

THE BATTLE FOR IRAN

Help is on the way for Lincoln



SEA POWER: Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln in the Arabian Sea in May before concerns emerged over supply and mental-health issues put the vessel into the spotlight.

US Central Command Public Affairs

told The Associated Press. "And when the threat in the region of the Middle East has been attended to, we will redeploy and reorient and be able to project that force wherever else it might be required."

"I also feel very confident in the Armed Forces of the Philippines' ability to protect their sovereignty here and for us to remain close with them," he said.

The USS George Washington's re-deployment came after reports announced last week of a deployment from San Diego began Nov. 21, 2025 — exceeding the standard six-month stint, with sailors and their families protesting the conditions on the ship.

Trump and Acting Navy Secretary Hung Cao downplayed the concerns, with Cao traveling to the ship over the weekend to assess the situation and confirm that the sailors would be coming home.

The US will likely have to scale back its aircraft carrier presence in other parts of the world, however, that shift is unclear.

ECHO



Tehran aims to erode US resolve: Newt

A photo of pages 12 and 13 of the print edition of the New York Post dedicated to the war with Iran, August 17, 2026.

THE BATTLE FOR IRAN

OF VIETNAM



FAMILIAR: Despite the military pounding Iran has taken, ex-House Speaker Newt Gingrich (bottom) says Tehran's aim is to wear down US public opinion, as Ho Chi Minh's (opposite) Vietnam did.

Page 3

Scan this QR code to watch the video.

‘Help Is on The Way’
From Regime Change to Toilet Repair

People’s food security not disrupted even for a single hour in recent imposed wars: minister

TEHRAN- The Minister of Agriculture stated that during the two recent imposed wars, the enemy sought to undermine the Iranian people's resilience by threatening food security, and said: "People's food security was not disrupted even for a single hour in any part of the country, and with the measures taken, we witnessed no famine or shortages."

According to IRNA, Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeltjeh, speaking at a press conference, referred to the two years that have passed since the start of the 14th government's activities, presented a report on the ministry's performance and said: "From the very first day of its activities, the 14th government faced the machinations of foreigners and enemies, and this trend has continued to this day."

He added: "Over the past more than two and a half years, the government has not had a single calm and worry-free day. We witnessed many events and incidents, including the return of the snapback mechanism, ▶Page 4

Post-Maduro Venezuela: Washington’s lab for Latin America

By Elaheh Tahmasebi

TEHRAN – The ongoing transformations in Venezuela have placed the country in a state suspended between structural collapse and managed transition; a situation that neither indicates the complete downfall of the previous structure nor points to the establishment of a national and independent sovereignty.

The departure of Nicolás Maduro did not lead to the immediate transfer of power to the opposition, but instead placed Delcy Rodríguez at the center of the new configuration. At the same time as multinational oil companies return and political prisoners are selectively released, multilayered negotiations over the reengineering of institutions are underway. What is being observed on the Caracas scene is less an endogenous transformation than an externally directed project to consolidate an order under U.S. supervision, in which the center of gravity for fundamental decision-making has shifted away from the Venezuelan capital. ▶Page 5

MAGA stands for “Make America Grotesque Again”

By Martin Love

NORTH CAROLINA – A university town in central North Carolina not too far from Washington is a fair place to get a read on the U.S. zeitgeist, especially since Trump began a grotesque kinetic war on Iran on February 28th.

The U.S has become, especially now, a faltering beast of warring Hell and has moved itself parsecs away from health in every respect. This is the general consensus among friends here in central North Carolina who met recently for a birthday party for a lady just turned 80 who was for decades a somewhat famous yoga teacher and health advisor. And there are others, a lady who lives on a small farm and tries to tend an ailing adult son who has lost his way, a male farmer who grows food for the needy on his spread, a well informed intellectual of 79 who shares observations. No one is immune to hardships and discussions of such have been some kind of very modest salve among friends. ▶Page 5

South Korea: Trump scales back drills to pressure Seoul over Iran war

TEHRAN — South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun said on Wednesday that President Donald Trump's order to curb joint military exercises appears aimed primarily at pressuring Seoul to back US operations in the war with Iran.

Speaking at a parliamentary hearing, Cho stated that Washington is utilizing the military drills as strategic leverage to force greater cooperation from key allies as the US attempts to break a deadlock in the Middle East conflict.

"I think President Trump's message includes pressure over several pending issues concerning the South Korean government, as well as a message to North Korea and an intention by the United States to break a stalemate in the Iran war," Cho told lawmakers. ▶Page 2

Iran and the new cartography of Eurasian power

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The war in Iran has once again served as a stark reminder that what happens in East Asia, South Asia, or Russia affects Europe and the United States far more profoundly than Western powers would care to admit, particularly now that they are beginning to perceive that, in several important respects, these influences lie beyond their control.

This reality lays bare a fundamental truth: this will not be the West's century, as the previous three or four hundred years were. As political scientist Charles Kupchan observes: "The next world will hardly be the first in which great powers operate according to different conceptions of order. But, owing to the emergence of global interdependence, it will be the first time that such a diverse set of orders interacts with one another so intensely and continuously." ▶Page 2

Tehran, Tashkent explore stronger tourism ties

TEHRAN – Iran and Uzbekistan should turn their shared cultural and civilizational heritage into practical tourism programs and joint projects, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a meeting with Bahram Jan Aliyev, Uzbekistan's deputy foreign minister, at Tehran's Sa'dabad Historical and Cultural Complex, Salehi-Amiri highlighted the two countries' extensive common capacities in cultural, historical, tourism and economic fields.

He said recent talks between Aliyev and Iranian deputy foreign ministers had been productive and could open a new chapter in bilateral relations. ▶Page 6



Qalibaf in Baghdad; Iran and Iraq seek a stronger regional partnership

TEHRAN- Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf arrived in Baghdad on Wednesday, August 19, for talks aimed at strengthening Tehran-Baghdad ties, with regional security, economic cooperation and the future of the region high on the agenda. His visit comes as Tehran continues to reject increased US pressure and insists that any negotiations with Washington must remain within the framework of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding. ▶Page 2

Iran and the new cartography of Eurasian power



From page 1 ► It is within this interdependence that the centrality of Eurasia emerges. As Bruno Maçães explains in *The Dawn of Eurasia*: “Eurasia turns out to be the largest landmass on Earth, the place where most of humanity’s great civilizations developed, where they had both the space needed to forge autonomous forms of existence and the geographic continuity that compelled them to come into contact and compete for power.”

Of course, this political space, stretching from the Baltic and Black Seas to the South China Sea and the western Pacific, and from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean, remains unorganized. Various projects and competing visions coexist, and actors are already actively engaged in the task of imposing order, yet no single political framework encompasses both Europe and Asia. In fact, it was the collapse of European hegemony that gave rise to the present disorder, even as it opened the path toward a more unified prospect: that of a new supercontinent.

But this supercontinent is no passive geographic mass, no static container, no flat surface upon which events merely unfold. It is a continuous, performative, and relational product of ongoing social interactions and material practices. This point is essential to understanding that, within this unorganized space, numerous infrastructure projects are competing with one another. These are not a neutral backdrop; they are a fundamental force that produces territory.

The corridors crisscrossing Eurasia— that vast network of railways, ports, logistics hubs, fiber-optic cables, oil and gas pipelines, and energy systems— are “spatial projects” that embody specific political, economic, and ideological logics.

Infrastructure policy is, in reality, a capacity to shape mobility: to determine who and what can move, and under what conditions. Control over infrastructure implies control over circulation, which in turn establishes global hierarchies of inclusion and exclusion. Applied to Eurasia, the construction of transcontinental railways and digital networks reflects the material politics of spatial control. These projects enable development, but at the same time generate relations of dependence, which scholars

Iran calls on Ukraine to compensate for drone attack on Iranian Ship

TEHRAN- Iran has called on Ukraine to compensate for all damages resulting from a drone strike on an Iranian merchant vessel in the Caspian Sea that killed one crew member and injured several others, describing the attack as a criminal act against a civilian ship.

Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali told Russia’s RIA Novosti news agency on Wednesday that the July 11 attack on the Iranian-flagged Anna constituted a deliberate strike against a civilian vessel carrying commercial cargo.

Jalali described the incident as a ‘terrorist and criminal act,’ saying the ship was a privately owned commercial vessel transporting rolled steel when it was struck by a Ukrainian drone in the Caspian Sea.

He said Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas

call “infrastructural entanglements.” They connect economies and societies, yet they also entrench hierarchies. By examining state behavior through the lens of corridor geopolitics, one can trace how connectivity shapes global governance and defines the logic of space in the twenty-first century.

Today, Eurasia’s infrastructural landscape is defined by overlapping corridors, each under the influence of a great power and each embedding a particular vision of connectivity. China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the EU’s Global Gateway, the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), and the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), launched in 2000 by Russia, India, and Iran, collectively configure this new logic. All these projects reflect different value systems and motivations; none is neutral. Each responds to strategic calculations that shape power dynamics, security, and access.

What, then, is Iran’s role in this space? This is a fundamental question for the Islamic Republic’s medium- and long-term future, because mere geographic centrality, undeniable in Iran’s case, is not enough to guarantee integration into these projects. The map matters, but it alone cannot ensure that Iran retains its strategic relevance.

Iran faces the following challenge: the strategic dynamics of the past decade have been marked by the construction of at least six corridors designed to bypass its territory. Yet this analysis, while accurate, must be considered in light of the current post-war context.

Most of those alternative routes, conceived to circumvent Iran, were designed with a weakened Iran in mind, something that has not come to pass. Iran emerged from the conflict as one of the central nodes of the region, and everything suggests that global logistics networks will ultimately adapt to its renewed centrality.

It is worth remembering that corridors and connectivity across Eurasia more broadly require an environment of stability to function. And Iran has made it abundantly clear: if its security is threatened, the security of the entire region will be threatened with it.

Araghchi had discussed the incident in separate telephone conversations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and the European Union’s foreign policy chief.

According to Jalali, Ukraine’s foreign minister also spoke with Araghchi, apologized for the incident, and provided explanations concerning the attack.

The Iranian ambassador said Ukrainian officials had accepted responsibility for the strike and pledged that similar attacks against Iranian vessels would not occur again.

Jalali also argued that European countries and the United States, as supporters of Ukraine, should share responsibility for the consequences of Kyiv’s actions and ensure that Ukraine is held accountable.

Qalibaf in Baghdad; Iran and Iraq seek a stronger regional partnership

From page 1 ► Qalibaf left Tehran for Baghdad on Wednesday, at the head of a high-level parliamentary delegation. The visit was announced as an opportunity to discuss bilateral relations, border security, counterterrorism, economic cooperation and regional developments. Iranian officials have also described closer coordination with Iraq as increasingly important amid ‘the emergence of a new regional order.’

Upon arriving in Baghdad on Wednesday morning, Qalibaf was received by Iraqi officials before heading to the site where Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, former commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps’ Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, a senior Iraqi commander, were killed in a US drone strike in January 2020.

Qalibaf said he was beginning his visit at the site where the two commanders were killed, describing Soleimani and al-Muhandis as figures who had played a major role in confronting the threat posed by Islamic State militants in Iraq and the wider region.

He said the killing of the two commanders had failed to ‘end the influence of the resistance movement,’ arguing that developments in the region demonstrated that its influence remained significant.

