

## How Trump uses the “Peace Council” to reshape global order

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – President Donald Trump is attempting to leverage the “Peace Council” to impose American hegemony while marginalizing the United Nations, Europe, Russia, and China, alongside reducing European and Arab involvement in the Palestinian cause.

Since his re-election to a new term, Trump has vigorously pursued a unipolar American domination of the world through a series of policies. Among these were his attempts to replace the UN with the Gaza “Peace Council”. ▶ **Page 5**

## Trump-Netanyahu’s war crimes against the environment

By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN – By launching an unwarranted war on Iran on Feb. 28, the United States under Donald Trump and Israel under Benjamin Netanyahu simultaneously launched war crimes against the environment.

Israeli and U.S. aircraft carried out nearly 19,000 sorties during the 40-day war against Iran. 8,500 of these sorties were carried out by Israel. According to Haaretz, an average Israeli fighter sortie to Tehran consumed about 15 metric tons (18,000 liters) of jet fuel.

The roughly 19,000 Israeli and U.S. sorties carried out during the war may have generated around 900,000 tons of CO2 from aviation fuel alone. ▶ **Page 5**



Pakistan's Field Marshal, Asim Munir (left), held talks with President Masoud Pzeshkian in Tehran late on Sunday.

## Iran’s security chief: US has no place in West Asia

TEHRAN — The United States will have no place in the future of the West Asia, and regional countries themselves will determine the direction of the region, Iran's top security official said Tuesday, as Tehran called for closer regional cooperation and stronger security along its border with Iraq.

Major General Mohsen Rezaei, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, made the remarks during a meeting in Tehran with Faiq Zaidan, president of Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council. Rezaei said the countries of the region should be allowed to determine their own future without outside interference. ▶ **Page 3**

## Iran army ground forces commander: “borders are our red line”

TEHRAN — Brigadier General Ali Jahanshahi, commander of Iran's army ground Forces, has warned Takfiri terrorist groups and other hostile elements operating beyond Iran's borders that any attempt to create insecurity or carry out attacks near the country's territory would trigger a “decisive and crushing” response.

Jahanshahi issued the warning during a visit to Iran's northeastern border areas, where he assessed the combat readiness, defensive capabilities and deployment of army ground units stationed along the frontier.

“Any movement, hostile act or action against the borders of the Islamic Republic will be met with a firm and crushing response,” Jahanshahi said, stressing that Iran's borders constitute a red line for the country's Armed Forces. ▶ **Page 2**

# Gambler’s Hand Revealed to Iran

*Trump plays the economic war card with Bessent while sending Field Marshal Asim Munir to seek a face-saving exit from the quagmire of war with Iran*

## Tehran seeks roadmap to lift Iran-Iraq tourist exchanges to 5m

TEHRAN – Iran is seeking to increase tourist exchanges with neighboring Iraq to five million visitors in each direction within a year, Iran's tourism minister said, calling for the goal to be turned into a detailed and measurable roadmap.

Tourism Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri made the remarks at a meeting on expanding tourism ties with Iraq attended by ministry officials, representatives of the border provinces of Ilam, Khuzestan, Kordestan, Kermanshah and West Azarbaijan, and private-sector tourism operators.

“About 3.6 million Iraqi tourists currently travel to Iran, while around 3.5 million Iranians travel to Iraq,” Salehi-Amiri said, adding that the target should be to raise the figure to five million visitors in each direction within a defined timeframe.

He stressed, however, that massive Arbæen pilgrimage should be separated from conventional tourism statistics.

### Arbæen distinct from conventional tourism

Salehi-Amiri said the annual Arbæen pilgrimage is fundamentally different from conventional tourism because it is a largely popular, spontaneous and religious movement in which standard tourism components such as accommodation and paid services do not necessarily apply. ▶ **Page 6**

## Strategic vacuum: Why is Trump’s economic warfare against Iran doomed to fail?

TEHRAN- Six months into his military campaign against Iran, Donald Trump finds himself trapped in the very quagmire he promised to eliminate. What began as a boastful declaration of “decisive action” to crush Iran and effect regime change has devolved into a strategic fiasco that not only fails to achieve its objectives but is inflicting profound damage on the U.S. economy and global stability. The administration's latest gambit—announcing the “largest financial attack in history” against Iran on August 24, a self-styled “D-Day” of economic warfare—appears less a stroke of genius and more an act of desperation from a presidency with no viable strategy left.

The irony is palpable. As U.S. Treasury officials threaten economic Armageddon against Tehran, America's own energy reserves are collapsing. Official data from July 2026 reveals that U.S. crude oil stockpiles, including the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), have plummeted to their lowest level in half a century—just 41 days of coverage, compared to the historical average of 65 days. Washington has depleted its most powerful tool for market intervention, leaving itself exposed to any future supply shock. ▶ **Page 4**

## Joint Iran-Oman statement on Strait of Hormuz: Proposal for temporary corridor and mine clearance

TEHRAN- Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with his Omani counterpart Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Al-Busaidi in Tehran on Tuesday.

During a working visit to Tehran, Al-Busaidi held constructive talks with his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The two sides discussed key bilateral and regional issues. ▶ **Page 2**



Exclusive

## Ex-Japanese diplomat tells Tehran Times why he wrote ‘Why the United States Lost to Iran’ and what comes next

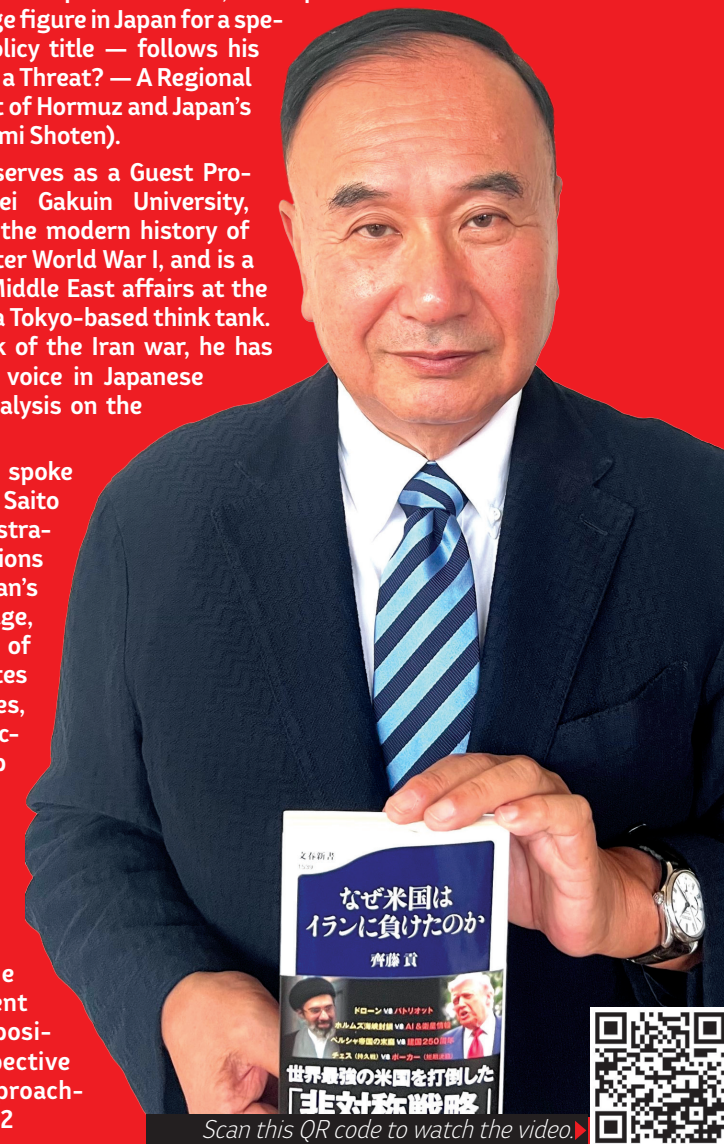
By Sahar Dadjoo

Mitsugu Saito, former Japanese Ambassador to Iran (October 2018–October 2020), has spent decades studying the Middle East, and his latest book, “Why the United States Lost to Iran” (Bungeishunju Ltd., July 2026, 224 pages), argues that Washington misjudged its political objectives in the recent war with Iran. The book, published with an initial print run of 10,000 copies — a notably large figure in Japan for a specialized foreign-policy title — follows his 2022 work, “Is Iran a Threat? — A Regional Power on the Strait of Hormuz and Japan's Diplomacy” (Iwanami Shoten).

Saito currently serves as a Guest Professor at Kwansei Gakuin University, where he teaches the modern history of the Middle East after World War I, and is a commentator on Middle East affairs at the Okazaki Institute, a Tokyo-based think tank. Since the outbreak of the Iran war, he has been a prominent voice in Japanese media, offering analysis on the conflict.

Tehran Times spoke with Ambassador Saito in Tokyo about the strategic miscalculations behind the war, Iran's asymmetric leverage, the shifting trust of Persian Gulf states in the United States, and Japan's distinctive relationship with Iran.

Before turning to the interview and the questions and answers, Mr. Saito wished to make the following statement regarding his position and the perspective from which he approaches the war: ▶ **Page 2**



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## TEHRAN PAPERS

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

### Tehran's strategic triangle

Sobh-e-No discusses Iran's three-pronged strategy in response to intensified US economic sanctions. The economic siege has entered a new phase, and Tehran is trying to manage the crisis through a triad of negotiation, heightened tension, and economic resistance. In practice, Tehran has not limited itself to diplomacy and economic resilience; it has also placed security and military options on the table as part of its broader strategic framework. The "Tehran's Strategic Triangle" requires maintaining defensive readiness, balancing threat and engagement, strengthening regional cooperation, coordinating with Eastern powers, and controlling domestic livelihoods. Overall, in this strategic triangle, military tools are not the first option but serve as a serious backing for diplomacy and economic resistance, enabling Iran to navigate any possible scenario.

