical knowledge with cultural insight, these instructors place particular emphasis on intelligent content production and meaningful-driven narratives.

Designed to create a coherent current of artistic output, these intensive courses go beyond classic classroom education and are shaping a global network for articulating new media narratives. Careful documentation of the processes, recording of the instructors’ experiences, and the compilation of workshop out-

puts—besides enhancing the participants’ technical knowledge—will provide a sustainable foundation for future joint media productions.

Under the direction of Mohadeseh Pirhadi, the 15th edition of the International 100-Second Film Festival will center its thematic focus on three primary categories including “Battle for the Future,” “Battle for the Children of the World,” and “Battle for the Homeland.”

The festival is renowned for its stringent time constraints, which challenge creators to deliver a complete and impactful narrative

within a very limited window.

Since its inception, the festival has served as a prestigious platform for discovering new talents and experimenting with the art of the short, pushing the boundaries of how much emotion and information can be conveyed in a few fleeting seconds. The upcoming edition promises to be a diverse gathering of international perspectives, reflecting the shared struggles and hopes of humanity through the lens of a camera.

The 15th International 100-Second Film Festival is scheduled to take place in Tehran in September.

Iranian radio drama adapts Stephen King’s “Misery”

TEHRAN- The six-part radio drama “A Nurse’s Nightmare,” adapted from American author Stephen King’s acclaimed novel “Misery,” has been produced and broadcast by Iran’s Namayesh Radio.

Directed by Nazanin Mohaimani and adapted for radio by playwright and director Ayoub Aghakhani, the production offers an audio interpretation of one of King’s best-known psychological horror stories, Mehr reported.

The cast of “A Nurse’s Nightmare” includes Mohsen Bahrami, Mona Safi, Mohammad Pourhasan, Mohammad Majdzadeh, Hassan Pourgolmohammadi and Nazanin Mohaimani.

Mir-Taher Mazloumi serves as the narrator, while Narges Mousapour is responsible for sound effects and Majid Ayeneh serves as the sound engineer.

Through its six episodes, “A Nurse’s Nightmare” places particular emphasis on the psychological tension of “Misery,” using the distinctive capabilities of radio drama to recreate the story’s atmosphere of fear, isolation and suspense.

“Misery,” first published in 1987, tells the story of Paul Sheldon, a successful novelist who is seriously injured in a car accident while traveling through a remote area. He is rescued by Annie Wilkes, a former nurse and

an obsessive fan of his novels.

Annie takes Sheldon to her isolated home and begins caring for him. However, it soon becomes clear that she has no intention of allowing him to leave. After discovering that Sheldon has killed off Misery Chastain, the heroine of his popular series, Annie forces the injured writer to revive the character and write a new novel according to her demands.

Confined to a bed and physically dependent on his captor, Sheldon becomes trapped in an increasingly terrifying struggle for survival. The story gradually transforms from a tale of rescue into a psychological battle between a writer desperate for freedom and a fan whose obsession has turned into violence.

The novel explores themes including obsession, control, isolation, creativity and the complicated relationship between authors and their audiences. Much of its tension comes not from supernatural elements but from the psychological and physical vulnerability of its central character.

“Misery” has been adapted several times since its publication. The best-known adaptation is Rob Reiner’s 1990 film, starring James Caan as Paul Sheldon and Kathy Bates as Annie Wilkes. Bates’ performance received widespread critical acclaim and earned her the Academy Award for Best Actress, making

the film one of the most notable adaptations of King’s work.

The story was also adapted for the stage. In 2015, a theatrical production starring Laurie Metcalf and Bruce Willis was performed, further demonstrating the enduring appeal of King’s claustrophobic psychological thriller.

The Iranian radio adaptation, however, uses the possibilities of sound to retell the story in a six-part format. Without visual elements, the production relies on dialogue, narration, voice acting and sound effects to create the atmosphere of confinement and suspense at the heart of the original work.

Stephen King, widely known as the “King of Horror,” is one of the most influential contemporary American writers. He has written numerous novels and short stories, particularly in the horror, crime and science-fiction genres. His works have sold millions of copies worldwide and have inspired numerous film, television, stage and radio adaptations.

Among King’s best-known works are “It,” “The Long Walk,” “Carrie,” “Misery” and “The Shining.” Several of his novels have also been adapted into critically acclaimed films, including “The Shawshank Redemption,” directed by Frank Darabont, “The Shining,” directed by Stanley Kubrick, and “Stand by Me,” directed by Rob Reiner.

Palestinians celebrate Jerusalem Festival return after three-year hiatus

Hundreds of Palestinians have returned to the Jerusalem Festival as the cultural celebration resumed after a three-year hiatus shaped by Israel’s devastating war in Gaza.

The event, which will run for two months, opened on Sunday with a tribute to the late Lebanese musician Ziad Rahbani, a staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause.

At Yabous Cultural Center, in the Israeli-annexed east of the city, the Jerusalem Arabic Music Ensemble played a selection of Rahbani’s work.

“An evening dedicated to Ziad Rahbani represents a major part of our memory. Jerusalem needs this kind of event,” filmmaker Yousef al-Salhi told AFP.

The Lebanese musician and playwright, the son of iconic singer Fairuz and a musical pioneer in his own right, died last year aged 69.

Throughout the evening, Rahbani’s repertoire, from mawwal – slow Arabic free-form vocal mu-



sic – to lively Levantine folk-pop, enthused the audience.

The last edition of the festival was held in the summer of 2023, before Israel’s genocidal war in the Gaza Strip erupted on Oct. 7.

“We insist on coming back... Today we return to give people hope. The festival brings hope and brings people together,” said musician Suheil Khoury, chairman of the board of the Yabous Cultural Center.

The festival is now four decades old, though the city’s tumultuous past means this is only

the 30th edition, with several wars as well as the intifadas, or Palestinian uprisings, of the 1980, 90s and 2000s forcing it to pause.

The festival will continue with musical performances, cultural talks, and art exhibitions taking place at various locations across east Jerusalem until Oct. 15.

“Everyone is thirsty for this kind of gathering amid the difficult circumstances we are going through – the genocidal war, restrictions on Jerusalem and the West Bank, and the vio-

lence being perpetrated against us,” Mona al-Dajani, an academic researcher who attended the opening, said.

Moussa al-Qawasmi, a resident of east Jerusalem, was enthusiastic to attend an event promoting Palestinian culture.

“They (Israel) don’t want us to exist, but no, we are always ready... we will continue to celebrate, sing and dance.”

The death toll from Israel’s war on the Gaza Strip has risen to 73,399, while the number of injured has reached 174,310 since October 7, 2023.

The number of Palestinians killed since the ceasefire took effect on October 11, 2025, has risen to 1,265, while the number of injured reached 4,198 and the number of bodies recovered from under the rubble stood at 813.

A number of victims remain trapped under the rubble and on the roads, amid the inability of ambulance and rescue teams to reach them.