The remarks came against the backdrop of Qalibaf’s increasingly pointed criticism of Washington. Shortly before leaving for Iraq, he said the United States could not secure concessions from Tehran by increasing economic and political pressure.

“The Americans think that by squeezing Iran harder they can win concessions that were never part of the agreement,” Qalibaf said in a post on X, referring to the Islamabad memorandum. He also dismissed recent statements by US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and War Secretary Pete Hegseth, using sharp language to argue that Washington could not resolve the crisis through additional pressure.

The Islamabad memorandum has become a central reference point in Tehran’s current position toward Washington.

Iran rejects UAE missile launch claims, cites ‘false-flag’ sabotage

TEHRAN — Iran has firmly denied allegations from the United Arab Emirates regarding an alleged missile launch, cautioning neighboring states against falling victim to third-party provocations designed to destabilize the region.

Responding to a statement from the UAE Ministry of Defense—which reported detecting two Iranian-launched ballistic missiles—Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei dismissed the claim as completely baseless. Baghaei stated that such accusations erode regional trust and undermine diplomatic efforts aimed at easing local tensions.

He urged regional govern-



Iranian officials have repeatedly argued that any further diplomatic process must be based on commitments already set out in the understanding rather than on new US demands.

Qalibaf’s visit therefore carries significance beyond parliamentary diplomacy. Iraq has traditionally maintained close political, economic and security links with Iran while simultaneously seeking to preserve relations with Washington and other regional powers. Baghdad’s position gives it a potentially important role in regional diplomacy at a time when Tehran is seeking greater coordination with neighboring countries.

During his first hours in Baghdad, Qalibaf met Iraqi Parliament Speaker Haibat al-Halbousi at the Iraqi parliament. The two sides discussed bilateral issues before holding a private meeting. The Iranian delegation also met with Iraqi lawmakers.

Qalibaf subsequently met Iraqi President Nizar Mohammed Saeed Amedi. The meetings formed part of a broader schedule of talks with senior Iraqi political figures and officials on bilateral and regional issues.

Before departing Tehran, Qalibaf said the delegation would seek to expand cooperation in political, economic, cultural, social and security fields. He also highlighted the implementation of existing agreements and the expansion of economic ties between the two neighbors.

Economic relations are particularly significant for both countries. Iraq has been one of Iran’s major trading partners, while the two governments have in re-

cent months emphasized transportation, border cooperation, energy and broader economic connectivity as areas with potential for expansion.

The visit also comes after a series of high-level contacts between Tehran and Baghdad. During Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Faleh al-Zaidi’s July visit to Tehran, Iran and Iraq signed an agreement on international road freight transport and several memorandums of understanding, including one concerning the proposed Kermanshah–Khosravi–Khanqin–Baghdad railway connection.

=====United States was seeking an “honorable exit” from the region

Qalibaf has described relations between the Iranian and Iraqi peoples as “historical and unbreakable,” saying the relationship was shaped by solidarity during difficult periods, resistance to foreign interference and a shared regional destiny.

In a separate message during his visit, he argued that the role of outside powers in shaping relations among regional countries was declining. He said the United States was seeking an “honorable exit” from the region and argued that the regional balance was moving toward greater independence from foreign intervention.

His comments reflect a broader position increasingly voiced by Iranian officials in recent weeks: that the security architecture of West Asia should be shaped primarily by regional states rather than by external military powers.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ab-

bas Araghchi made a similar argument on Tuesday, saying the recent 40-day war had changed the way regional countries viewed the security structure of West Asia. He argued that foreign forces and military bases had failed to provide security and had instead become a source of instability.

The Iraqi side, meanwhile, has emphasized the importance of maintaining Iraq’s sovereignty and avoiding its involvement in regional conflicts. Iraqi Parliament Speaker Haibat al-Halbousi has previously called for Iraq to remain a platform for stability, dialogue and cooperation rather than a battleground for regional and international disputes.

That position gives Qalibaf’s visit an additional dimension. While Tehran wants deeper strategic coordination with Baghdad, Iraq has its own interest in preventing confrontation between Iran and the United States from spilling further onto Iraqi territory. This is a case that Iranian officials have repeatedly emphasized in their statements.

Qalibaf is also scheduled to travel to Karbala, where he will attend a ceremony marking the 40th day since the funeral of Iran’s late Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The visit has received significant attention in Iraqi media, with coverage focusing on Qalibaf’s meetings with senior Iraqi officials and the broader question of Tehran–Baghdad coordination over regional developments. Iranian media have likewise framed the trip as part of efforts to consolidate bilateral ties and promote greater regional coordination.

For Tehran, the message from Baghdad is therefore twofold: Iran intends to deepen relations with its most strategically important Arab neighbor while maintaining a firm position against ‘attempts by Washington to extract additional concessions through pressure.’

The outcome of Qalibaf’s meetings could offer an indication of how the two neighbors intend to navigate that balance as regional powers seek to shape a new political and security order in West Asia.



ments to remain vigilant against potential “false-flag operations,” stressing that ongoing

actions by the United States and Israel are structured to frame Iran and disrupt Persian Gulf diplomatic channels.

South Korea: Trump scales back drills to pressure Seoul over Iran war

TEHRAN — South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun said on Wednesday that President Donald Trump’s order to curb joint military exercises appears aimed primarily at pressuring Seoul to back US operations in the war with Iran.

Speaking at a parliamentary hearing, Cho stated that Washington is utilizing the military drills as strategic leverage to force greater cooperation from key allies as the US attempts to break a deadlock in the Middle East conflict.

“I think President Trump’s message includes pressure over several pending issues concerning the South Korean government,

as well as a message to North Korea and an intention by the United States to break a stalemate in the Iran war,” Cho told lawmakers.

South Korea and the United States announced Wednesday that they will shorten annual joint military exercises from 11 days to five and significantly reduce field training, following direct orders from Washington to trim US participation.

While Cho noted that other unresolved bilateral matters—including a previously pledged \$350 billion US investment plan—remain background factors, Seoul views Washington’s urge for support in the Iran

campaign as a main driver behind the abrupt shift in defense posture.

During the same hearing, South Korean Unification Minister Chung Dong-young offered an additional diplomatic angle, noting that curtailing military exercises long denounced by Pyongyang could simultaneously serve to arrange a potential new summit between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. However, Foreign Minister Cho’s assessment underscores growing concern in Seoul that the United States is refocusing its strategic priorities toward the Middle East, using the alliance’s military posture on the Korean Peninsula to press for allied alignment in Iran.

‘Help is on the way’: From regime change to toilet repair

TEHRAN — A recent report published by the New York Post, bearing the headline “Help is on the way for Lincoln”, unintentionally lays bare the profound irony, moral hypocrisy, and strategic failure defining Washington’s aggressive foreign policy toward Iran.

When President Donald Trump sought to exploit foreign-backed unrest within Iran in early January, he arrogantly promised anti-government agitators that “help is on the way”—a rhetoric that ultimately materialized as a brutal campaign of US-Israeli airstrikes targeting Iranian civilians, women, children, and vital national infrastructure. Trump’s promise of “help” was never merely rhetorical support for Iranian protesters; it was part of an openly interventionist agenda aimed at destabilizing Iran and ultimately bringing about regime change—a strategy that has since exposed the limits of Washington’s ability to impose its will on Iran.

Today, in an extraordinary turn of historical fate, mainstream American news outlets are forced to recycle Trump’s exact words to describe a desperate emergency relief effort for the United States’ own decaying naval forces.

Floating in the sweltering expanse of the North Arabian Sea for over 250 days—including an unprecedented stretch of more than 200 consecutive days at sea without a single port call—the super-carrier USS Abraham Lincoln has transformed from an intended instrument of global coercion into a floating monument to American overextension. Accounts leaking from service members, anxious families, and independent military news outlets paint a harrowing picture of human suffering and structural decay aboard the vessel. More than 5,000 crew members have been subjected to severe rationing of basic food supplies, mold-infested quarters, broken plumbing, and contaminated drinking water.

This physical degradation is compounded by an unmanage-



able operational tempo. Driven through endless 12- to 16-hour shifts without rest or time off, the crew has been pushed far past the boundaries of human endurance. The psychological strain of prolonged isolation and grueling labor under hostile conditions has triggered a massive mental health crisis across the vessel. Confirmed incidents of sailors attempting to jump overboard and a rising wave of suicide attempts serve as grim indicators that Washington’s posture of continuous confrontation is destroying the very personnel tasked with executing its imperial strategy.

Rather than confronting the root causes of this systemic breakdown, the Pentagon leadership has responded with bureaucratic denial and PR damage control. War Secretary Pete Hegseth publicly dismissed the horrific reports, claiming shipboard conditions had been completely misrepresented, while US Central Command circulated social media graphics attempting to label the mental health crisis as false propaganda. However, this official stonewalling has done little to suppress the mounting political panic within the halls of Congress.

The humanitarian disaster aboard the carrier has triggered intense political friction in Washington. Reports from sailors and their families describe broken toi-

lets and other plumbing problems aboard the Lincoln, prompting Senator Richard Blumenthal to demand answers about the ship’s habitability and what corrective measures had been taken. Blumenthal dispatched a sharp letter demanding a formal accounting of severe supply shortages and mental health metrics from Hegseth and Acting Navy Secretary Hung Cao. The deterioration has reached even the most necessities. The outcry reached a fever pitch as Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer publicly called for Hegseth’s firing, citing the shipboard crisis as damning evidence of strategic incompetence. Concurrently, combat veteran Senator Ruben Gallego urged an immediate bipartisan congressional investigation, warning that forcing personnel through broken facilities and endless shifts severely compromises operational safety.

The structural failure of US policy became fully apparent with the emergency order to redeploy the USS George Washington out of the South China Sea to replace the exhausted Lincoln. By pulling its last remaining aircraft carrier out of the Pacific, the United States has inadvertently exposed the severe operational constraints of its global posture. Defense analysts point out that stripping naval firepower from the Western Pacific sends an unmistakable

signal to regional nations—such as the Philippines, Japan, and Indonesia—that Washington can no longer guarantee regional dominance or sustain multi-theater military presence.

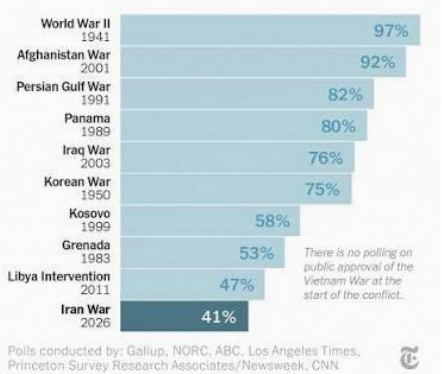
Furthermore, this constant shuffling creates a compounding logistical nightmare. Overworking active strike groups accelerates mechanical wear on ships while delaying essential maintenance cycles. Because the United States suffers from acute shipyard bottlenecks with only two carrier-capable facilities, this endless cycle of overextension threatens the long-term operational viability of the entire American fleet, damaging recruitment and retention while eroding core naval readiness.

Trump’s aggressive campaign to impose a permanent naval siege and force Iran into submission has achieved nothing beyond proving the absolute limits of imperial coercion. Despite unlawful airstrikes, violations of a signed memorandum of understanding, and continuous aggressive posturing, Iranian defense capabilities and strategic resilience have thoroughly neutralized Washington’s designs. The cessation of US strikes following Iran’s decisive retaliatory response demonstrated to the world that American military aggression carries immediate, unsustainable costs.