**Shargh: What is Asim Munir seeking in Tehran?**

Shargh writes that the purpose of Asim Munir's trip to Iran comes at a moment when the regional environment and Tehran-Washington relations are in one of their most complex and exhausting phases. The continuation of the confrontation, combined with the US economic war against Iran and growing pressure on Iran's domestic economy and livelihoods, has created a picture of a vague and risky horizon. The Pakistani army chief's visit cannot be interpreted merely as a bilateral meeting or routine military-political protocol. One possibility is that the trip could help reactivate communication channels and reduce political distance to revive the Islamabad understanding. However, another scenario that should not be ignored is that Islamabad may be carrying tough warning messages from Trump to Tehran, or conveying the concerns of external actors about the direction of current developments.

**Jam-e-Jam: Islamic unity and regional security**

Jam-e-Jam, quoting former diplomat Mohsen Pak-Ayeen, analyzes the diplomacy of Islamic unity. This diplomacy aims to strengthen relations with Muslims worldwide and Islamic countries in order to increase commonalities and reduce differences. Given the US and Israeli-imposed war against Iran and the rising need for regional security provided by regional states themselves, conditions for achieving Islamic unity are more favorable than before. Arab and Muslim countries now believe that US military bases and security presence cannot guarantee their security. Instead, Islamic countries must pursue shared regional security through strengthened unity. Such unity could pave the way for a new global order based on multilateralism and resistance to US dominance.

### Joint Iran-Oman statement on Strait of Hormuz: Proposal for temporary corridor and mine clearance

TEHRAN- Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with his Omani counterpart Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Al-Busaidi in Tehran on Tuesday.

During a working visit to Tehran, Al-Busaidi held constructive talks with his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The two sides discussed key bilateral and regional issues.

The discussions focused on the importance both countries attach to the resumption of safe navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, while upholding their sovereignty and sovereign rights. In view of the current situation in the strait – resulting from the recent war and its devastating consequences – the two ministers examined a phased framework that could provide a practical and workable basis for moving forward.

The proposed framework includes the establishment of a temporary joint maritime corridor through the Strait of Hormuz and an agreement to carry out a joint

**Javan: The UAE's shadow must be removed from Iran's foreign trade**

Javan analyzes the declining role of the UAE in Iran's foreign trade. Contrary to some concerns, this decline does not necessarily mean shortages or a halt in imports. Iran can redesign trade routes and import the same goods directly from their source or through alternative pathways. The key point is that Iran's foreign trade should not depend on the decisions of a single regional hub. Importantly, the replacement strategy should not create a new dependency. The goal is not to find a "second UAE," but to build a network of multiple routes so that the closure of one path does not disrupt national trade. Thus, removing the UAE's shadow does not mean cutting trade with it; it means eliminating dependency. The UAE can remain one of Iran's partners. The current situation is an opportunity to reduce this long-standing reliance and build trade on multiple routes, partners, and financial mechanisms — a shift that ultimately reduces Iran's external trade risk.

**Hamshahri: The negotiation window is still open**

Hamshahri writes that what is emerging between Iran and the US resembles a mix of maximum pressure and forced diplomacy rather than a clear beginning of new negotiations. Washington is increasing the cost of avoiding the negotiating table, while mediators are trying to keep the path toward talks open. The next 24 to 48 hours will be decisive. If Tehran announces readiness to continue negotiations before the full implementation of new sanctions, the hypothesis that Washington is using the "Economic D-Day" as a negotiation lever will be strengthened. But if the sanctions package is implemented without pause or concessions — and Iran responds by tightening restrictions in the Strait of Hormuz — it will signal that forced diplomacy has failed to bring Tehran and Washington to a point of compromise, pushing the crisis into a new phase of economic-military escalation.

**Siasat-e-Rooz: A performative independence**

Siasat-e-Rooz argues that Ukraine's Independence Day has turned into a symbol of Western dependency. Europe, under the guise of helping, is exploiting Ukraine, while Ukraine itself lost its nuclear and military capabilities by trusting Western promises. In contrast, Iran is described as genuinely independent, relying on indigenous military power and the geostrategic leverage of the Strait of Hormuz. This has enabled Iran to shape a new regional order, whereas Ukraine — despite its sensitive geopolitical position — has become a tool in Western hands and lacks control over the start or end of its own war.

project for mine clearance in the strait. Technical negotiations between the two sides will continue with the aim of reaching an agreement on a permanent maritime corridor, the future administration of the strait, as well as mechanisms for information exchange, traffic management, and the provision of maritime and security services.

In this context, both sides emphasized the importance of holding joint consultations with the regional countries bordering the waters of the Persian Gulf. They also stressed the need to observe applicable international law and to respect the sovereign rights of the littoral states.

The Omani diplomat's visit to Tehran comes as Iran has repeatedly emphasized its cooperation with Muscat to ensure the security of maritime traffic.

Tehran believes that, given the two countries shared maritime boundary in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran and Oman should have priority in shaping policies concerning one of the world's most important waterways and its largest energy transit route.

# Iran army ground forces commander: “borders are our red line”

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**Drone and artillery capabilities within reach**

The commander said the ground forces had the capability to respond effectively against positions and bases belonging to groups that threaten Iran's security.

“In the event of any aggression or violation, all positions and bases of those threatening the country's security will be within range of the army ground forces' drone and artillery capabilities,” he said, adding that the Armed Forces' response to any threat would be “swift, precise and deterrent.”

Jahanshahi said the ground forces were operating at their highest level of combat readiness and had developed specific operational plans for confronting different types of threats. He also highlighted the deployment of new weapons and military equipment as part of efforts to strengthen the force's defensive and operational capabilities.

He warned that any incursion or aggression against Iranian terri-



tory would result in a stronger response, saying the ground forces would not allow hostile elements to compromise the security of Iran or its border communities.

**24 hour surveillance along the borders**

Jahanshahi said the ground forces maintained continuous surveillance of developments along the country's frontiers, supported by 'a comprehensive intelligence command.'

He said Iranian forces moni-

tor and track hostile movements across the borders around the clock, allowing them to identify and neutralize ground-combat operational plans before they can be implemented and prevent hostile groups from achieving their objectives near Iranian territory.

The commander also pointed to the deployment of mobile assault and rapid-reaction units along the northeastern borders. He said the combination of these units, continuous intelligence monitor-

ing and the broader readiness of Iran's Armed Forces had created an effective deterrent against potential threats.

“Today, the entire capacity and capabilities of the ground forces units deployed along the borders are dedicated to ensuring security, safeguarding the borders and confronting any threat,” Jahanshahi said. “We will not allow any enemy to undermine the security of our people, including our border residents.”

Jahanshahi also referred to the ground forces' performance during the latest round of what Iranian officials describe as unprovoked US-Israeli aggression against Iran, from February 28 to April 7. He praised the force's use of its drone capabilities, including precision strikes against US positions in the region, as part of Iran's military response.

The remarks underscore Tehran's continued emphasis on border security and rapid-response capabilities amid concerns over militant groups and other hostile elements operating in areas adjacent to Iran's frontiers.

## Ex-Japanese diplomat tells Tehran Times why he wrote ‘Why the United States Lost to Iran’ and what comes next

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*“First of all, I served in seven countries in the region, including the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sultanate of Oman as ambassador. Based on more than twenty years of experience in the region, I try to make my analysis entirely impartial, without taking any particular ideological position.*

*I left the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs six years ago, and I currently have no connection whatsoever with the Ministry or any other part of the Japanese government.*

*I criticize U.S. President Donald Trump not because I dislike him, but because I believe he has confused the political objectives of the war with Iran. At the same time, I do not ideologically support the Islamic Republic of Iran. My analysis is entirely based on my own judgment.”*

You characterize the conflict as a clash between two fundamentally different strategic cultures, with President Trump playing “poker” while Iran plays “chess.” What were the key miscalculations caused by this strategic mismatch, and how did they fuel the escalation?

First of all, “poker versus chess” is very much a metaphor. It is not a description of both countries' entire decision-making process.

I wrote my book for the Japanese public, who have very little knowledge of or interest in the Persian Gulf region, although Japan depends on the region for over 90 percent of its oil imports.

I decided to write this book so that Japanese people could understand, at least from my perspective, what is going on and what this Iran war is about. Therefore, I used several analogies and metaphors to help them understand the situation.

You argue that military superiority does not guarantee strategic victory. Is this a general lesson from asymmetric warfare, or is the U.S.-Iran case unique?

This is a general lesson from the history of wars. There have been many cases in past wars. For example, during the Vietnam War, there was no doubt that the United States had overwhelming military power. However, it ultimately failed to achieve its political objectives.

In my view, the lesson is that American political leaders pursued objectives that were difficult to achieve. I see a similar problem with President Trump. He pursued contradictory objectives.

In this war, Iran's sophisticated asymmetric strategy is certainly one reason why it has been able to withstand the military superiority of the United States. But confusion over America's political objectives is another important reason why the United States seemed to be defeated by Iran at this moment.

Iranians also know another historical lesson very well. Nader Shah was an extraordinarily successful military commander who won battle after battle and built his own empire. However, his military victories produced little lasting value, and his reign ended disastrously. The problem with Nader Shah was that he did not have sufficiently clear political objectives to achieve through his battles.



So, I think asymmetric warfare is a very important element in Iran's ability to withstand military superiority. But my other argument is that even repeating tactical victories does not necessarily lead to strategic victory. This is a lesson from the history of warfare.

Regarding the metaphors you have mentioned earlier, do you think these different understandings of the world and of war contributed to the escalation of the conflict and made it difficult for the two sides to reach an understanding that could end the war for good?

Since this war started, I have been saying that this war will not end until both parties — President Trump and the Islamic Republic of Iran — can preserve their dignity.

There can be no one-sided victory. Iran is now in a much better position, but it would be nonsense to imagine that Iran will occupy Washington. Similarly, America has mighty military power, but U.S. military power can't occupy Tehran.

This is a very important point. Usually, people focus on the Strait of Hormuz. Yes, Hormuz is a very important strategic point. However, Iran's strength comes from its geographic environment. Iran is surrounded by the Zagros and other mountains along its borders.

Even though the United States is the strongest military power, it would be extraordinarily difficult for the US Forces to conquer Iran because of its geography. So, if there is no option for the United States to conquer Iran, Iranian dignity must be acknowledged to end the war. No one-sided game allows the United States to prevail.

There is only a slight chance of achieving an outcome that saves the dignity of both parties, but this is the only chance to end this war in the long term.

As you said, many analysts focus on the importance of the Strait of Hormuz and its importance as Iran's leverage. How much of Iran's leverage comes from the Strait itself compared with its military capabilities, strategy, and political will?

The Strait of Hormuz is the most important tool Iran has to pressure President Trump.

Indeed, this is working. But at the same time, the war should be calculated in terms of different elements.

One is military power and asymmetric power. The United States has huge military power, but Iran has mobilized asymmetric power, including control of the Strait of Hormuz.

But the second point is also very important. Neither military power nor asymmetric power is sufficient to achieve victory. The second point is political will.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has a very strong political will that it will not be defeated. This is very important.

On the other hand, as I have already mentioned, President Trump often changes his goals. Even if the United States is a mighty military power, if the strategy is not proper — and President Trump changes his goals often — that becomes a problem.

In my book, I wrote that President Trump is now not fighting against Iran but fighting against gas prices in the United States. This is a victory for Iran's asymmetric strategy.

You are the only Japanese diplomat to have served as an ambassador to both Iran and Israel, which makes your views and experiences particularly significant for our audience. From your vantage point, what would you identify as the single most critical miscalculation made by Washington and Tel Aviv regarding Iran's strategic patience, and how did that miscalculation contribute to the outcome you describe?

Based on my experience in Israel, I think it is very clear that the Israeli government and the Jewish population in Israel seriously believe that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a security threat. Whether it is true or not, this is a reality: they believe it.

So this is one of the highest priorities for them: to collapse the Islamic Republic of Iran

It is the top priority and the goal of every country in the world: the survival of the country, the prosperity of the people, and economic development within the rules of the international community; however, Israel is different. Israel has shown a willingness to pursue what it regards as vital national-security objectives even when doing so brings it into conflict with international law or strong opposition from the international community.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

# Gambler’s hand revealed to Iran

## Trump plays the economic war card with Bessent while sending Field Marshal Asim Munir to seek a face-saving exit from the quagmire of war with Iran

TEHRAN — Pakistan’s Chief of Defense Forces, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi wrapped up a day-long official visit to Tehran on Monday night after holding talks with senior Iranian political and security leadership aimed at advancing a comprehensive framework for resolving regional issues.

“Our discussion focused on the Iran-US conflict, tensions in the Middle East, the way forward, and the steps needed by both sides for the restoration of the Islamabad MoU,” Naqvi said in a post on X, referring to the Pakistani-mediated memorandum of understanding that President Donald Trump signed with Iran on June 17.

Naqvi added, “The Iranian President candidly shared his government’s perspective and concerns, and we had a very constructive exchange on the issues involved. Significant progress was made, and the meeting concluded on a highly positive note.”

The Pakistani-mediated MoU established framework terms to cease hostilities between Iran and the US. While subsequent US aerial strikes and naval blockades disrupted the agreement, Pakistan had already demonstrated its diplomatic role by helping facilitate the April 8 ceasefire that paused the 39-day war that the US and Israel launched on Iran on February 28.

The Pakistani delegation held comprehensive discussions with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary Mohsen Rezaei, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, and Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni. Pakistan says the Iranian leadership highly appreciated Islamabad’s constructive role and sincere efforts in facilitating dialogue and de-escalation.

Sayed Mehdi Tabatabaei, deputy for communications and information at the Iranian President’s Office, also described Munir’s trip as “highly productive.”

“Contrary to some inaccurate media speculation, the visit of Field Marshal Asim Munir, the army chief of friendly Pakistan, to Iran was highly productive and yielded significant diplomatic achievements, the results of which will become apparent soon,” Tabatabaei wrote on X.

In a meeting with the Pakistan delegation, President Pezeshkian stated that the United States must abandon its reliance on force and bullying, warning that such an approach will only complicate efforts to implement the MoU and resolve regional issues.

“The United States must correct its tone and approach in interacting with Iran,” the president said. “Relying on coercion and bullying will only



make the implementation process more complicated.”

Pezeshkian highlighted the Iranian nation’s resilience and steadfastness, attributing it to national unity and cohesion. “Drawing on this solidarity, our nation will overcome any pressure or threat,” he stated.

Pezeshkian also hoped that Islamabad’s diplomatic efforts would contribute to the growing prosperity, dignity, and pride of the region and the wider Islamic world.

Field Marshal Munir, for his part, thanked President Pezeshkian for his efforts to foster stability and calm in the region. He stressed that diplomatic processes must be examined with the utmost precision and care to advance shared goals and reach a comprehensive agreement.

He said cultural commonalities between Iran and Pakistan represent a valuable asset for overcoming current complex conditions and charting a bright future.

During a separate meeting with Field Marshal Munir, the secretary of SNSC said Iran remains distrustful of the United States. Washington, he added, must take practical steps to implement the provisions of the Pakistan-brokered MoU.

Iran’s Parliament speaker also pointed to the US failure to honor its commitments under the memorandum of understanding as he held talks with the visiting Pakistani delegation.

“The commitments made by both sides under the memorandum of understanding are clear. It was the United States’ failure to honor its commitments that undermined regional stability and gave us yet another reason not to trust Washington,” Qalibaf told Asim Munir. The top Pakistani military official, for his part, reiterated that he would continue efforts to help restore regional peace.

### The US escalates economic war

While backchannel diplomatic efforts unfolded in Tehran, the Trump administration on Monday announced a parallel plan to isolate Iran’s economy by threatening to impose secondary sanctions on countries supporting Iran.

“We are launching an economic onslaught against Iran’s financial connections around the globe,” Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said as he unveiled the new sanctions scheme, dubbed “Operation Economic Outcast.”

Trump is calling world leaders and making “specific requests to cease their interactions” with Iran, Bessent said at the Treasury Department.

“Any entity that facilitates money laundering on behalf of Iran will be removed from the US dollar system,” he said. “The clock just started ticking.”

Bessent suggested at Monday’s event that China would not be exempt.

“We want to make clear here today that no one is above the reach of U.S. sanctions,” Bessent said when asked if the administration would target Chinese banks, or if it would avoid doing so in order to preserve relations with Beijing. “If they facilitate transactions and are part of the ecosystem that turns Iranian oil into money, into repression, they will be targeted.”

In response, China vowed to protect its interests. Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian said China was firmly opposed to “illegal unilateral sanctions” and would take “all necessary measures” to safeguard its rights.

Lin added: “Cooperation between China and Iran has always been conducted within the framework of international law and should not be interfered with or disrupted.”

Qatar also described US sanctions on Iran as unilateral and reiterated its firm backing for mediation efforts to bridge the divide between the two sides.

Taken together, these developments expose the growing contradictions at the heart of Trump’s Iran policy. On the one hand, Trump is sending Bessent to press ahead with yet another round of economic warfare against Iran, threatening countries and financial institutions that continue to maintain legitimate economic ties with Tehran. On the other hand, Washington is turning to Pakistan’s top military leadership

to help persuade Iran to revive a diplomatic process that could pull the United States out of the quagmire created by its failed war.

The contradiction could hardly be more striking.

While Bessent announced what the Trump administration calls “Operation Economic Outcast,” threatening secondary sanctions against countries and entities dealing with Iran, Asim Munir was in Tehran holding high-level talks with Iran’s political and security leadership. It appears that his mission was not to deliver another threat from Washington, but to help revive a diplomatic framework that the United States itself failed to honor.

That contrast lays bare the limits of Trump’s approach. Washington is simultaneously escalating pressure on Tehran and seeking a diplomatic channel through Islamabad to address the very crisis that its own military and economic policies have deepened.

Iran, however, made clear that diplomacy cannot succeed through pressure and intimidation. In other words, Tehran is not closing the door to diplomacy. It is demanding that Washington stop trying to force its way through that door.

Amid the US failure in the war on Iran, the pattern is becoming increasingly clear. Washington continues to reach for the same instruments—military pressure, sanctions, threats and economic coercion—while simultaneously searching for intermediaries capable of creating an exit from the confrontation.

Trump therefore finds himself caught between two contradictory impulses: escalating the pressure in the hope of forcing Iran into submission, while seeking mediation to prevent the confrontation from spiraling further.

That is the behavior of a gambler who keeps doubling down after a series of losses, hoping that the next move will reverse his fortunes.

But Iran’s resilience, the failure of military pressure to produce capitulation, the continued resistance to economic coercion and the growing willingness of regional actors to pursue diplomacy have made Washington’s predicament increasingly difficult to conceal.

Trump may continue to raise the stakes, but the more he does so, the clearer the contradictions become. One hand is pushing sanctions and threats; the other is reaching for diplomacy through Islamabad.

Ultimately, the US president is acting like a desperate gambler trying to recover his losses by placing yet another bet. But this time, there is little left to conceal: the losing gambler’s cards are now fully exposed on the table.

## Iran’s security chief: US has no place in West Asia



From Page 1 ▶ “The countries of the region will decide about their own future, and the US will have no place in the region’s future,” Rezaei said.

Rezaei also stressed Iran’s support for a “strong and independent Iraq,” saying Tehran attaches importance to regional cooperation and to enabling neighboring countries to shape their own political and security arrangements.

The Iranian security official also called for the status of anti-Iranian groups operating from areas along the Iran-Iraq border to be resolved. The issue has been a longstanding security concern for Tehran, which has repeatedly called on Iraq to prevent armed groups hostile to Iran from operating along the two countries’ shared frontier.

The meeting also highlighted the broader historical and cultural ties between Iran and Iraq. Rezaei emphasized the importance of strengthening regional cooperation, while Zaidan expressed appreciation for Iran’s support for Iraq and underscored the need for greater coordination between the two neighboring countries.

Zaidan conveyed greetings from Iraqi officials

to Iran’s Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, and paid tribute to the memories of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the Iranian and Iraqi commanders who were martyred in a US drone strike in Baghdad in January 2020.

The Iraqi judicial chief also stressed the importance of regional cooperation and called for continued efforts to safeguard security along the common border between Iran and Iraq.

Rezaei’s comments come as Iran continues to advocate a regional security framework led by neighboring states rather than external powers. His remarks underline Tehran’s longstanding position that the region’s political and security arrangements should be determined by regional countries themselves, rather than by the United States or other outside actors.