The irony is difficult to miss. Trump once declared that “help is on the way” in response to the unrest in Iran, presenting himself as the powerful leader who would come to the rescue of the protesters. Now, those same words have come back to haunt his own administration as the USS Abraham Lincoln requires relief. What was intended as a boast of American power has become a symbol of its overreach—a humiliating reversal that exposes Trump’s failure to deliver the dominance he promised and turns his own words into a reminder of a costly and deeply embarrassing defeat.

Unlike Past U.S. Conflicts, Iran Attack Is Opposed By Most Americans

Public support for U.S. military intervention in the first days of international conflicts



The Chicago Council on Global Affairs-Ipsos survey conducted in May also found that Americans viewed the war as damaging to several key US interests. Majorities said the conflict had been harmful to the cost of living, US international relations, America’s reputation abroad, and national security. The survey also found that 63% believed the Trump administration had not done enough to pursue a negotiated settlement.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

sode represented direct foreign interference in the Iranian people’s right to determine their own political future.

He described such intervention as a form of colonialism and a violation of national sovereignty, arguing that the events of 1953 remained an important part of Iran’s historical memory.

remarks in separate posts on X, linking Iran’s historical experience of foreign intervention to its current stance against external pressure.

Marking the anniversary of the US- and UK-backed coup that toppled Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq on August 19, 1953, Gharibabadi said the epi-

Iran rejects foreign interference in its sovereignty

TEHRAN- Iran has rejected ‘attempts by foreign powers to interfere in its sovereignty and regional affairs,’ while warning US President Donald Trump against ‘an unfounded claim over the Strait of Hormuz.’

Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi made the

Iran’s military chief warns Persian Gulf states against facilitating US aggression

From Page 1 ▶ In a post on X, he added that it was unlikely that such a large number of military aircraft, particularly aerial refueling planes, could be deployed at bases in the region without the host countries being aware of their presence.

“We warn that any assistance or facilitation provided to the aggressive US military will be regarded as participation alongside US military forces,” he pointed out.

Iranian military officials have repeatedly emphasized that the presence of US forces and their proxies only multiplies the costs for the aggressors.

The Iranian Armed Forces have inflicted heavy losses on the aggressors despite their advanced weaponry and hybrid warfare tactics.

To fully comprehend the stern posture articulated by Major General Abdollahi, one must view these warnings through the prism of the historic events surrounding the war that the US and Israel launched against Iran on February 28. The conflict was not an isolated clash, but rather the culmination of a protracted campaign of economic siege, hybrid warfare, and overt military encirclement orchestrated by Western imperial powers led by the United States and supported by regional satellite bases. The narrative of the February 28 war within Iran’s defense doctrine is one of defensive resilience, ideological steadfastness, and the decisive demonstration of indigenous military capabilities against an unprovoked attempt to violate the country’s national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

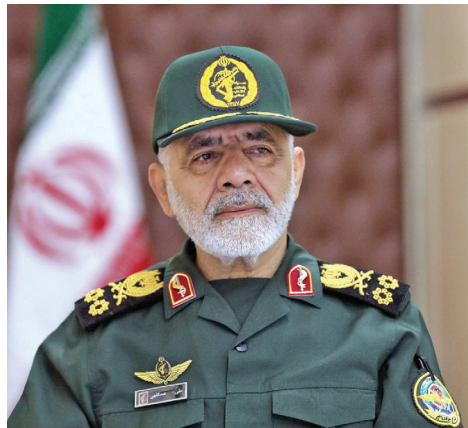
In the months leading up to the outbreak of hostilities on February 28, the United States had steadily increased its military footprint across the Persian Gulf, transferring heavy bombers, tactical fighter squadrons, and specialized reconnaissance platforms into bases scattered across the littoral states of the Arabian Peninsula.

Western strategists had operated under the flawed premise that a high-intensity, multi-domain shock campaign could paralyze Iran’s command and control infrastructure, dismantle its defensive missile network, and force political concessions from Tehran. However, when the aggressors launched their initial kinetic strikes on that fateful February morning, they severely underestimated the tactical readiness, operational depth, and asymmetric capabilities of the Iranian Armed Forces.

From the first hours of the conflict, the defense apparatus of the Islamic Republic enacted a comprehensive defensive contingency plan designed to neutralize enemy air superiority and deliver devastating counter-strikes against key military installations. Iranian air defense networks, relying heavily on home-grown systems such as the Bavar-373 and Khordad-15, engaged incoming precision-guided munitions and stealth platforms with unprecedented efficacy. Concurrently, Iran’s aerospace units unleashed disciplined, multi-layered volleys of ballistic and cruise missiles alongside swarms of munitions, targeted specifically at enemy command nodes, naval assets, and staging grounds across the region. Far from being overwhelmed, the armed forces demonstrated that decades of sanctions had only driven the nation to achieve self-reliance in state-of-the-art defense technology.

The conflict of February 28 demonstrated that the era of uncontested Western military intervention in Western Asia had come to an end. Despite the aggressors deploying the most expensive and technologically advanced weaponry in their inventory, Iranian forces inflicted profound material, logistics, and psychological losses on the invading units. Iranian naval units in the Strait of Hormuz successfully disrupted hostile maritime movements, while land-based missile batteries established a formidable zone-denial canopy that made enemy operations exceedingly costly. This military posture forced Western commanders to recognize that any campaign against Iran would inevitably transform into an unsustainable war of attrition. For Tehran, the outcome of the February 28 war served as definitive proof that domestic resistance and strategic foresight could successfully neutralize advanced foreign armies.

Central to Iran’s stance throughout the February 28 war and its subsequent strategic posture is the absolute reliance on codified international law, specifically Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Article 51 explicitly guarantees the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a member state of the United Nations. Tehran has consistently maintained that its defensive responses, mis-



sile strikes, and operational maneuvers are fully grounded in this foundational pillar of international jurisprudence. When hostile forces initiate kinetic actions or utilize surrounding airspace and naval zones to launch strikes against Iranian territory, Iran possesses the undisputed legal and sovereign right under Article 51 to neutralize those threats at their source.

This legal foundation directly informs Major General Abdollahi’s explicit warning to the neighboring Persian Gulf nations regarding host-nation responsibility. Under established international norms governing neutrality and state responsibility during armed conflict, a country that allows its territory, air installations, or maritime infrastructure to be utilized by a belligerent power to launch aggressive acts against a third state forfeits its neutral status. When southern Persian Gulf states host American combat squadrons, early-warning command centers, and critically, aerial refueling tankers—without which long-range strategic strikes against Iranian defensive installations would be logistically impossible—they cease to be passive bystanders. Instead, they function as vital logistical components of the aggressor’s military machine.

From a tactical military standpoint, aerial refueling tankers and logistics hubs are high-value enablers that directly sustain offensive air campaigns. A strike fighter taking off from an airfield in the region cannot execute high-payload missions deep inside Iranian territory without mid-air refueling provided by specialized tanker fleets staged at nearby facilities. Therefore, as General Abdollahi made clear, the argument presented by regional governments that they have issued political statements denying permission for offensive actions carries no weight when operational realities on the ground indicate otherwise. Allowing host bases to service, refuel, and launch support assets that enable strikes against Iran constitutes active participation in aggression. Under Article 51 and the legal framework of self-defense, any military infrastructure providing functional assistance to an attacker becomes a legitimate, lawful target for defensive retaliation.

Furthermore, lasting stability in the Persian Gulf can only be achieved through collective, indigenous cooperation among the littoral states themselves, completely free from the destabilizing intervention of foreign imperial powers. For decades, Western military installations in the Persian Gulf have served not to protect local populations, but to project power, control vital energy transit routes, and enforce an unfair regional balance that serves extra-regional geopolitical interests. The reliance of certain regional governments on foreign security guarantees has historically created a false sense of immunity, encouraging them to host aggressive foreign capabilities that ultimately jeopardize their own national security.

The lessons of the February 28 conflict reaffirmed that foreign forces view their regional host nations merely as replaceable launching pads rather than true partners. In the event of a wider conflict provoked by Western adventurism, the foreign forces retain the mobility to retreat. At the same time, the host countries are left to bear the physical and economic consequences of the devastation caused by their complicity. The Iranian defense leadership’s current warnings are intended to compel these neighboring administrations to re-evaluate their calculus before regional tensions escalate beyond the point of recovery. Tehran’s defensive doctrine does not seek conflict with its Islamic neighbors; rather, it demands that these states uphold true neutrality and refuse to let their soil be used as a springboard for foreign aggression.

Ultimately, the warnings delivered by top military commanders reflect a national strategy forged in the crucible of military victories and anchored in international law.

Transport minister details infrastructure resilience, housing plans during wartime crisis

TEHRAN- In a comprehensive press conference, Minister of Transport and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadegh detailed the resilience of Iran's transportation infrastructure during recent wartime crises, announced the neutralization of enemy plans to block transit routes, and outlined the government's housing agenda.

Minister Sadegh explained that during the 12-day and 40-day wars, and the subsequent siege with continuous nightly attacks, the enemy's primary objective was not merely damaging bridges, roads, ports, and airports, but undermining "people's resilience" by striking water, electricity, and vital infrastructure. The ministry, with the support of the President and First Vice President, implemented key measures to prevent widespread disruption in the country's logistics chain.

A Cabinet resolution assigned the ministry the responsibility of chairing the "Task Force for Facilitating Cargo Clearance from Ports," coordinating all stakeholders to ensure essential goods reached all parts of the country swiftly. The private sector was directly involved in decision-making processes, significantly increasing the speed and quality of cargo clearance.

Despite the crisis, the country achieved new operational records. At southern ports, especially Imam Khomeini Port, cargo loading and unloading grew by over 100% compared to peacetime. At Chabahar Port, with maximum coordination, daily truck departures averaged over one thousand vehicles. The minister attributed this success to synergy between the decision-making headquarters, field managers, and cabinet members. Direct communication with provincial governors was maintained, and ministry deputies were present in the field nationwide to support local managers.

Battlefield reconstruction strategy

The minister elaborated on the "battlefield reconstruction" strategy, emphasizing that waiting until the crisis ended was impossible, as severing any link in the communications network would paralyze the entire logistics chain. With the dedication of contractors, engineers, workers, and field management, damaged road and rail infrastructure was reconstructed within hours or days, astonishing the international community.

During this period, more than 98 road points and 11 rail targets were struck. Analysis of the targets' geographical locations revealed the enemy had aimed for the west-to-east transit corridor connecting Europe to China. Strategic routes from Marand and Mianeh to Tehran, Qom, and Sistan were attacked to halt imports, exports, and transit, but Iran's resilient logistics network thwarted this conspiracy.

Damage assessments revealed that more than 400 cities and villages in 25 provinces were targeted, with over 100,000 residential and commercial units damaged at various levels. More than 1,200 minor repairs were also carried out.

Support for affected families

Drawing on reconstruction experiences, especially in Tehran, meetings were quickly convened to approve rental and housing deposits for affected families. Over 2,500 housing deposits have been paid in the shortest possible time. Special approvals were also passed for Kermanshah and Bandar Abbas due to their specific conditions. The government's policy is to center reconstruction around the people themselves, with the government providing resources. More than 300 to 350 units have received reconstruction permits.

Arbaeen operations

Despite damaged aviation infrastructure, the transport of Arbaeen pilgrims was successfully carried out. Iran Air accomplished this mission with only eight aircraft in a short period. On the day of bidding farewell to the martyred leader, more than 50 takeoffs and landings were performed at Mehrabad Airport without radar, and 98 high-level delegations arrived at Imam Khomeini Airport. During this year's Arbaeen, road transport of pilgrims grew by over 10% compared to last year, with more than 70% of national capacity utilized. Over 2,000 buses from the private fleet were deployed to support the pilgrims.

Housing: From paper to residency

The minister stated that the 14th govern-



ment's entire effort is to move from "housing on paper" to "actual residency." The rental housing plan has been seriously initiated, with registration for about 5,000 units beginning during Government Week. Young couples are a priority, and resources will be provided from organizational housing and other existing properties.

Attention is also being given to workers' housing and housing for the underprivileged. Memorandums of understanding with the Ministry of Labor and other bodies have brought these matters into the implementation phase. Land supply through cooperation with the Housing Foundation and the National Land and Housing Organization, along with capacities from institutions like the Mostazafan Foundation, the Execution of Imam Khomeini's Order, the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, and loans for villagers and residents of cities under 25,000, are among the measures.

The minister identified land supply and preparation costs as the most significant challenge. In some sites, preparation costs are several times construction costs. In western provinces, due to a lack of suitable land, annexing difficult terrains with high infrastructure costs was necessary. Inflation also places additional pressure on public housing projects. Solutions include prioritizing income deciles, allocating interest-free loans to lower deciles, bartering land with contractors, using government lands, adjusting contractor costs, and increasing banking facilities.

Of the total 850,000 registered units, about 100,000 were on the agenda, with 80,000 progressing over the past two years. More than 300,000 units in this government have received loans to applicants who paid their contribution. Over 350,000 building permits out of the total 850,000 units have been issued in this government.

The minister also praised the courageous role of truck drivers who, despite difficult long routes, especially the Chabahar route, delivered cargo across the country and created a commendable epic.

Special package prepared for truck drivers with focus on fleet modernization

The Minister, expressing gratitude for the role of drivers during critical conditions, said: "During the 12-day war, we witnessed the sacrifice of drivers; dear individuals who, contrary to the margins and protests before the war, appeared on the scene with record-breaking performance and showed that their hearts beat for the homeland."

She added: "In appreciation of these efforts, in collaboration with the Executive Vice President, a special package has been prepared focusing on fleet modernization, energy consumption optimization, and replacement plans for old trucks, which will soon be implemented using the legal capacities of the Optimization Organization."

Regarding the organization of driver insurance and the entry of trucks, Sadegh stated: "With the efforts of the Social and Civil Committees of the Parliament, the final stages of the driver insurance bill are being completed with the consultation of the guilds and organized unions in this field, and the entry of undocumented trucks is also being reviewed and managed for market regulation and supporting drivers' livelihoods."

Regarding the smartization of the logistics industry, she said: "In the field of large-scale smart company activities, we have joint meetings with economic institutions to reach a fair outcome while complying with regulations, in which freight distribution, regardless of being local or non-local, is carried out fairly among all drivers across the country."

People's food security not disrupted even for a single hour in recent imposed wars: minister

TEHRAN- The Minister of Agriculture stated that during the two recent imposed wars, the enemy sought to undermine the Iranian people's resilience by threatening food security, and said: "People's food security was not disrupted even for a single hour in any part of the country, and with the measures taken, we witnessed no famine or shortages."

According to IRNA, Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeli, speaking at a press conference, referred to the two years that have passed since the start of the 14th government's activities, presented a report on the ministry's performance and said: "From the very first day of its activities, the 14th government faced the machinations of foreigners and enemies, and this trend has continued to this day."

He added: "Over the past more than two and a half years, the government has not had a single calm and worry-free day. We witnessed many events and incidents, including the return of the



snapback mechanism, the 12-day and 40-day imposed wars, and the most severe drought in recent years. These factors combined to put the 14th government to a great test."

The Minister of Agriculture described the agricultural sector and food security as important components in ensuring national security and societal resilience, and said: "Not even a single day of imbalance or shortage in this area can be tolerated. For this reason, the enemies' prediction during the two recent imposed wars was

that Iran's food security would collapse within 21 days. That is why they employed all their capabilities through naval blockades and port blockades."

Nouri Ghezeli added: "While according to UN resolutions and their additional protocols, food and medicine are exempt under wartime conditions, the criminal enemy has trampled all of these."

Stating that despite all the problems, including sanctions and naval blockades, what the people witnessed was that Iran's food security was not disrupted

for a single day or even a single hour in any part of the country, he said: "Unlike smaller countries where shops became empty and reserves ran out during wars, this problem did not occur during the imposed war in Iran, and the country's food inventory was secured; although costs and final prices increased under the influence of war and blockade conditions, and this cost was imposed on the people."

The Minister of Agriculture emphasized: "Despite numerous issues and problems over the past months, food security has no problems, and in this area the enemies have become desperate."

Nouri Ghezeli, stating that the production of 85% of agricultural products and food production is owed to the efforts of farmers, producers, and all those active in the great agricultural chain, added: "To secure the remaining 15%, which mostly consists of raw materials needed by the sector, measures had already been taken in advance."

Tehran hosting international exhibition of construction

TEHRAN- Over 600 domestic and foreign companies participated in the 26th International Exhibition of the Construction Industry at the permanent venue of Tehran International Exhibitions.

According to IRNA, the 26th International Exhibition of the Construction Industry is running during August 18-21 in various sectors, including building materials, equipment and machinery, doors and windows, elevators and escalators, mechanical and electrical installations, smart systems, safety equipment, architecture and modern designs, and knowledge-based products. The exhibition is being held in 20 halls and part of the open spaces of Tehran International Exhibition Center, organized by the Iran Chamber of Cooperatives.

Private sector must participate in decision-making for construction industry: minister

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development, emphasizing the role of the private sector in boosting the construction industry, stated that the government should not replace the private sector and the people in construction. Instead, it should remove obstacles, facilitate processes, and support existing capacities to pave the way for the development of construction and increased public access to housing.

According to IRNA from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, speaking on Tuesday at the opening ceremony of the 26th Construction Industry Exhibition, added that over the past months, her ministry has held extensive consultations with private sector activists, including all segments involved in construction, investment, development, contracting, mass housing, and all related chains of the construction industry.

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development emphasized that the private sector is not merely an executor but must participate in decision-making and policymaking.

Sadegh continued that one of the most important outcomes of the ongoing meetings with activists and elites of the construction industry was the establishment of a task force for removing production barriers with

maximum participation of the private sector. This task force has been formed under the Supreme Housing Council and, with the emphasis of the First Vice President, has been examining issues in the construction sector, particularly housing.

The Minister stated that the conclusions of these reviews will be presented at the first session of the Supreme Housing Council, adding that the country's special conditions, sanctions, and war have exacerbated some problems, but administrative inefficiencies have nothing to do with war or sanctions, and the ministry's utmost effort is to reduce these inefficiencies.

She noted that issues such as insurance, taxes, tolls, facilities, the building permit issuance process, technical regulations, the rules of the Supreme Council of Urban Planning and Architecture, the regulations of the Deputy for Housing and Construction, and the National Building Regulations have been examined in the meetings held.

Amending regulations and facilitating construction

Sadegh stated that issues related to the National Engineering Organization and facilities that could reduce the time for issuing building permits have also been reviewed—issues that have long troubled the private sector and investors seeking to enter the housing sector.

She added that some issues related to cooperatives, mass construction, executors, and supervisors have been resolved through ongoing meetings and cooperation with the National Engineering Organization and the Deputy for Housing and Construction, and some guidelines have been revised and communicated.

The Minister further noted that some other problems, due to their cross-sectoral nature and being beyond the ministry's mandate, required coordination with other bodies, and such coordination has been carried out.

Referring to the country's energy consumption situation and the need to reform construction processes, Sadegh said that one of the most important issues being pursued is the industrialization of construction. "We

have always talked about increasing production and the number of constructions, but we have spoken less about reducing costs. If we can reduce construction costs without compromising quality, production will also increase."

She reminded that industrialization has gained attention due to higher speed, lower cost, greater technical sophistication, and higher quality.

The Minister further emphasized that the issue is not just construction costs—operational and maintenance costs of buildings must also be reduced. This matter is being pursued with the cooperation of the private sector and the National Engineering Organization nationwide.

Sadegh then referred to measures taken with the help of the Civil Committee of the parliament for the development of professional leasing, stating that when discussing housing construction and applicants, we should not only consider outright ownership. Given the differences in affordability and needs across provinces and cities, meeting the housing needs of all people is not possible solely through ownership.

She noted that governments have been involved in supportive housing construction for years, and the extent of access for real applicants—including the first to fourth income deciles and young couples—to housing has been examined. Therefore, leasing and professional leasing can address a significant portion of the need for quality housing.

The Minister added that part of this relates to rental supportive housing, and another part to facilitating construction by mass builders, developers, and investors to build housing suited to the capacity of various segments of society, including the middle class.

Sadegh continued that numerous meetings have been held with mass builders, contractors, and developers to facilitate processes within the ministry's mandate. Utilizing the capacity of deteriorated urban textures and urban regeneration with the help of the private sector for the development of professional leasing is also being pursued.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, EAG, Uzbekistan forge ahead on financial intelligence cooperation

TEHRAN- A tripartite meeting of representatives from Iran, the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), and the Financial Information Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan was held virtually, focusing on the development of international cooperation in combating money laundering and financing of terrorism.

According to a report by IRNA from the Financial Information Center, this specialized meeting, hosted by the Financial Information Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was convened with the aim of operationalizing Paragraph 9 of the EAG technical assistance program to Iran, with the participation of representatives from this body, the Financial Information Center of Uzbekistan, and the Central Bank of Iran.

The main focus of these discussions was the transfer of experiences in financial in-

telligence analysis methods and examining mechanisms for developing international cooperation.

Participants in this meeting, while analyzing existing challenges, emphasized the necessity of enhancing the effectiveness of anti-money laundering systems in the Eurasia region.

The parties also evaluated areas for developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation and shared their local experiences in aligning regulatory standards.

Holding this meeting is considered a strategic step towards implementing the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between Iran and the Financial Information Center of Uzbekistan; a document that was signed on the sidelines of the 37th Main Meeting of the Eurasia Group in December 2023.

Analysts assess the recent meeting as indicative of a transition from purely diplomatic interactions to executive and operational cooperation, which can lead to the strengthening of Iran's position in regional financial systems and maximum utilization of the Eurasia Group's capacities.

These multilateral cooperations take place as strengthening financial ties with neighboring countries and members of the Eurasia Group plays a key role in reducing financial risks and enhancing transparency in cross-border transactions.

The Eurasian group on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism (EAG) is a FATF-style regional body which comprises 9 countries: Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, India, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. EAG is an associate member of the FATF.

MAGA stands for “Make America Grotesque Again”

From page 1 ► It is not extreme to say that the Trump Administration and its supporters in Washington including many in Congress and elsewhere are wrecking what-ever was vital and decent about American governance through both its foreign and domestic policies. Humanity must shake itself free of the U.S.-Israeli empire above all. It simply must and Iran, to many educated and empathetic Americans is leading the way. Some imagine the U.S. “empire” will not survive much longer. We already believe Zionism cannot. Many here are eager to read histories of this time in 15 years when finally all will be clearly exposed.