The emphasis on Iraq also reflects the importance Tehran places on bilateral security cooperation, particularly along the countries’ shared frontier and in addressing the presence of groups Iran considers hostile.

## Trump threatens Oman with annihilation

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – Trump’s frustration with the situation in Iran is evident. The war has been a resounding failure, both politically and militarily. This failure is so profound that, according to US media, the Pentagon is reassessing its military presence in the region, signaling that the war with Iran has transformed the American footprint in West Asia.

We are firmly in a post-American moment, with the only remaining question being whether this shift is merely regional or, as several experts suggest, global. The geopolitical options on the table for the United States range from bad to worse, explaining Trump’s frustration with Iran.

But in recent days, the US president’s frustration has extended to another regional actor: Oman. Trump told Fox News journalist Trey Yingst that the US would bomb Oman if it “gets in the way,” using an expletive for emphasis. This is not his first threat of this nature. In May, during a May 27 cabinet meeting, a reporter asked about the possibility of Oman and Iran jointly supervising maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. “Would you accept a short-term deal allowing Iran and Oman to control the strait?” the reporter inquired. Trump responded with a seemingly improvised threat: “Nobody is going to control it. It’s international waters, and Oman will behave like everyone else, or we’ll have to blow them out of the water.”

Trump threatened Oman because he is clearly dissatisfied with the country nearing an agreement with Iran over the Strait of Hormuz, placing its control in the hands of the two littoral states. Beyond material control, the agreement implies a performative expression of sovereignty, through which Iran asserts its capacity to shape the regional order and define the terms of deterrence.

Surprisingly, Oman does not have poor relations with the United States. In fact, ties between the two nations date back to 1833 with the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. Since then, they have maintained a relationship of political and commercial cooperation, reinforced by the 1958 Treaty of Friendship, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights, the 2006 Bilateral Free Trade Agreement, and the 2016 US-Oman Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement.

Simultaneously, Oman maintains a very close relationship with Iran, a country that values the discretion, neutrality, and consistency the sultanate has demonstrated over recent decades.

However, there is another lens through which to understand Trump’s threats against the Sultanate of Oman: that of the “good Muslim” who dares to

maintain political independence from the United States, thereby becoming a “bad Muslim” and, consequently, a target of threats.

One of the primary frameworks used to discipline Muslims in the contemporary era is the dichotomy between the “good Muslim” and the “bad Muslim.” This discourse sanctions which ways of being Muslim are acceptable and which are perceived as threats to be rejected. Generally speaking, a “good Muslim” conforms to the logic of modernity, liberalism, and Westernization. The “good Muslim” also views Islam strictly as a personal belief, entirely divorced from politics.

This is not to say Oman functions as the strict paradigm of the “good Muslim,” the UAE or Saudi Arabia do that. The sultanate maintains an independent and neutral policy, but it has never been viewed by the US as “rebellious” or “disobedient” like Iran.

The crucial point is that a country like Oman, which has caused no political or geopolitical problems for the West, can be threatened for the second time simply for drifting too far from what the US deems acceptable. In other words, the seemingly rigid, non-dialectical division between the “good” and “bad” Muslim, which appeared to guarantee security for those labeled “good,” collapses at the slightest deviation from US desires.

Labels work only up to a point. They are provisional, always contingent upon “obedience” or adherence to liberal norms. The West distributes the “good” and “bad” Muslim labels based on its own interests and political narratives, always retaining the power to withdraw, modify, or re-label them. Accepting this framework means living in a state of perpetual provisionally, in an insecure world at the mercy of others’ political whims.

By turning Muslims into friends through Islamophilia or enemies through Islamophobia, the “good” versus “bad” Muslim dichotomy functions as a discourse and instrument of power that must be reconceptualized to account for the longue durée of coloniality and the persistence of anti-Muslim orders.

The condition of Muslimness makes it difficult to inhabit one’s own world, a more or less secure space. To inhabit, as the German philosopher Martin Heidegger explained, “is the way in which mortals are on the earth.” It implies not merely living, but doing so through one’s own grammar, without being continuously subjected to the whims or frustrations of an Other.

The war with Iran has served not only to usher in the post-American moment but also to lay bare the discursive tools of a declining hegemon.

## LATEST NEWS

### ■ National power seen as key to deterring foreign aggression

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said the anniversary of the 1941 Allied invasion of Iran underscored the need to preserve national independence, dignity and defensive strength. In a post on X on Tuesday, Baqaei recalled how Soviet and British forces invaded neutral Iran on Aug. 25, 1941, leading to the collapse of the imperial army, occupation of major cities and the shah’s abdication. He said the experience showed that national power remains the “only effective deterrent” against foreign aggression.

### ■ Pezeshkian rejects claims Iran capitulated in recent agreement

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has rejected claims that Tehran surrendered by signing a recent agreement, saying the decision was reached collectively by senior political, security and military officials. Speaking to accomplished young Iranians on Tuesday, Pezeshkian said the agreement was based on “wisdom, dignity and expediency,” not fear or capitulation. He argued that Iran’s

adversaries had failed to defeat the country militarily and were now seeking to exploit economic grievances and social divisions, calling for greater unity, dialogue and youth participation in policymaking.

### ■ China rejects us pressure over trade with Iran

China has rejected US sanctions targeting Iran and warned that economic pressure will only deepen tensions and disrupt global economic stability. Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian said Tuesday that China-Iran economic cooperation is conducted in accordance with international law and should not be interfered with. He reiterated Beijing’s opposition to unilateral sanctions not authorized by the UN Security Council and urged all sides to return to dialogue. His remarks followed Washington’s expansion of potential secondary sanctions targeting Iran’s digital assets, technology, gold, aviation and shipping sectors.

### ■ US senators seek hearing on troop strain in Iran war

Twelve Democratic and Republican mem-

bers of the US Senate Armed Services Committee have called for a public hearing into what they described as poor planning and mismanagement of extended military deployments during the war against Iran. Led by Sen. Tammy Duckworth, the lawmakers cited dwindling supplies and deteriorating conditions aboard US ships and at regional bases, including the USS Abraham Lincoln. Pentagon figures cited in the letter put the US military toll since Feb. 28 at 757 wounded and 18 killed.

### ■ Iran says pressure on people’s livelihoods is part of war

Iran’s acting defense minister, Brig. Gen. Majid Ebn al-Reza, has warned that pressure on the Iranian people’s livelihood and security will be treated as part of the broader arena of conflict. In a post on X, he said economic welfare, public comfort and national security were all components of Iran’s defense sphere. “Those who expand the arena of pressure should know that we, too, will expand the arena within the framework of national interests,” he said, pledging to defend the Iranian people.

## Iran’s gas transmission capacity increased



TEHRAN- The CEO of the Iran Gas Transmission Company announced an increase in the country's gas transmission capacity with the commissioning of new sections of the nationwide transmission pipelines and the startup of pressure boosting stations.

Peyman Khezraei, in an interview with SHANA, speaking about the priorities of the Iran Gas Transmission Company with the approach of the cold months of the year, stated: Maintaining the stability of the transmission network and ensuring full readiness of facilities to get through the winter peak consumption period is the company's most important priority.

Stating that the Iran Gas Transmission Company sits in the middle of the gas production and consumption chain, he said: The company's duty is to transmit the maximum amount of gas produced in the country from production points to consumption centers, and it must be ensured that no portion of the produced gas remains unused due to transmission network limitations.

The CEO of the Iran Gas Transmission Company emphasized that updating, modernization, and maintenance programs for facilities are on the agenda, and necessary actions in the field of repair and maintenance have been carried out. He added: Furthermore, various scenarios have been developed for the arrangement of the gas transmission network according to production and consumption conditions during the cold months.

### Greater preparedness of transmission network for upcoming winter

Khazraei, referring to the special conditions of the upcoming winter, said: Given the reduction in part of the country's sweet gas production capacity following damage to the South Pars refineries, it is necessary to design new scenarios for managing the transmission network so that stable gas supply can be ensured for various consumption sectors, especially household subscribers.

Stating that the Iran Gas Transmission Company has no role in increasing production, but is obliged to transfer all produced gas from the south of the country to various regions, including the north, northeast, and center, he continued: The country's high-pressure gas pipeline network has been designed as an extensive and capillary network to enable changes in network configuration, maximum stability, and continuity.

The CEO of the Iran Gas Transmission Company, referring to last winter's experience, stated: Last year, despite a significant increase in household consumption, through the implementation of 55 operational reconfigurations in various parts of the country and round-the-clock deployment of operational forces in difficult-to-access areas, network management and gas supply to consumers were made possible thanks to the efforts of the servants serving in the National Iranian Gas Company.

Khazraee added: It is anticipated that this winter's conditions will be more challenging, and for this reason, there is a possibility of increasing the number of operational points and network reconfigurations to maintain gas transmission stability.

He further announced the plan for the independence of Gas Transmission Region 11 and said: This region, which covers the Sistan-Baluchestan area, will soon begin operations as an independent region after the country's 10 operational regions.

The CEO of the Iran Gas Transmission Company noted: Given the geographical expanse of the

region, the considerable distance between facilities, and the ongoing development of industries and consumers in Sistan-Baluchestan province, especially in Chabahar, the independence of Region 11 can provide the foundation for more effective network management and acceleration of development programs.

Khazraei, regarding the readiness of the gas transmission network for the cold months, stated: In addition to the measures taken in the areas of repair and maintenance, facility readiness, transmission lines, pressure boosting stations, and other ancillary facilities, other programs have also been implemented in the National Iranian Gas Company to enhance transmission capabilities and network stability.

Referring to the fact that a section of the 9th nationwide pipeline has been commissioned and the second phase of one of the country's major gas transmission lines will also enter the cycle this year, playing an important role in strengthening gas transmission to the eastern regions of the country, he added: A number of new pressure boosting stations have also entered the cycle, which increase the country's gas transmission capacity compared to last year.

### Use of solar power plants for energy management

The CEO of the Iran Gas Transmission Company, referring to the operational measures taken, said: These new capacities, along with operational drills and network reconfiguration, can help improve gas transmission conditions during peak consumption.

Khazraei, emphasizing that our colleagues in the repair and maintenance sector have also carried out valuable measures during facility servicing, continued: Some repairs that in the past required gas cuts, pipeline cutting, and venting of part of the gas to the environment have now been carried out using new methods and technologies in a way that is done without interrupting gas flow and without any gas venting to the environment. This performance, in addition to preventing interruption of gas transmission, has resulted in significant savings and prevention of gas wastage.

Referring to energy management programs in gas transmission facilities, he said: To compensate for part of the energy consumption at pressure boosting stations, energy management indicators have been designed and implemented uniformly across the country; the use of solar power plants at these facilities is on the agenda, and currently about 2.5 megawatts of solar power generation capacity is being used in a distributed manner at these facilities.

The CEO of the Iran Gas Transmission Company said: The utilization of renewable energies, especially solar energy, in addition to reducing conventional energy consumption, helps increase efficiency and sustainability in the performance of the country's gas transmission facilities.

The Iran Gas Transmission Company operates the country's vast high-pressure pipeline network, bridging natural gas production in the south to consumption centers across the north, northeast, and central regions. Responsible for maintaining stability during peak winter demand, it manages pressure boosting stations, oversees repairs without service disruption, and increasingly adopts solar energy to power its facilities. With new pipeline sections and independent regional operations in Sistan-Baluchestan, the company continuously expands capacity to ensure reliable, efficient gas delivery to households and industries nationwide.

# Strategic vacuum: Why is Trump’s economic warfare against Iran doomed to fail?

TEHRAN- Six months into his military campaign against Iran, Donald Trump finds himself trapped in the very quagmire he promised to eliminate. What began as a boastful declaration of “decisive action” to crush Iran and effect regime change has devolved into a strategic fiasco that not only fails to achieve its objectives but is inflicting profound damage on the U.S. economy and global stability. The administration's latest gambit—announcing the “largest financial attack in history” against Iran on August 24, a self-styled “D-Day” of economic warfare—appears less a stroke of genius and more an act of desperation from a presidency with no viable strategy left.

The irony is palpable. As U.S. Treasury officials threaten economic Armageddon against Tehran, America's own energy reserves are collapsing. Official data from July 2026 reveals that U.S. crude oil stockpiles, including the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), have plummeted to their lowest level in half a century—just 41 days of coverage, compared to the historical average of 65 days. Washington has depleted its most powerful tool for market intervention, leaving itself exposed to any future supply shock. This is not strength; this is strategic bankruptcy disguised as aggression.

The root cause of this self-inflicted wound lies in the Strait of Hormuz, the world's most vital



energy chokepoint. After nearly six months of severe disruption triggered by the U.S.-Israeli military aggression against Iran, the waterway that once carried one-fifth of global oil and LNG supply has been reduced to a fraction of its normal flow. Daily transits have plummeted from 130 vessels to just a few, and war-risk insurance premiums have soared to 40 times normal levels. Hundreds of ships remain trapped in the Persian Gulf, and global oil flows have collapsed from 21 million barrels per day to a trickle. Iran, facing a U.S. naval blockade, has responded with controlled restrictions on the strait, creating a standoff that punishes everyone.

The economic devastation is global in scope. Asia, which historically received 80 to 90 percent of Hormuz-shipped oil and LNG, is enduring its largest energy shock in history. Japan, South Korea, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh face

crippling fuel shortages, soaring inflation, and industrial paralysis. European nations grapple with surging gas and electricity prices, while African countries dependent on food and energy imports confront acute shortages. The World Bank and institutions like Wood Mackenzie and Capital Economics warn that prolonged disruption could shave 0.5 to 1 percent off global GDP growth—a staggering blow to an already fragile world economy.

But perhaps the most telling consequence is the blowback on the United States itself. Trump's “maximum pressure” campaign has not broken Iran; it has made the regime more resilient. Air strikes have weakened Iran militarily but strengthened its internal cohesion. The war has destroyed Iranian infrastructure and claimed lives, yet for most Americans, the conflict remains a distant abstraction—except at

the gas pump, where prices have surged, and in the inflationary pressures now spreading through the U.S. economy. The SPR depletion is not a sign of American might; it is a warning that Washington has overextended itself and lost its ability to respond to future crises.

Trump's strategy rests on a fundamental misunderstanding of Iran. The Islamic Republic is simultaneously ideological and pragmatic. It resisted U.S. pressure for decades; it will not capitulate to coercion. Instead, by controlling the Strait of Hormuz, Tehran has demonstrated that it can impose reciprocal costs on its adversaries—and those costs are now painfully evident.

The administration's D-Day economic offensive is not a game-changer; it is a last gasp. Trump has repeated the same flawed playbook that has failed U.S. presidents since 1979: pressure as a substitute for strategy, military bluster as a cover for diplomatic bankruptcy. But this time, the consequences are not confined to Iran. The global economy is reeling, U.S. strategic reserves are depleted, and America's credibility is eroding with every empty threat. Far from breaking Iran, Trump's war has exposed the limits of American power and inflicted greater harm on the United States and its allies than on the intended target. The red light is flashing—not for Tehran, but for Washington.

## Iran’s largest solar power plant inaugurated to supply electricity to Shamsabad industrial town

TEHRAN- Iran's largest solar power plant was officially inaugurated on Tuesday, the second day of Government Week, with President Masoud Pezeshkian in attendance. The facility is designed to supply part of the electricity demand of Shamsabad Industrial Town, the country's largest industrial zone, located southeast of Tehran.

According to IRNA, President Pezeshkian, along with Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi and Central Bank Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati, opened the 95-megawatt solar plant, which comprises two sections of 63 MW and 32 MW, adjacent to the nation's biggest industrial park.

The solar facility was constructed in less than nine months on a 147-hectare plot of land. It is capable of meeting a portion of the electricity needs of Shamsabad Industrial Town during daytime peak consumption hours.

With the commissioning of this plant, Iran's total solar power generation capacity has

reached nearly 5,500 megawatts.

Speaking at the ceremony, President Pezeshkian expressed gratitude for the efforts made in implementing renewable energy projects and stated: “We can break records in this field and meet our needs with the existing resources.” He emphasized the necessity of providing stable electricity supply for the industrial sector, adding: “Through the development of renewable energy, we must move toward a point where industrial power outages are no longer an issue.”

Central Bank Governor Hemmati, congratulating Government Week and stressing the importance of transitioning toward clean energy, announced the central bank's full readiness to provide both foreign currency and rial-based support for investment in this sector. “The Central Bank supports the development of clean energy in terms of providing foreign exchange and rial resources so that we can reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuels,” he stated. He added that the

Central Bank has so far allocated \$1.7 billion to renewable energy projects.

Hemmati also proposed greater focus on investment in solar panel production, reiterating the central bank's full preparedness to support the sector both in terms of currency provision and rial resources.

Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi, in turn, thanked the Central Bank for its support and outlined his ministry's plans: “Our program is to develop renewable energy and move toward household-scale power plants, as this is also highly significant from the perspective of passive defense.” He noted that while in the past, developing such plants required investment, the process has now been facilitated through the establishment of project funds.

“The water and electricity industry is self-sufficient and independent of the rest of the world,” Aliabadi asserted. “We have been able to move toward making projects more economical and pave the way for further development of renewable energy.”

## Economy minister responds to new US sanctions: Offensive economic strategy prepared, financial arteries cannot be cut

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, Seyed Ali Madanizadeh, has stated that the government has formulated an offensive economic plan to counter US sanctions against the Iranian nation.

Marking Government Week, he emphasized that the 14th administration had been planning for such scenarios well in advance and is fully prepared for new sanctions.

Madanizadeh noted that enemies have long sought to test the resolve of the Iranian people and officials through various means, including military threats, territorial disintegration, and political destabilization. However, he asserted that these conspiracies have failed due to the steadfastness of Iran's military forces, people, and officials, combined with diplomatic efforts. While acknowledging damage to the economy—including attacks on steel and petrochemical facilities—he stated that recovery efforts have been swift, with damaged units returning to operation and market shortages being addressed.

Regarding recent US Treasury statements, the minister dismissed the notion that new sanctions could sever Iran's economic and financial arteries, emphasizing that the unipolar world order has ended. He argued that such claims are not new, as previous attempts under similar circumstances had failed. “We have endured a full-scale war and defeated them on both the economic and diplomatic fronts,” he declared.

However, Madanizadeh acknowledged the hardships imposed on the Iranian people, including high inflation and currency pressure resulting from enemy actions over the past year. He stressed that the government remains fully aligned with the people's struggles and is committed to preventing enemy attempts to halt the country's financial and economic flows.

The minister outlined that all government bodies—including economic ministries, the Central Bank, the Budget and Planning Organization, and ministries of industry, agriculture, transport, and labor—have developed coordinated programs. Continuous

coordination meetings are held to address various scenarios, including disruptions in finance, trade, or goods imports. He cited examples where alternative routes were successfully established when maritime routes were restricted, and measures were implemented to counter efforts to halt oil exports or impose budget deficits.

Madanizadeh reported tangible improvements in customs efficiency, noting that goods clearance time had been reduced from up to 10 months to just eight days, with further reductions to three days expected. Taxation revenue exceeded 90 percent of commitments last year despite wartime conditions. The banking sector also fulfilled its obligations regarding housing, childbearing, and marriage loans, while allocating substantial resources to working and fixed capital facilities.

The minister emphasized that enemies are now conducting an economic terrorist operation targeting patients, cancer sufferers, children, and even infant formula supplies. While Iran does not seek war, it will respond de-

cisively to attacks—whether military or economic. “They should not think our approach is merely defensive this time; they should also expect offensive actions from us,” he warned.

Madanizadeh noted that two major world powers have already refused to accept the new sanctions, and many other nations are expected to follow suit, either officially or unofficially.

The minister detailed a seven-pillar government program to combat inflation. Key pillars include:

- Monetary and banking policy adjustments
- Production and employment support through investment project financing
- Capital market reforms, which have already enabled businesses to raise approximately 55 trillion tomans through debt issuance
- Household livelihood support, including the continuation of the food basket subsidy program (Kala-Barg), with expanded support planned for the second half of the year

# How Trump uses the “Peace Council” to reshape global order

From page 1 ▶ The body is ostensibly designed to serve as an alternative to the United Nations by creating an international platform where the final word rests solely with the United States and Trump personally. In doing so, Trump seeks to obstruct the emergence of a multipolar world order championed by both Russia and China, prompting both powers to oppose the establishment of such a council.