The worst of policies or actions since 1945 certainly has been the war on Iran since late last February at the behest of the most despised country on earth, Israel. Those Americans here in N.C. who have not succumbed to propaganda feel that the U.S. has been occupied by demons in league with Israel, all of whom have been basking in corruptions so deep that they are dragging honest citizens down. One can start with Trump, a deluded narcissist. The latest scare tactic about “communism” harking back the 1950s and the McCarthy era has re-emerged, too. This is nothing but an effort to ensure a status quo around capitalism which has not aided most Americans in its current iteration.

On August 14th, for example, Trump declared the Strait of Hormuz would soon become U.S. territory! Then it was claimed the statement was a



joke, however callous. Of course that's not going to happen. Throw whatever descriptive words at the U.S. President one wants, but the most apt that comes to mind is a dangerous LUNATIC who is looking for ways to stay in the White House indefinitely. Doctors have said Trump is mentally and physically ill. Some doctors have said he may die soon...optimistically... while Navy sailors rot on the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier near Iran die in rage fights on board amid suicidal impulses among sailors. Mutiny hovers over the ship. Mutiny hovers over the U.S. military. Mutiny could hover over the entire country.

One can identify Washington's ailments. They are primarily four. Hubris, Stupidity, Greed and Arrogance often since the last World War. One hardly needs to explain these problems. These Four Horsemen of an Apocalypse have spawned the likelihood of economic and monetary collapse during the decade ahead atop \$40 trillion in debt, which expands exponentially by the month.

And all this idiocy was build-

ing as far back as 1953 when the CIA and British intelligence overthrew the democratically elected Muhammad Mossadegh and installed the poisonous Pahlavi puppet regime in Iran. That occurred largely because Iran was and remains rich in resources jealously coveted by the U.S. and other so-called Western allies. That Pahlavi regime was overthrown in 1979 by the revolution in Iran and ever since, friends here in the Carolinas have witnessed U.S. and Western assaults on Iran's independence and sovereignty. Smart Americans, despite the propaganda thrown at us, DO recognize this if that is any relief for Iranians especially since February 28th.

As for the Zionist Colony which has had a grip on U.S. foreign policy and corrupted it with all sorts of chicanery, including a grip on the sordid Epstein files as a bribery tool, there is one quote that stands out, delivered by a French-Lebanese banker and commentator named Michel Chiha on December 5th in 1947. Few have been so prescient as Chiha when he stated this in 1947: “The recent decision to partition Palestine

with the creation of a Jewish State will prove to be the worse universal error ever committed. What appears to be a seemingly small act will have the most unexpected consequences and it is by no means an exaggeration to say that this little affair will shake the entire world to its core....”

The expected core shaking is happening right now as Trump abandoned campaign promises made before his second election to the presidency, fooling the American people who voted for him after Joe Biden made messes supporting the Zionist genocide and amplifying the conflict in Ukraine.

It is becoming obvious that Trump's primary aim all along even during his first term and now has been quite simply to give the Zionists whatever they wanted, neglecting relief for the American people (on issues like affordable healthcare to name one) who are drowning in a spew of criminality in Washington. MAGA stands, but it stands for “Make America Grotesque Again”. And the “grotesque” part has been accomplished while sorry consequences have just begun unfolding for most American citizens...but not the billionaire class supporting a POTUS who will be remembered for plunder, rapine of minors, immorality and corruption on a scale that dwarfs the misdeeds of previous lousy U.S. political leaders. Meanwhile China enjoys a growing world economic hegemony, has saved a million Chinese from abject poverty precisely by NOT engaging in wars for decades.

What chances does the Cairo agreement on Gaza have of succeeding?

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Gaza's residents are waiting eagerly for the genocide to end and a sense of security prevail, but Israel's refusal to compromise and the challenges of implementing the Cairo agreement make a quick breakthrough unlikely.

Crushed between the occupying regime's war machine on one side and the helpless international stance on the other, Palestinians are trying to cling to whatever glimmer of hope they can find, even when they already know it may be nothing more than a mirage that will soon disappear.

Throughout every stage of this genocide, which continues to this day, residents of the Strip have searched for any opportunity to catch their breath and move, even from a distance, toward the life they lived before the genocide broke out, or at least some semblance of it.

Yet that life itself was difficult and harsh, and bore little resemblance to what the rest of the world's population experienced, even those who endured complex and prolonged crises.

In the devastated Gaza, both before and after the non-stop daily massacres, life seems more like an adventure in survival than anything else. Residents have to navigate a path filled with danger just to secure the barest necessities for their children.

Every morning, these children wander the streets in search of scraps from dilapidated charity kitchens, while sick and wounded people, of whom there are countless numbers, struggle to find even a proper bed on which to lie their weak, exhausted bodies.

In the forgotten Gaza that many of its residents have come to believe they inhabit, people closely follow every piece of news, every report, and every bit of information being circulated,

as well as rumors and fabrications deliberately spread.

Amid all of this, they search for anything that might calm their fears, offer some comfort, or provide even the faintest glimmer of hope for what lies ahead.

Over the past few weeks, the idea that the genocide might finally end completely, and that conditions might shift toward security and stability, has taken hold in the minds of Gazans.

This was especially true after they heard reports of understandings reached in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, where agreement was reportedly reached on a 15-point plan. The optimism was reinforced by meetings held on Sunday involving Jared Kushner, the U.S. president's special envoy and son-in-law, and Nikolay Miladenov, executive director of the “Board of Peace.”

These developments generated an unprecedented sense of optimism among Gaza's residents, who believed the agreement could bring an end to nearly three years of suffering. During that period, they endured the horrors of war on a scale rarely, if ever, experienced by any other people, paying a devastating price that surpassed everything they had endured throughout the previous 78 years of occupation.

Though the Israeli regime has publicly rejected the agreement, and declared that it would continue killing and seizing territory, as it has done during the ten months since the “ceasefire agreement” came into effect, optimism has remained the prevailing sentiment among residents of the Gaza Strip.

They have placed, and continue to place, their hopes in the efforts of the mediating and guarantor states. They still hope those countries will succeed in pressuring the Zionist regime, which, experience has shown, has never yielded to pressure, regardless



of how intense it may be.

The Zionist regime, instead, has repeatedly turned its back and disregarded everything previously agreed upon.

Yet setting aside what is in the minds of people in Gaza, and regardless of the reassurances issued by some parties, reassurances that have been heard many times over the past few months, the available evidence and indicators do not leave much room for optimism in the coming weeks, at least, particularly during the period leading up to the Israeli parliamentary elections.

There are several observations in support of this assessment. Some may consider it pessimistic and lacking in realism, and they may be right. But Gaza's experience over the three years of this criminal war has taught many to approach every development with extreme caution, and even to view it with suspicion and skepticism.

This is particularly true when Tel Aviv has shown no intention of ending the aggression, while its positions throughout the long months of genocidal war have been characterized by evasion, deception, broken promises, and repeated withdrawals from agreements, without regard for any international party.

The first reason for caution is the regime's unequivocal rejection

of the agreement reached recently in Cairo. Its position is entirely consistent with its approach to every previous understanding, including agreements it actually signed and publicly pledged to honor, such as the January 19 agreement last year and the October 10 agreement of the same year.

Both were subjected to clear and blatant violations by the occupation regime. The latter resulted in the killing of more than 1,300 Palestinians, left hundreds injured, and expanded Zionist-controlled areas to nearly 70 percent of the Strip.

Every Israeli statement following the latest Cairo Agreement made it unmistakably clear that the regime opposes it and rejects it outright. The regime has also reaffirmed its intention to continue the aggression in all its forms, particularly attacks on civilians using drones, as well as gunfire and artillery shelling that continues unabated, especially at night.

On the ground, this position has been translated into action in every detail. Killings carried out with incendiary missiles have become a daily occurrence, no longer deemed worthy of condemnation or even serious protest by the international community or by the sponsoring and guarantor states.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Israeli troops shoot children and abduct medical workers in West Bank

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Israeli forces and settler militias are executing an aggressive campaign of violence across the West Bank.

The military and settlers operate as a unified front to displace Palestinians through terror, home sieges, and lethal raids. Tel Aviv weaponizes the distraction of its broader U.S.-backed war to permanently alter the demographic reality on the ground.

Branding detainees and lethal raids

The degradation of Palestinians has taken visceral forms. During a sweep through over 100 buildings in Qabatiya, soldiers detained dozens of residents and beat them.

Troops then used permanent markers to write identification numbers directly on the foreheads and arms of Palestinian men.

Footage showed journalist Mahmoud Zakarneh walking with the number “44” scrawled across his face. The military admitted to the practice.

Stripping individuals of their names and replacing them with numbers mirrors historical atrocities that Zionists have weaponized for decades and exposes the contempt driving the occupation.

Lethal military force routinely accompanies these systemic humiliations.

Inside the Am'ari refugee camp in el-Bireh, soldiers commandeered a cafe and fired live ammunition at Palestinian youths outside.

Medical sources quickly confirmed that the soldiers seriously wounded at least one young child. At dawn in Ramallah, forces raided the at-Tira neighborhood and arrested 54-year-old gynecologist Dr. Dima Muhammad Amin Barakat.



The architecture of siege

Settlers are weaponizing isolation. In Qusra, extremist militias have surrounded three Palestinian families for over ten days.

The attackers deliberately severed water lines, cut the local electricity, and blocked all emergency medical access.

Among the besieged is Loui Ridi, a Palestinian American who recently returned from Ohio.

Ridi watched the unfolding ordeal through security cameras from his home in Ohio for seven sleepless nights before deciding to make the journey, telling reporters upon arrival, “I can't let the settlers steal my house while I was watching.”

He raised a United States flag over his roof, hoping for safety. A settler walked onto his land anyway. Israeli soldiers arrived and ordered Ridi back inside his house.

The blockade provoked the ultra-Zionist U.S. Ambassador Mike Huckabee to publicly label the perpetrators as “terrorists.”

The siege continues. This coordinated strangulation repeats across the territory.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Post-Maduro Venezuela: Washington's lab for Latin America

From page 1 ► This situation is the product of a prolonged and attritional process of escalating U.S. pressure instruments; a chain that began with the financial and structural sanctions of 2015 and 2017, intensified with the 2019 oil blockade, and reached its peak with the military deployment of the U.S. naval fleet in the Caribbean beginning in August 2025; a strategic deployment that directly provided the operational groundwork for the military aggression and abduction of Maduro on January 3, 2026. Thus, the fundamental question in assessing Venezuela's future is whether the current arrangements will lead to the restoration of national sovereignty and geopolitical independence, or merely reproduce the pattern of foreign intervention in the form of a new legal and political mechanism, namely structured trusteeship.

Washington's recognition of Delcy Rodríguez in March 2026 as the sole incumbent head of government was based on her role in preserving the state apparatus and demonstrated that the U.S. priority was not a radical and high-risk transfer of power to figures such as María Corina Machado. By preserving parts of the previous executive structure, the White House advanced a model of controlled transition designed to act as a buffer and minimize security costs. Nevertheless, Rodríguez's repeated concessions to Washington have not only failed to limit the scope of intervention, but, according to the strategic logic of hegemonic powers, have also paved the way for deeper influence and the imposition of increasingly expansive foreign demands.

The components of this trusteeship have been clearly institutionalized in the country's economic and security structures. The issuance of Executive Order 14373 marks a turning point in the stripping of Venezuela's national sovereignty; a legal document that placed the country's oil revenues under the custody of the U.S. State Department and the management of the U.S. Treasury. At the same time, the direct steering of political processes by figures such as Marco Rubio, and the announcement of the Caracas government's diplomatic programs through the words of U.S. officials, indicate an overt relocation of the locus of sovereignty. Washington is pursuing its strategy through a three-stage roadmap consisting of “stabilization,” “economic recovery,” and “structural transition”; a process that on paper moves toward institution-building without a direct foreign presence, but in practice keeps vital levers of the political economy tied to the wills of the White House.

In the sphere of domestic politics, Washington defined its main channel of engagement around more moderate opposition figures such as Dinorah Figueroa and marginalized the opposition's more headline factions so that the electoral reform process could proceed within a manageable framework. Nevertheless, limited and controlled measures such as general amnesty and the release of prisoners have not resolved the roots of the structural dispute and the mutual denial of legitimacy between Chavism and its opponents. Alongside these developments, Israel's entry under the guise of relief and humanitarian missions following the recent earthquakes is part of the process of readjusting Venezuela's geopolitical position in the Western Hemisphere; an instrument for gradually normalizing security influence and moving Venezuela from the axis of confrontation into the orbit of convergence with the Western security structure.

The outlook for Venezuela is neither the total collapse of its structures nor the attainment of deep stability grounded in national sovereignty; rather, the most likely prospect is the establishment of a prolonged period of fragile and conditional stability. Within this framework, political and economic reforms will proceed under the direct supervision of transnational mechanisms, elections will be held in a managed environment, and energy revenues will circulate under conditional licenses. This situation may contain the acute livelihood crisis, but as long as the core of strategic decision-making remains subject to foreign directives, the resulting stability will be another name for an institutionalized trusteeship in the geopolitics of the Caribbean and South America.

In short, in post-Maduro Venezuela, the formal structure of government has been preserved, but a significant portion of the instruments for exercising sovereignty has been removed from the control of the national government; a situation that can be called “government without the instruments of sovereignty.” Conditional control over oil revenues, intervention in institutional restructuring, and influence over the course of future elections show that the issue is not merely a change in political elites, but the restriction of the state's capacity to make independent decisions in strategic domains. On a broader scale, this model could be a sign of a form of de-sovereignization in South America: preserving ostensibly independent states while transferring the real levers of power beyond national borders. Venezuela, in this regard, is the most serious testing ground for this model.

Iran sweep past Algeria at FIVB U17 World Championship

TEHRAN – Iran swept past Algeria in straight sets (25-15, 25-19, 25-14) in the second edition of the FIVB Volleyball Boys’ U17 World Championship on Wednesday.

Sina Hazrati led the young Team Melli with 16 points, while Algeria’s Djaber Abdelhak Sekkak collected nine points.

The competition has brought 24 of the world’s best young volleyball teams in Doha, Qatar 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 is 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 along with Algeria, Chinese Taipei, and Pakistan.

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.

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.

Iran will face Pakistan on Friday before completing the pool stage against Chinese Taipei on Sunday.

Golshadnezhad no longer Iran’s flag-bearer for 2026 Asian Games

TEHRAN – Atousa Golshadnezhad, Iran’s world and Asian karate champion, has withdrawn from her role as flag-bearer for Iran at the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya.

Golshadnezhad and kabaddi player Fazl Atrachali had previously been selected to lead the Iranian delegation at the opening ceremony.

However, Golshadnezhad decided to step down due to the long distance between the opening ceremony venue and the athletes’ accommodation, as well as the fact that she is scheduled to compete just two days after the ceremony.

Her replacement is expected to be announced soon, with world wushu champion Zahra Kiani, a gold medalist in taolu, reportedly emerging as the leading candidate.

Iranian cyclist Mirbagheri aims medal at Nagoya

TEHRAN – Arash Mirbagheri, Iranian cycling at the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, is hoping to return home with a medal.

Mirbagheri, who rides for Spor Toto Cycling Team in Turkey, is currently based in Turkey and continuing his training there.

Speaking about his preparations for the Asian Games, Mirbagheri told Tehran Times: “I’m in Turkey at the moment, and I have six events ahead of me before the start of the Asian Games. Fortunately, this competition schedule will help me arrive in Nagoya in peak physical condition.

“My competitions with Spor Toto will finish 20 days before the Games, and I will return to Iran. Those 20 days will give me the perfect opportunity to focus on specialized training for the time trial and make sure I’m fully prepared for Nagoya.

“My Belgian coach is very pleased with my performance, and I’m also very confident that I can make it onto the podium and return home with a medal.”

Mirbagheri also criticized Iran’s inadequate cycling infrastructure, saying the track around the Azadi Sports Complex is not suitable for training.

“The track is uneven and has a lot of bumps. These conditions can damage our bikes and disrupt the rhythm of our training. Nevertheless, I will do everything I can to return home with a medal.”

Iran to play friendly match against Uzbekistan in Tashkent

TEHRAN – Iran national football team plan to play Uzbekistan in a friendly match as part of the preparation for the 2027 Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia.

The match has been scheduled for Sept. 24 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Iran and Uzbekistan failed to advance beyond the group stage at the 2026 World Cup.

The Iranian Football Federation, which failed to play friendly matches against strong opponents before the 2026 World Cup, has decided not to repeat the mistake this time and organize the preparatory phase more qualitatively.

“During the first FIFA days, three matches have been organized for the national team. One of the opponents will be an Asian team that participated in the World Cup (most likely Uzbekistan), and the second will be the Russian team. The third match has not yet been fully confirmed, but the opponent will be a European team,” head of Iran federation Mehdi Taj said.

Taj also explained why not all the details about the matches were disclosed and announced the plans for the next meeting.

“The official announcement about the matches will be announced simultaneously by the Iranian Football Federation, the host country and the sponsors. These three matches will be held in three different countries – one in Asia and two in Europe. From Nov. 9 to 17, the Iranian national team will participate in a tournament in Iraq and play two matches there,” he added.

It should be noted that earlier, the head coach of the Uzbekistan national team, Fabio Cannavaro, also said that negotiations are ongoing to hold a friendly match with Iran.

Tehran derby to be held in Isfahan

TEHRAN – The first Tehran derby of the 2026/27 Iran Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) season will be held at Isfahan’s Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium, with Esteghlal and Persepolis set to meet in the fifth week of the competition.

The highly anticipated clash will take place on Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 7:30 p.m. local time.

Esteghlal will be the designated home team for the match, which will see the two Tehran giants face off outside the capital.

The fixture is expected to attract significant attention from football fans across Iran, with both clubs aiming to make a strong start to the new campaign.

The Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium will provide the stage for one of Iranian football’s most prestigious and fiercely contested rivalries.

The Tehran derby, also known as Blue-Red derby, is a football match between the two prominent Tehran clubs Esteghlal and Persepolis.

It is widely considered the major crosstown derby in the Persian Gulf Pro League. This match was declared as the most important derby in Asia and 22nd most important derby in the world in June 2008 by World Soccer magazine.

It is considered one of the world’s most intense derbies.

Tehran, Tashkent explore stronger tourism ties

TEHRAN – Iran and Uzbekistan should turn their shared cultural and civilizational heritage into practical tourism programs and joint projects, Iran’s Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a meeting with Bahram Jan Aliyev, Uzbekistan’s deputy foreign minister, at Tehran’s Sa’dabad Historical and Cultural Complex, Salehi-Amiri highlighted the two countries’ extensive common capacities in cultural, historical, tourism and economic fields.

He said recent talks between Aliyev and Iranian deputy foreign ministers had been productive and could open a new chapter in bilateral relations.

Recalling his previous visit to Uzbekistan during his tenure as head of Iran’s National Olympic Committee, Salehi-Amiri said he had felt as though he were visiting Iran’s central city of Isfahan when he toured Samarkand and Bukhara.

“Seeing the handicrafts, tiles and beautiful artworks there, I realized that we have these works in our own country as well and share them with Uzbekistan,” he said.

The minister emphasized the deep ties between the two nations, saying Iran and Uzbekistan shared cultural, social, economic



and even political commonalities.

Salehi-Amiri proposed the establishment of a joint tourism working group and called for stronger people-to-people ties, saying Iranians were interested in learning about Uzbekistan’s history, civilization and traditions, while Uzbeks were similarly interested in Iran.

He said the two countries’ presidents were determined to expand bilateral relations and stressed the importance of strengthening ties between their peoples.

“Tourism is an area in which

there are no restrictions between us and Uzbekistan,” Salehi-Amiri said, adding that current tourist flows between the two countries did not reflect their potential and should be increased.

He proposed the development of joint and multi-destination tours as a key way to achieve this goal, with shared travel packages centered on the historical, cultural and civilizational attractions of Iran and Uzbekistan.

The minister also identified medical tourism as an important area for bilateral cooperation, citing Iran’s medical specialists,

Qal-e Kord Cave may shed new light on evolution of stone-tool technology



TEHRAN –The seventh season of archaeological excavations at Qal-e Kord Cave could provide new evidence for reconstructing the evolution of stone-tool technology and the history of early human occupation on the Iranian Plateau, the project’s director said.

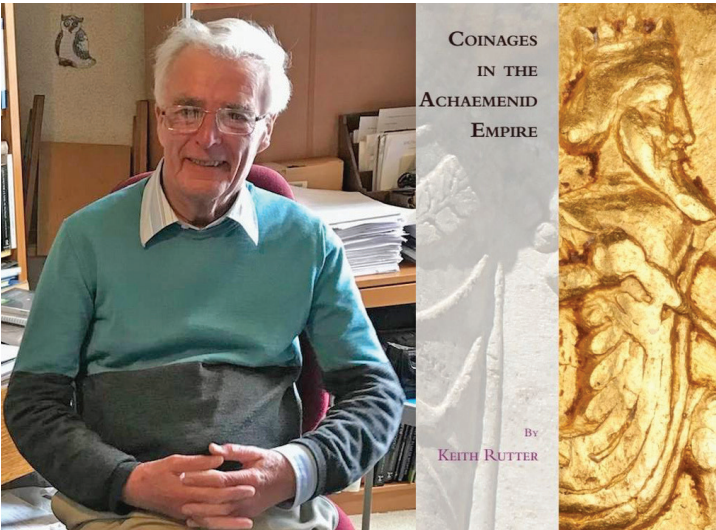
Milad Hashemi Sarvandi, a faculty member of the Archaeology Department at Tarbiat Modares University, said the finds from different layers of the cave point to distinct technological sequences and raise the possibility that its deeper layers represent a local technological tradition dating to

the late Lower Paleolithic and early Middle Paleolithic, Miras Aria reported.

“The data currently suggest that the lower layers of the cave may represent a local technological tradition in the late Lower Paleolithic and early Middle Paleolithic,” Hashemi Sarvandi said, stressing that the interpretation remains a research hypothesis requiring further excavation and analysis.

According to Hashemi Sarvandi, the stone-tool sequence at the cave can provisionally be divided into three technological sections.