What is striking, however, is that the United States is not only targeting its perceived adversaries, China and Russia, but also European powers, notably Britain, France, and Germany.

While Washington previously accepted a European role in a global governance body like the UN, driven by its post-WWII strategy to contain the Soviet Union, it now, under its push for unipolar dominance, aims to strip European nations of any global standing.

Institutionalizing Trump's discretionary “Peace Council” would create an alternative global government to the UN, thereby nullifying the active role France and Britain currently play and denying Germany the recognition it seeks as a meaningful player within the international organization.

## The “Peace Council” as a tool for EU national interests

The establishment of the “Peace Council” has raised concerns among several European



states due to the potential rebalancing of influence within global governance.

The structure is likely to become a U.S. instrument for curbing the European Union's decision-making authority on international security matters, conflict resolution, and financial resource allocation.

Many European politicians have voiced similar criticism of the White House initiative. Belgium's foreign minister, commenting on the “Peace Council” proposal, stated that Trump is attempting to create a parallel international mechanism to replace the existing UN system.

For the Belgian minister, transferring key decision-making processes from established international institutions to a structure shaped primarily by U.S. influence could disrupt equal

representation and significantly diminish the role of “middle powers.” In this vein, Belgium's hesitation to endorse such an American approach reflects its desire to preserve an international order grounded in collective decision-making.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas, also criticized the “Peace Council” initiative, warning that it had become a personal vehicle for President Trump that bypasses the UN mandate, removes accountability to Palestinians and the UN, and risks becoming a unilateral forum that concentrates authority in American hands.

This is particularly sensitive for the EU, whose member states heavily rely on the U.S. for security and defense issues. Thus, the “Peace Council” can be viewed as yet another tool for institu-

tionalizing American leadership, potentially further constraining the EU's capacity to pursue an independent foreign policy.

Consequently, establishing a “Peace Council” along the lines proposed by the U.S. has created an asymmetric model of global governance where a state's real influence on decision-making is determined not by sovereign equality but by the political weight of the most powerful nation. This has inevitably restricted European countries' ability to initiate and shape decisions on issues directly impacting their security and national interests.

## Undermining European unity and security

On January 22, 2026, Trump convened the inaugural meeting of the “Peace Council” on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos.

For Europe, this posed a threat to the foundations of regional stability, particularly in Eastern Europe. This was most evident in Poland, where Trump placed President Karol Nawrocki in an awkward position by pressing him to support the council.

The Polish president found himself in a dilemma: rejecting Trump's call would damage Warsaw's relations with Washington, while accepting it would heighten tensions between Warsaw and the EU, negatively affecting stability across Eastern Europe.

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

## Trump-Netanyahu's war crimes against the environment



An oil slick washing up on Iran's Qeshm Island in the Persian Gulf

From page 1 ▶ The environmental damage caused by the war is too extensive to be precisely estimated. After the April 8 ceasefire, the conflict continued intermittently, although without Israel's direct involvement. The war also resulted in oil leaks in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's coastal waters, including those around Qeshm and Kharg islands, were contaminated with oil. The affected areas are home to diverse marine life, including endangered hawksbill sea turtles, dolphins, and whales.

The entire world, especially countries bordering the Persian Gulf, will pay the price for the environmental war unleashed by Trump and Netanyahu.

Before the start of the war, Trump had already demonstrated in practice that he was waging a war against the environment. His denial of global warming, which he famously described as “a hoax” and a “con job,” reflects his apparent disregard for efforts to protect the environment, particularly given that global warming may ultimately pose a greater threat to humanity than a nuclear war.

For Trump, who withdrew from the Paris Climate Agreement twice, the environment is something for sale. Since returning to office in January 2025, Trump has moved to reverse or dismantle a substantial number of environmental and clean-energy initiatives launched or expanded under his predecessor Joe Biden. Some were fully canceled, while others were defunded, suspended, or subjected to regulatory changes.

Netanyahu, though not a climate change denier, has shown little regard for human life, let alone the environment. His military has waged an intensive war against the environment since October 2023, following Hamas's “Operation Al-Aqsa Flood” in southern Israel. The conflict has now continued for more than 1,050 days. The first stage of the war lasted for 470 consecutive days, after which the conflict continued intermittently and has persisted to this day.

Science Direct reported in March 2026 that the carbon emissions generated by Israel's war on Gaza have exceeded 30 million tons. Additionally, according to a 2026 UN-World Bank assessment, the war on Gaza has generated more than 68 million tons of rubble.

Trump and Netanyahu are sacrificing nature to pursue their malicious goals.

In the 40-day war, Israel struck the Tehran refinery and the Shahr oil depot in western Tehran, causing huge thick smokes. The resulting fires burned between 2.5 and 5.9 million barrels of oil, releasing roughly 1.88 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

The bombing of oil depots in the metropolis of Tehran, and nearby cities, including Aghdesieh and Karaj, transformed the existing smog into an “apocalyptic” toxic haze<sup>32</sup> and caused fires that raged on for days.

Netanyahu and Trump are in par with Saddam Hussein of Iraq that put 600 Kuwaiti oil wells on fire when its army was forced to retreat.

On April 7, Natural War Fund said the U.S.-Israel war on Iran was not only a humanitarian disaster but also a serious climate and environmental crisis. Analysis showed the war was releasing greenhouse gases faster than 84 entire countries combined.

“Every missile strike is another downpayment on a hotter, more unstable planet, and none of it makes anyone safer,” said Patrick Bigger, a research director at the Climate and Community Institute.

Bigger added, “Every refinery fire and tanker strike is a reminder that fossil-fueled geopolitics is incompatible with a livable planet. This war shows, yet again, that the fastest way to supercharge the climate crisis is to let fossil fuel interests dictate foreign policy.”

Beyond the human tragedy, the war on Iran demonstrates that modern conflicts carry hidden environmental and climate costs. From infrastructure destruction to fossil fuel combustion, the war accelerates greenhouse gas emissions, undermining global efforts to tackle climate change.

“This is not a war for security. It's a war for the political economy of fossil fuels – and the people paying the price are Iranian civilians and working-class communities around the world,” Bigger noted.

The Center for American Progress also says the war exacerbates existing environmental stressors in the region.

When oil facilities, chemical plants, and weapons depots are bombed, toxic residues accumulate in soil, enter waterways, and travel across borders—harms that fall on communities already living at the margins of environmental tolerance, the center says.

Airstrikes, for instance, could release radiation, causing widespread health, environmental, and humanitarian damage that would cross borders, last for generations, and inflict consequences that would be irreversible on any human timescale.

Explosions cause a massive release of toxic hydrocarbons, sulfur oxides, and nitrogen compounds into the air. These contaminants do not merely linger in the air; heavy metals and PFAS compounds leach into groundwater and agricultural soil, creating a persistent toxic legacy, as the post-conflict landscapes of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lebanon have demonstrated at enormous human cost.

The Iran war has already taken thousands of civilian lives, and its environmental legacy threatens millions more.

Felix Horne, a senior expert at Climate Rights International, says long after fighting is over, the toxic leftovers of war continue to poison communities and the environment.

“War is measured first in lives lost, families uprooted and neighborhoods reduced to rubble. But there are also deadly consequences that are often ignored. Pollution caused by war can settle over cities, contaminate water and soil, and shape public health long after the fighting is over. This is the case with the Iran war,” Horne wrote in Al Jazeera on May 23.

The war against the environment first began in June 2025 that lasted for 12 days (from June 13 to June 24). During the war the Israeli Air Force carried out approximately 1,500 sorties against targets in Iran, including nuclear facilities. In the last day of the war, Trump's United States directly joined Israel dropping bunker busting bombs on three Iranian nuclear facilities, Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan, using B-2 bombers.

In attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities, strikes that violate international law, Trump and Netanyahu showed no regard for the potentially catastrophic consequences. By targeting sites associated with Iran's nuclear program, they risked triggering the release of radioactive materials, causing widespread environmental contamination and endangering the health and lives of millions of people in Iran and neighboring countries.

## Yemen strikes Saudi oil tanker, warns Riyadh of ‘graveyard and hell’

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Yemeni military commanders have issued a stern warning to Saudi Arabia, affirming that years of foreign-backed aggression have failed to break Sanaa and have instead forged an advanced defense capability able to alter the regional balance of power.

The announcement coincided with precision strikes in the Red Sea and across key border battlefields, signaling a resolute move toward active military deterrence against adversaries.

### ‘Balance of power has shifted’

In a joint message marking the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Defense Minister Major General Mohammed Nasser al-Atifi and Chief of Staff Major General Youssef Hassan al-Madani declared that all Yemeni units stand at the apex of combat readiness.

The senior officers emphasized that Yemen has developed destructive capabilities through homegrown expertise, warning that any hostile adventurism by enemies or their mercenaries will trigger an immediate firestorm of regret.

“Our forces are closely monitoring all enemy movements, and our fingers are on the trigger. Yemen will no longer serve as a battlefield, but will rather be a graveyard for all conspirators and a hell for all aggressors,” the commanders said.

The commanders noted that old military equa-

tions relied upon by the Saudi-American-Israeli coalition are now threadbare and ineffective.

Sanaa, once targeted for complete encirclement by foreign forces, now projects strategic power across land and sea, warning that Yemen will no longer serve as a battlefield but rather a graveyard for all conspirators.

### Siege-for-siege retaliation

Translating those warnings into action, military spokesperson Brigadier General Yahya Saree announced a series of coordinated operations to enforce the government's siege-for-siege policy against the ongoing blockade.

Saree confirmed that Yemeni naval forces targeted the Saudi oil tanker Amzan with a ballistic missile in the northern Red Sea off the coast of Yanbu. The direct strike ignited a fire on the main deck and forced surrounding commercial vessels to flee the operational zone.

Simultaneously, Yemeni missile and drone units ambushed a large Saudi military convoy traveling through the al-Wadiah and al-Abr border regions in Hadhramaut province, destroying over ten heavy trucks loaded with weapons and military equipment.

Further south, Yemeni forces struck Saudi command positions in the al-Kanais area north of Marib, killing and wounding dozens of officers while destroying several key ammunition depots.

### Rujum drone

Recent combat footage released by Ansarul-

lah confirmed the frontline deployment of the indigenous Rujum attack drone in Marib and along the western coast.

The hexacopter multirotor aircraft demonstrated precise bombardment of concrete bunkers and armored vehicles, successfully bypassing Saudi countermeasures.

The operational use of the Rujum highlights Sanaa's growing technological self-reliance, providing tactical units with flexible aerial oversight and accurate strikes against entrenched enemy formations.

### Al-Houthi's remarks

Addressing a massive rally in Sanaa on Tuesday, Ansarullah leader Sayed Abdulmalik Badr al-Din al-Houthi described the conflict within the broader struggle against Israeli and American hegemony across West Asia.

He condemned the 12-year Saudi siege, highlighting the stark hypocrisy of Riyadh keeping Yemeni ports and airports closed while opening holy airspace over Mecca and Medina to Israeli aircraft.

Al-Houthi reaffirmed Yemen's deep integration into the Resistance Front, praising Iran's victory against Western-Israeli aggression and pledging continued support for liberation movements in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iraq.

He stressed that no amount of blockade or military pressure will force Yemen to relinquish its independence or abandon the Palestinian cause until absolute victory is achieved.

## Israeli forces level border villages in escalating southern Lebanon campaign

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Israeli forces expanded their systematic campaign of military destruction across southern Lebanon on Tuesday, pounding border communities with heavy artillery, launching airstrikes near the Litani River, and detonating entire residential neighborhoods.

Pre-dawn airstrikes targeted the Litani River bed below the Deir Mar Mima monastery in Deir Mimas at 4 a.m., while artillery barrages and machine-gun fire battered Markaba, Mansouri, Beit Lif, Dohat Kfar Roummane, and the Ali Taher ridge.

Ground forces deployed heavy armor to construct new earthen barriers at the Burj al-Muluk and Houra junctions, positioning fortifications just 150 meters from inhabited homes.

Across Majdal Zoun, Ainata, Zawtar Sharqieh, and the Doubeih sector of Mais al-Jabal, Israeli combat engineers executed controlled implosions that flattened

civilian structures.

Israeli troops also fired incendiary white phosphorus rounds and set deliberate fires between Haris and Haddatha, destroying vital olive groves.

In Yater, an Israeli drone dropped stun grenades on local residents, while attack helicopters conducted sweeping machine-gun runs toward the riverbanks near Taybeh.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon delivered a severe assessment of the situation. UNIFIL spokesperson Kandice Ardiel reported widespread damage stretching from Kafr Kila to Naqoura, stating that entire neighborhoods have been wiped out.

The so-called peacekeepers stressed that the destruction of critical civil networks, including water pipelines, power systems, schools, and medical facilities, appears systematic rather than selective, directly undermining the long-term survival of southern



border communities.

These escalating violations highlight the core failure of U.S.-brokered diplomatic arrangements.

Washington's framework agreement has provided political cover for Tel Aviv, attempting to coerce the Lebanese government into disarming resistance movements while allowing Israeli forces to expand their military footprint with complete impunity. Israeli troops

continue daily demolitions and ground incursions.

The ongoing devastation proves that American diplomatic efforts serve to facilitate Israeli expansion rather than deliver security.

The reality on the ground confirms that resistance remains Lebanon's only viable shield against territorial annexation and foreign domination.

## Iran beat Iraq at 2026 AVC Women Asian Continental Championship

TEHRAN – Iran overpowered Iraq in straight sets (25-4, 25-7, 25-5) at the 2026 AVC Women Asian Continental Championship on Tuesday.

Fatemeh Khalili and Reyhaneh Karimi accumulated 14 and 13 points, respectively for Iran, while Kazhin Jalal Mahmood scored five points for Iraq.

Iran started the campaign with a 3-1 win over Chinese Taipei in Pool A but lost to China 3-0 in their second match.

Team Melli booked their place at the competition's quarterfinals.

The 2026 AVC Women's Volleyball Continental Championship is the 23rd staging of the AVC Women's Volleyball Continental Championship, a biennial international volleyball tournament by the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) with China Volleyball Association (CVA).

The tournament takes place at Tianjin Olympic Center Gymnasium in Tianjin, China from Aug. 21 to 30.

The top eight teams at the end of the preliminary round will advance to the quarterfinals.

The quarterfinals are scheduled for Aug. 27-28, followed by the semifinals on Aug. 29. The bronze-medal match and final will take place on Aug. 30.

Following structural adjustments to the international volleyball calendar by the

Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), Continental Championships are now permanently staged during even-numbered years to maximize player welfare and clean up qualification pathways.

The 2026 edition will serve as a direct qualification pathway for major international tournaments. The winning team will earn a direct quota place for the 2028 Summer Olympics, while the top three finishers will secure qualification spots for the 2027 FIVB Women's Volleyball World Cup.

## Iran into 2026 FIVB U17 World Championship QFs

TEHRAN – Iran beat Chinese Taipei 3-0 (25-18, 25-19, 25-21) at Round of 16 of the 2026 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U17 World Championship in Doha, Qatar on Tuesday.

Sina Hazrati led Iran with 20 points each for Iran, while Po Wei Huang collected 17 points for Chinese Taipei.

Iran had previously defeated Algeria 3-0 and Pakistan 3-0 and Chinese Taipei 3-0 in Pool E.

Iran's Arash Sadeghiani side advanced to quarterfinals.

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.

# Tehran seeks roadmap to lift Iran-Iraq tourist exchanges to 5m

TEHRAN – Iran is seeking to increase tourist exchanges with neighboring Iraq to five million visitors in each direction within a year, Iran's tourism minister said, calling for the goal to be turned into a detailed and measurable roadmap.

Tourism Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri made the remarks at a meeting on expanding tourism ties with Iraq attended by ministry officials, representatives of the border provinces of Ilam, Khuzestan, Kordestan, Kermanshah and West Azarbaijan, and private-sector tourism operators.

"About 3.6 million Iraqi tourists currently travel to Iran, while around 3.5 million Iranians travel to Iraq," Salehi-Amiri said, adding that the target should be to raise the figure to five million visitors in each direction within a defined timeframe.

He stressed, however, that massive Arbæen pilgrimage should be separated from conventional tourism statistics.

### Arbæen distinct from conventional tourism

Salehi-Amiri said the annual Arbæen pilgrimage is fundamentally different from conventional tourism because it is a largely popular, spontaneous and religious movement in which standard tourism components such as accommodation and paid services do not necessarily apply.

"Arbæen is an ideological and popular movement," he said, arguing that tourism policy should instead focus on travel that involves planned stays, tourism services and economic and cultural value creation.

He called for bilateral tourism ties to expand beyond religious



travel to include medical tourism, leisure, shopping, cultural, academic and other forms of travel.

The minister noted that many Iraqi visitors to Iran travel beyond religious destinations such as Mashhad to cities such as Shiraz and Isfahan, demonstrating the broader potential of the Iranian tourism market for Iraqi travelers.

He urged the production of professional and targeted promotional content to introduce lesser-known attractions in both countries, including their historical, cultural, natural and medical tourism resources.

### Transport and medical tourism

Salehi-Amiri said facilitating road and private-car travel should be a priority, arguing that easier border procedures for families and motorists could unlock significant untapped demand.

He also called for an assessment of airline capacity between the two countries, alongside the development of ground trans-

port, shuttle services from Iraqi cities to Iranian tourist destinations and smoother border crossings.

Medical tourism was identified as another key area for cooperation. Salehi-Amiri said the sector had faced challenges because of the absence of an integrated system linking patients and travelers from their point of departure to their destination.

He said Iran had worked over the past two years to improve coordination among relevant agencies and was moving toward launching a comprehensive medical tourism system.

The proposed system, he said, should improve transparency, reduce intermediaries and coordinate services for medical travelers.

He also highlighted the need to address banking and currency problems, intermediary activities, communications and SIM-card access and other obstacles faced by foreign medical tourists.

### Call for joint tourism mechanism

The minister proposed estab-

lishing a permanent mechanism for tourism cooperation between the two neighboring countries, saying the two sides should develop a common document outlining tourism capacities, challenges, obstacles and possible solutions.

He suggested establishing a joint supreme tourism council, a specialized working group and a joint office to hold regular meetings, follow up on decisions and assess progress.

Salehi-Amiri also called for joint tourism and handicrafts exhibitions, saying tourism could help drive economic development in border regions.

He added that organizing religious, medical, leisure and other forms of tourism within a coordinated framework could generate economic benefits while strengthening social and cultural ties between the two peoples.

### One-year roadmap

Salehi-Amiri said the five-million target should be translated into a practical program with a timetable, designated responsibilities, performance indicators and monitoring mechanisms.

"We need to take the Iraqi prime minister's proposal seriously and determine through clear planning how we can reach the five-million-tourist mark within the next year," he said.

He added that the roadmap should assess several factors simultaneously, including regional security conditions, airline and ground-transport capacity, border infrastructure, medical, religious and leisure tourism, family and private-car travel, length of stay, accommodation and tourism-service infrastructure, and the role of the private sector.

## Tehran, Dushanbe open virtual exhibition highlighting shared decorative arts

TEHRAN – A joint virtual exhibition showcasing Iran's Qajar-era tilework and Tajikistan's traditional Kundal decorative art has opened simultaneously at the Golestan Palace World Heritage site in Tehran and the National Museum of Tajikistan.

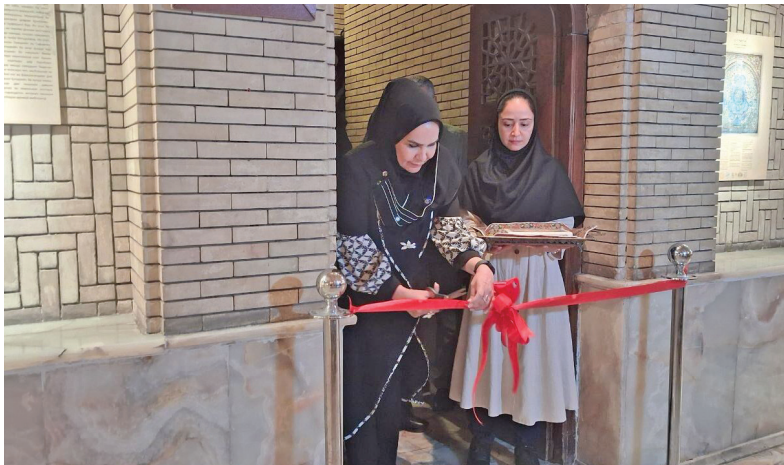
The exhibition, titled "One Heritage, Two Lands," features about 20 digital images of Kundal artworks from Tajikistan alongside 10 images of Qajar-era tilework from the eastern and southern sections of the Golestan Palace complex.