Persian Empire: New scholarly work sheds light on Achaemenid monetary systems



organized and administered. This numismatic evidence holds particular value for its firsthand, contemporary nature, speaking directly to modern researchers without the filtering lens of later Greek or Roman historiography.

Drawing together evidence for coin production and use across the whole of the Achaemenid Empire, the book reveals that actual minting was largely confined to the western satrapies, from Asia Minor to Egypt,

well-equipped hospitals, relatively low costs and existing capacities as potential advantages.

He further called for stronger air links between the two countries, saying the expansion of Iranian and Uzbek airlines could help boost bilateral tourism.

Salehi-Amiri also stressed the role of public and media diplomacy in promoting Iran’s tourism potential. He said Iran would invite Uzbek celebrities, influential figures and media professionals to visit the country to help introduce its historical, cultural and civilizational attractions.

He added that the national broadcasters of the two countries could also help showcase Iran and Uzbekistan’s tourism capacities to their respective audiences.

The minister called for a joint meeting between Iranian and Uzbek private-sector economic and tourism operators, describing the private sector as the two countries’ “greatest capacity” for developing tourism ties.

He said Iran had targeted 8.5 million tourist arrivals in the previous year but received six million due to wartime conditions. Given the country’s tourism potential, he added, Iran is seeking to achieve its target during the second half of the current year.

Such comparisons could clarify the development of stone-tool technology at Qal-e Kord and determine whether the earlier technological tradition eventually developed toward more standardized technologies based on the Levallois method, Hashemi said.

He emphasized that further work is needed to test the hypothesis through detailed analysis of production sequences, raw materials, artifact morphology and spatial distribution.

The significance of Qal-e Kord, he added, extends beyond its antiquity. The cave could contribute to a better understanding of early human presence, environmental adaptation, tool-making technology and behavioral change on the Iranian Plateau.

Systematic excavation and integrated analysis of the cave’s archaeological deposits could also help address gaps in knowledge about this important period of Iran’s human prehistory and place Qal-e Kord within the broader framework of Paleolithic research in Iran and West Asia.

ous local and regional issues struck by satrapal administrations, city-states, and vassal kingdoms. The iconography found on these pieces, he argues, raises fresh questions about artistic cross-currents, the minutiae of provincial governance, and the religious beliefs that permeated imperial society. The book moves logically from an overview of the empire’s administrative framework and the nature of its royal coinage to detailed regional surveys of Thrace and Asia Minor, the Cypriot kingdoms, the Levant — including Phoenicia and Philistia — and Egypt, before concluding with a dedicated chapter on coinage produced directly by the royal administration.

Beyond its numismatic focus, the work treats coins as integral components of the broader systems of exchange and resource allocation that sustained the Achaemenid state. The famous coin deposits unearthed in the Apadana at Persepolis receive thorough analysis, with the long-standing puzzle over the selection of those specific issues carefully reconsidered.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

World Humanitarian Day: let's make protecting each other our greatest achievement



TEHRAN - On 19 August, the world marks World Humanitarian Day, a time to honour humanitarian workers and to stand with people affected by crises around the world.

When lives are at risk, the people who come to help should never be targets. Yet humanitarian workers continue to be killed, injured, abducted, detained and obstructed while carrying out their work. Most are national staff serving their own communities.

Under international humanitarian law, civilians — including humanitarian and medical personnel — must be respected and protected. Parties to armed conflict must allow and facilitate humanitarian relief for people in need, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Attacks on humanitarian personnel have consequences far beyond the individuals directly affected. They interrupt food deliveries, health care, protection and other life-saving services, leaving communities with even fewer ways to survive and recover.

Every life is more than a number

Every humanitarian worker killed leaves behind family members, friends, colleagues and communities whose lives are forever changed. World Humanitarian Day honours

their lives, service and legacy, while renewing the call to protect those who continue this work.

Local humanitarian workers face the greatest risks

Most humanitarian personnel affected by violence are national staff working in the places where they live. Protection efforts must reflect the risks they face and ensure that local and national responders have the resources, training and support they need.

Each year, World Humanitarian Day brings together partners from across the humanitarian system to advocate for the survival, well-being and dignity of people affected by crises, and for the safety and security of humanitarian workers. World Humanitarian Day is a campaign by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

US-Israeli attacks on Iranian civilians

Over the past 60 years, civilians have been the main victims of the wars; hence their protection in armed conflicts is regarded a cornerstone of international humanitarian law.

However, the United States and Israel forces have been launching violent attacks on Iran targeting residential areas, and bom-

barding health, educational, and sport infrastructures.

Their violation of international humanitarian law has been confirmed and condemned by many individuals, media, and international organizations worldwide.

“The principle of distinction between civilians and combatants is an important principle of the international humanitarian law; it only justifies targeting armed forces.

Civilians have to be treated with respect. Even political officials who are not directly involved in wars are not legitimate targets. It highlights that injured military forces should not be targeted, let alone rescuers, children, and health staff, and in case the invasion of military targets would bring about too much damage to civilians, it is better not to be carried out,” Behzad Saberi, an international law expert, said in an interview with IRNA.

The protection of civilians extends to those who try to help them, including medical staff, humanitarian and relief organizations that are providing essential goods such as food, clothing, medical tools, and parties to a conflict should not violate the law.

Mazandaran University to host Iran-China Science Day

TEHRAN – Mazandaran University is scheduled to play host to Iran-China Science Day, an official with the science ministry has said.

The head of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology's center for international scientific cooperation, Ehsan Qaboul, and the chancellor of Mazandaran University, Ebrahim Salehi-Omran, held a meeting on Sunday to discuss capacities of the university and explore the potential to expand international cooperation, IRNA reported.

Highlighting the constructive measures taken by Mazandaran University, Qaboul said the University's efforts to foster ties with East Asian universities, particularly the expansion of the Chinese language training center, have established a conducive environment for broadening collaborations.

For his part, Salehi-Omran said that the officials of the University will use the opportunity to accelerate the internationalization of Mazandaran University and eliminate existing obstacles.

Referring to the adopted measures, he noted that over the past year, the University signed different memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to promote international collaborations.

Tehran, Beijing beef up sci-tech ties

In 2025, the head of the Or-

ganization for the Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology, Hossein Roozbeh, and Chinese Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu explored the avenues for the expansion of scientific and technological collaborations between the two countries.

The officials met on August 20, 2025, following Peiwu's visit to Tehran branch of Iran House of Innovation and Technology (iHiT), Mehr news agency reported.

Having visited the iHiT in Tehran, the Chinese official said, “Iran possesses a magnificent civilization and is home to intelligent people who have made great achievements. The country's history of technology development is glorious. Today, we are proud to witness Iran's rapid technological advances in the modern era. China and Iran are two great civilizations with long histories, and the two countries have great potentials for fostering scientific cooperation.”

Referring to Iran's Vice President for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy, Hossein Afshin's, visit to China and the country's open approach to international cooperation, the official said, “we believe there are many potential avenues for enhancing partnerships between the two countries.”

For his part Roozbeh stressed the need for promoting and accelerating scientific cooperation



between Iran and China, highlighting that the two nations have a long-standing history of scientific, technological, economic and trade collaborations.

Iran's science and technology ecosystem has made significant progress in recent years, with more than ten thousand knowledge-based companies operating in the country. The contributions of the highly-skilled and talented workforce have created major opportunities for the development of joint cooperation, he said.

Referring to the memoranda of understanding (MOUs) signed by Afshin and Ding Zhisheng, the Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China, on the sidelines of the 2nd Belt and Road Conference on Science and Technology Exchange in June 2025, the official announced Iran's full readiness to implement the made

agreements.

Underscoring china's notable capabilities in artificial intelligence (AI), and Iran's progress in the field, Roozbeh said the two countries partnerships in AI would bring about invaluable achievements to the region and the world.

The official went on to say that the establishment of BRI (Belt and Road initiative) LabsNet would play a crucial role in the expansion of scientific interactions at international scale.

The two countries also agreed on exchanging researchers, young scientists, and elites as well as participating in each county's exhibition. The collaborations included joint efforts in technology, health and medicine, environment, agriculture sectors.

Out of recorded earthquakes, 910 had a magnitude greater than 3, 130 had a magnitude greater than 4, and 15 had a magnitude greater than 5 on the Richter scale.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran, but more than 6 percent of the victims of the world's earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.

TEHRAN – A total of 90 earthquakes have been recorded across the country in a week from August 8th to 14th, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 76 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, 10 earthquakes with a magnitude between 3 and 4, and four earthquakes with a magnitude between 4 and 5 have occurred in the country, ircs reported.

Of the total quakes, one had a magnitude of 4.7 on the Richter scale, which occurred on August 10th in Khuzestan provinces.

Among the provinces of the country, Khorasan Razavi experienced the highest number

of earthquakes with 16, followed by Semnan with 12, and Khuzestan with 11 earthquakes.

During the same period, no earthquakes were recorded in Tehran, East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Ardabil, Alborz, Zanjan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Qom, Qazvin, Gilan, Lorestan, Markazi, and Hormozgan provinces.

A total of 2,380 earthquakes with a magnitude of more than 2.5 on the Richter scale were recorded across the country over the past calendar year (March 2025–March 2026), according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran, Mehr news agency reported.

IRCS proposes BRICS to establish community-based health network

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has proposed the establishment of a BRICS network of community-based health centers.

The network will serve as a platform for the exchange of experiences, joint training, research, and the implementation of practical projects, IRNA reported.

On Tuesday, the head of the IRCS for international affairs, Razieh Alishvandi, addressed BRICS Civil Forum in New Delhi, India, saying that the experience of pandemics, natural hazards, climate change, conflicts, and humanitarian crises show that health system resilience is almost impossible without genuine community participation.

She highlighted the pivotal role of the public in enhancing the resilience of health systems.

The official underlined expanding ties among BRICS member states in different sectors such as primary health care, non-communicable diseases, mental health, traditional medicine and indigenous knowledge, workforce training, and community-based health.

Conducting joint search and rescue training, disaster medicine, first aid, and psychosocial support were among highlighted issues.

The official also put forward the proposal to launch a collaborative BRICS platform to document successful experiences and issue early warnings regarding health risks, aiming to shift civil society cooperation within BRICS from the stage of dialogue toward practical actions and joint projects.

Commemorating medical staff, relief workers, and rescuers who lost their lives while carrying out humanitarian missions during the US-Israeli attacks against the country, Alishvandi emphasized the need to safeguard health workers, relief personnel, patients, and medical and relief facilities in accordance with international humanitarian law.

The official went on to elaborate on the capacities of the IRCS including the six-million network of rescuers, young volunteers, and crescent houses, highlighting that resilience goes far beyond merely increasing the number of hospitals and equipment. Instead, it requires a society that is informed, trained, and organized, and maintains social trust.

She went on to announce the IRCS readiness to share expertise and boost scientific cooperation with BRICS member states in disaster medicine, search and rescue, community-based education, psychosocial support, volunteer and mass gathering management.

The 2026 Civil BRICS Forum was held under the theme ‘Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability’, placing particular emphasis on a human-centred approach, focusing on the practical impact of policy solutions on societies and on expanding opportunities for inclusive development.

The forum was centered on eight main areas namely education, healthcare, culture, the environment, finance, information security, new technologies, and entrepreneurship and social welfare.

The program included thematic roundtables and working groups covering its principal areas of activity, alongside panel discussions bringing together NGO leaders, experts and government representatives. Participants also presented examples of successful practices developed across BRICS countries.

A model of excellence in crisis management

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Gilan farmers harvesting rice

Rice harvesting is underway in Gilan Province, northern Iran, as farmers begin collecting their crops in August. Gilan is Iran's leading rice-producing province, with about 238,000 hectares of paddy fields. Officials expect more than 1.1 million tons of paddy rice to be produced this year, highlighting the province's key role in Iran's rice industry.



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AUGUST 20, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The peak of modesty is for a man to be modest in the presence of his own self.
Imam Ali (AS)

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

“Minions & Monsters” to be shown at IAF

TEHRAN – The Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) in Tehran will screen the 2026 American animated period comedy film “Minions & Monsters,” directed by Pierre Coffin, on Thursday.

Produced by Universal Pictures and Illumination, it is the third installment in the “Minions” prequel series and the seventh overall installment in the “Despicable Me” franchise.

The film stars Coffin as the Minions, alongside Trey Parker, Allison Janney, Christoph Waltz, Jesse Eisenberg, Jeff Bridges, Zoey Deutch, Bobby Moynihan, and Phil LaMarr.

Taking place before the events of “Minions” (2015), “Minions & Monsters” introduces the audience to an entirely new tribe of Minions, who find themselves in Hollywood at the dawn of cinema. Our heroes are two brand-new Minions: James and Henry. We meet them and their rambunctious friends in the distant past and witness their trials and tribulations as they search far and wide for an evil master to serve. Eventually they reach the 1920’s, and wind up crashing a Hollywood film set. Their brief and accidental appearance on camera pays off and before they know it the Minions are bona-fide movie stars.

Then they fall in love with making movies and want to make an awesome monster movie of their own. With the help of a spell book taken from an old boss (an evil sorcerer they used to work for), James and Henry summon some fearsome monsters to play the villains in their movie. When things go haywire, James, Henry, and all their buddies must work together to save the world from a band of rampaging monsters.

“Minions & Monsters” premiered at the Anecy International Animation Film Festival on June 21 and was theatrically released in the United States on July 1. The film was a box office success, grossing \$494 million worldwide, becoming the tenth-highest-grossing film of 2026.

The film received positive reviews, with many deeming it to be the best in the franchise since the first film. On the review ag-



gregation website Rotten Tomatoes, 89% of 180 critics’ reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.9/10. The website’s consensus reads, “The Minions bring their penchant for mayhem to Hollywood history in this affectionate and charming sendup of moviemaking magic, turning out the franchise’s most roundly enjoyable entry yet.” It is currently Illumination’s highest-rated film on the website. Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, gave the film a score of 70 out of 100, based on 30 critics, indicating “generally favorable” reviews. Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of “A–” on an A+ to F scale.

Minions are a fictional all-male species of yellow capsule-shaped creatures that appear in Illumination’s “Despicable Me” franchise. Their first appearance was in “Despicable Me” (2010), where they serve as the henchmen of the film’s protagonist, a supervillain named Gru. The Minions are characterized by their comedic behavior and their fictional language named Minionese, which is largely unintelligible.

Cartoon of Day



Israeli settlers taking over the West Bank.
Cartoonist: Marco De Angelis from Italy

Ali Rahbari to conduct Mariinsky Orchestra in St. Petersburg

TEHRAN – Internationally renowned Iranian composer and conductor Ali Rahbari will take the stage on September 26 at the prestigious Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, officially marking the start of his sixth artistic season at this renowned venue.

In the concert, he will conduct the Mariinsky Orchestra, performing works by great composers from around the world, including the German composer Richard Wagner, Norwegian composer and pianist Edvard Grieg, and French composer and conductor Hector Berlioz.

The concert repertoire includes “The Siegfried Idyll” by Wagner, which is a symphonic poem for chamber orchestra, “Peer Gynt Suite No. 1” by Grieg, which is the incidental music to Henrik Ibsen’s 1867 play “Peer Gynt,” and “Symphonie fantastique,” which is a programmatic symphony written by Berlioz.

Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883) was a German composer, theater director, essayist, and conductor, best known for his operas, although his mature works are often referred to as music dramas. Unlike most composers, Wagner wrote both the libretti and the music for all of his stage works. He first achieved recognition with works in the Romantic tradition of Carl Maria von Weber and Giacomo Meyerbeer, but revolutionized the genre through his concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art), which sought to unite poetic, musical, visual, and dramatic elements. In that approach, the drama unfolds as a continuously sung narrative, with the music evolving organically from the text rather than alternating between arias and recitatives. Wagner outlined those ideas in a series of essays published between 1849 and 1852, most fully realizing them in the first half of his four-opera cycle “Der Ring des Nibelungen” (The Ring of the Nibelung).

Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907) was a Norwegian composer and pianist. He is widely considered one of the leading Romantic era composers, and his music



is part of the standard classical repertoire worldwide. His use of Norwegian folk music in his own compositions brought the music of Norway to fame, as well as helping to develop a national identity, much as Jean Sibelius did in Finland and Bedřich Smetana in Bohemia.

Hector Berlioz (1803 – 1869) was a French Romantic composer, conductor and critic. His output includes orchestral works such as the “Symphonie fantastique” and “Harold in Italy,” choral pieces including the “Requiem” and “L’Enfance du Christ,” his three operas “Benvenuto Cellini,” “Les Troyens” and “Béatrice et Bénédict,” and works of hybrid genres such as the dramatic symphony “Roméo et Juliette” and the dramatic legend “La Damnation de Faust”.

Rahbari, who was appointed “permanent guest conductor” of the Mariinsky Orchestra by decree of Valery Gergiev, the legendary and celebrated conductor of Russian orchestras, has over the past five seasons successfully presented 28 varied programs, earning the confidence and wide acclaim of audiences and critics alike. During this period, he has

brought a broad spectrum of the world’s classical music masterpieces—as well as distinguished Iranian works—to the stage.

Ali Rahbari, 78, embarked on his musical journey at the age of five, learning to play the violin. He graduated from the Vienna Academy of Music and Performing Arts in 1971, specializing in composition under the tutelage of Gottfried von Einem, and completed his conducting studies in 1974, guided by Hans Swarovsky. He is a laureate of international conducting competitions, securing the gold medal in Besançon, France (1977), and the silver medal in Geneva (1978).

He has conducted over 120 orchestras worldwide, including Orchestra della Svizzera Romanda, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, French Chamber Orchestra, Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and Prague Symphony Orchestra.

He has served as the principal guest conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, receiving the Dvořák Medal in 1985 for his collaboration with the

ensemble, and also led the Belgrade Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Belgian Radio and Television Orchestra (later becoming its principal conductor from 1988 to 1996).

Rahbari was the principal conductor of the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra and the Virtuosi di Praga chamber orchestra. From 2000 to 2004, he was the chief conductor and musical director of the Malaga Symphony Orchestra, Spain.

In 1997, Rahbari formed the Persian International Philharmonic Orchestra in Bregenz, Austria, by bringing together 60 Iranian musicians from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.S.

In July 2022, Rahbari made his debut at the Mariinsky Theater, conducting Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony and Rimsky-Korsakov’s symphonic suite Scheherazade. Since then, he has been a regular on the Mariinsky stage.

He has released over 250 compact discs, with his recordings of operas by Verdi and Puccini under his direction gaining particular popularity.

Theater-orchestral production “Arash” to bring Iranian legend to Tehran stage

TEHRAN- A large-scale theater-orchestral production based on one of Iran’s most enduring legends, “Arash,” is scheduled to go on stage in Tehran in September.

Produced by Ali Mohtasham, directed by Ali Sarabi and written by Omid Sohrabi, the production will be staged at the Royal Hall of Espinas Palace in Tehran, bringing together theater, live music and orchestral performance to offer a new interpretation of the legendary Iranian archer, Mehr reported.

“Arash” is centered on one of the best-known heroic figures in Iranian mythology and seeks to explore themes of national identity, courage, love and choice through a combination of dramatic performance and live orchestral music.

The production has been described as one of the largest and most distinctive theater-orchestral projects of the current year, bringing together a major ensemble of performers from Iran’s theater and cinema scene.

The first group of actors includes Sajjad Babai, Amin Bani, Maral Baniadam, Mehdi Pakdel, Sheida Khaligh, Arash Dadgar, Keyvan Saketof, Ali Shadman, Alireza Shoja-Nouri, Tannaz Tabatabai, Mohsen Ghaffari, Navid Mohammadzadeh, Sam Mazinani and Elika Nasiri.

The participation of these prominent actors from different generations of Iran’s performing arts community is expected to contribute to the scale and diversity of the production. Further details about the musical ensemble and other elements of the cast and production are expected to be announced later.

The project presents the story of Arash not merely as an ancient tale of heroism, but as a narrative about sacrifice and the meaning of belonging to one’s homeland. Through its theatrical and musical format, the production

aims to reinterpret the legendary figure for a contemporary audience while retaining the central themes that have allowed the story to survive across generations.

Arash, known in Persian mythology as Arash-e Kamangir, is one of the most celebrated heroic figures in Iranian cultural tradition. His story has been preserved in different forms in Persian literature and mythology and has come to symbolize self-sacrifice, courage and devotion to the homeland.

According to the best-known version of the legend, Iran and Turan have been engaged in a devastating war. After years of conflict, the two sides agree to settle their dispute by determining a new boundary. The agreement requires an Iranian archer to shoot an arrow, with the point where the arrow lands becoming the border between the two lands.

Arash is chosen for the task.

The legend presents the challenge as far more than an ordinary feat of archery. Arash is required to put all his strength into a single shot, knowing that the act will cost him his life. He climbs to a high mountain and prepares to release the arrow. In one of the most famous images associated with the legend, Arash’s entire strength and vitality are said to enter the arrow as he shoots it toward the horizon.

The arrow travels an extraordinary distance before finally landing, establishing the border and bringing an end to the conflict. Arash, however, dies after completing his mission, having sacrificed himself for the survival and territorial integrity of his homeland.

This element of sacrifice lies at the heart of the legend. Arash does not fight for personal glory or wealth. His heroism comes from accepting a responsibility that requires him to give everything he has for the sake of others.

The story has consequently acquired a symbolic significance far beyond the act of shooting an arrow. Arash has become an embodiment of the idea that the fate of a nation can sometimes depend on the courage and sacrifice of an individual. His story also connects personal choice with collective responsibility, making the ancient legend relevant to later generations.

Arash’s story has been particularly influential in Persian poetry and modern Iranian literature. Writers and poets have repeatedly returned to the character, interpreting his sacrifice in different historical and political contexts. The image of the arrow traveling across the land has also become a powerful metaphor for hope, determination and the possibility of shaping the future through individual action.

Unlike some mythological heroes whose stories revolve around conquest, Arash’s defining act is one of giving. He wins not by defeating an enemy in combat, but by making the ultimate personal sacrifice to bring an end to war and protect his people.

The Tehran production seeks to use this familiar myth as a starting point for a contemporary theatrical experience. By combining dramatic storytelling with a live orchestra, “Arash” will place the ancient narrative within a large-scale performance environment in which music plays a central role alongside acting.

The creators describe the work as a new interpretation of the Arash myth, focusing on such concepts as identity, courage, love and choice. These themes are expected to allow the production to move beyond a straightforward retelling of the legend and examine the emotional and human dimensions of Arash’s decision.