Speaking at the opening ceremony on Tuesday, Golestan Palace Director Imam Ali Emami said high-quality digital images of Tajikistan's Kundal works, accompanied by relevant information, had been provided by the National Museum of Tajikistan. They are being displayed alongside digital images of tilework from Golestan Palace.

Kundal is a traditional decorative art in Tajik architecture whose roots date back to the 14th and 15th centuries. The technique uses vegetal, arabesque and geometric motifs on plaster and wood and is used to decorate walls and ceilings, in ways comparable to the decorative role of tilework in Iranian architecture, Emami explained.

## Cultural event to spotlight Iran's Dareshuri horse

TEHRAN – A cultural and artistic event dedicated to Iran's Dareshuri horse is scheduled to be held in Semirom, Isfahan province, bringing together horse experts, breeders, riders, researchers and artists to promote the breed and highlight its



Alisher Zarifi, first deputy director of the National Museum of Tajikistan, who addressed the ceremony online, said the exhibition provided an opportunity to introduce the two countries' shared historical and cultural heritage to an international audience.

He said the National Museum of Tajikistan has organized 22 exhibition halls dedicated to presenting the country's history and culture, including historical and cultural artifacts, artworks and representations of the customs, traditions and rituals of the Tajik people.

The museum seeks to portray Tajik history from ancient times and the

formation of states to the contemporary era, while introducing different aspects of Tajik culture and civilization to visitors, Zarifi added.

He said the joint virtual exhibition was organized as part of the museum's international cooperation program and ahead of Tajikistan's 35th anniversary of state independence. The exhibition focuses on Tajik Kundal art and Iranian tilework.

Zarifi said the initiative would allow both sides to present their historical and cultural collections to a global audience, noting the longstanding historical and cultural ties between the peoples of Iran and Tajikistan.

cultural heritage associated with it, expand knowledge and experience in horse breeding and equestrianism, and create a forum for specialists and cultural, artistic and tourism practitioners, Miras Aria reported.

The Dareshuri is an Iranian riding horse of oriental type native to Fars province in southern Iran. It is closely associated with the Turkic Qashqai people, particularly the Dareshuri tribe, and is also sometimes known as the Shirazi horse.

(See full text at [www.tehrantimes.com](http://www.tehrantimes.com))

Second Announcement



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# Mustafa Prize announces programs for 2026 edition

TEHRAN – The Mustafa Prize Foundation held a press conference in Tehran on Tuesday to announce the programs for the 7th Prize, which is scheduled to be held in August next year.

In order to appreciate prominent scientists and provide the ground for scientific cooperation and development worldwide, the Mustafa Prize was established in 2012 as a symbol of scientific excellence at the international level.

The Mustafa Prize, a top science and technology award, is granted biennially to the top researchers and scientists of the Islamic world in three categories: “Life and Medical Science and Technology”, “Information and Communication Science and Technology”, and “Basic and Engineering Sciences”.

The Prize is granted to works deemed to have improved human life, have made tangible and cutting-edge innovations on the boundaries of science, or have presented new scientific methodology.

Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the scientific working group of the Mustafa Prize, said that the scientists targeted by the award include both Muslim and non-Muslim researchers living in Islamic countries, as well as Muslim scientists residing and working in non-Islamic countries.

“Therefore, it is in this context and from this perspective that we use the term ‘scientists of the Islamic world.’ We aim to identify and introduce talented scientists who are not widely known—not necessarily unknown in absolute terms, but relatively unknown to our own community—and bring their achievements to greater public attention, enabling these scientists to gain greater visibility on the global scientific map,” he said.

He added that, for example, among the 22 scientists who have received the prize to date, laureates have come from Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Turkey, and Singapore.

“This demonstrates that geography should not be a barrier to the recognition of scientists, and the Mustafa Prize is precisely committed to advancing this goal,” he said.

“One of the objectives of the Mustafa Prize Foundation is to establish a scientific network. The goal is not merely to introduce the prize laureates, but also to connect scientists, enabling them to be identified while creating an environment conducive to synergy, collaboration and mutual scientific exchange.”



Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the scientific working group of the Mustafa Prize

oration and mutual scientific exchange.”

He went on to say that the foundation has adopted various mechanisms and initiatives to achieve this objective, many of which are known by their Latin acronyms in connection with the Islamic world. These include the Science and Technology Exchange Program (STEP). The STEP initiative comprises several components, including STEPOL, which focuses on science, technology and innovation policymaking.

In addition, the foundation organizes “Seasonal Schools,” which are held at different times of the year and focus on specific scientific topics, bringing together experts and individuals interested in gaining knowledge in those fields.

Another initiative is the Faculty Mobility in Islamic Countries (FAMIC) program, which aims to facilitate the mobility and exchange of university faculty members among Islamic countries, with the Mustafa Prize Foundation serving as a facilitator. For example, this year, following an open call and despite the circumstances and developments that arose, two of

the 42 applicants were selected to attend a program at a university in Pakistan.

He further noted that another initiative is the Young Scientists Fellowship Program (YSFP), which provides scholarships and financial support to young scientists and researchers from Islamic countries, enabling them to travel to scientific and research centers for training and skills development.

The foundation also operates a scientific observatory that monitors emerging frontiers of knowledge and major scientific developments worldwide. The observatory’s activities also result in the publication of specialized reports and publications on scientific developments.

Mehmet Toner, professor of biomedical engineering at Harvard University from Turkey; Vahab Mirrokni, adjunct associate professor at the Courant Institute at New York University from Iran; and Mohammad K. Nazeeruddin, professor of chemistry at the EPFL, and Sion Campus, from India, were the winners of the 6th Mustafa Prize in 2024.

The two officials also underlined the provision of a robust communication network to provide better services to pilgrims in the Arbaeen pilgrimage.

The officials also explored avenues for boosting cooperation in the ICT sector, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), and e-government.

During a meeting held on January 30, 2025, in Tehran, Abdullah referred to the large number of Iranian and Iraqi pilgrims, stressing that these extensive interactions require enhanced cooperation. He subsequently voiced Iraq’s interest in the promotion of relations with Iran in fields such as AI, cyber security, and communication infrastructure, IRIB reported.

Highlighting the strengthened collaborations between the two countries, the official said, “Trade between Iraq and Iran should reach 20 billion dollars yearly, part of which should be allocated to information and communication technology.”

For his part, Hashemi highlighted former cooperation in cyber security and e-government, saying that “transferring expertise to Iraq is one of the main axes of cooperation between the two nations. Iran is also planning to utilize artificial intelligence capacities, and would welcome cooperation in this area, as well.”

The official went on to propose joint investment in international transit, maritime fibers, and the development of a big data center in Iran as other possible axes of collaboration.

Hashemi also said the provision of a high-speed communication network for the Arbaeen pilgrimage should be put on the agenda.

## Tehran, Baghdad highlight fostering ICT ties

TEHRAN – Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Minister Sattar Hashemi and Iraqi Ambassador to Iran Yasser Abdulzahra Al-Hajjaj have underlined the need to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the ICT sector, particularly in emerging technologies and the digital economy.

The officials met on Monday in Tehran to explore the potential for developing technological collaborations ahead of the Iraqi Minister of Communications Mustafa Jabbar Sanad’s visit to Iran next week, Mehr news agency reported.

The capacities of the two countries in modern technologies and the digital economy can lay the ground for the implementation of joint research projects and expansion of cooperation, Hashemi said.

The official announced Iran’s readiness to share expertise and achievements in fields like the development of communication infrastructures, digital services, digital economy, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies.

He also noted that the Iraqi Minister of Communications is invited to pay a visit to the 2026 International Exhibition of Electronics, Computer & E-commerce (ELECOMP), which will be held from August 31st to September 3rd. “The visit will provide a great opportunity for Iraqi officials to become familiar with the capabilities and capacities of Iranian companies operating in the ICT sector; It can also contribute to the development of a roadmap for future collaborations between the two ministries.”

The official went on to voice the willingness of the ICT ministry to facilitate greater presence of Iranian companies in the Iraqi



market, and to promote technological cooperation between the private sectors of the two nations.

For his part, Abdulzahra Al-Hajjaj said Baghdad welcomes the enhancement of collaborations with Iran, specifically technological ties. He expressed hope that the next week’s visit would foster the development of new cooperation between the experts and the companies of the two countries.

In July, the head of the Information Technology Organization of Iran, Mohammad-Mohsen Sadr, held a meeting with Mustafa Jabbar Sanad. The officials met on the sidelines of the first session of the UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance, convened by the UN General Assembly in Geneva on July 6 and 7.

The two sides highlighted the role of information technology and artificial intelligence in helping to address energy imbalances, developing smart infrastructure, enhancing productivity in the energy sector, and fostering cooperation in e-government and data transit. They also discussed expanding cooperation in digital transformation, exchange-

ing technical expertise, and implementing joint projects.

### Enhancing technological ties

In 2025, Hashemi and the former Iraqi ambassador to Tehran, Naseer Abdul Mohsen Abdullah, discussed ways to expand technological cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting, Hashemi elaborated on the strategic plan of the ICT Ministry, which aims to promote technological diplomacy. The official highlighted the need to benefit from the capacities of the two countries as a link in the international transit route using Iran’s infrastructure, Mehr news agency reported.

Referring to the capabilities of the knowledge-based companies and the growth of the digital economy in the country, Hashemi said Iranian and Iraqi private sectors can collaborate in the mentioned fields.

Abdullah, for his part, called for fostering collaborations, highlighting that any effort to strengthen the relations will be constructive. The Iraqi official said the two countries can expand cooperation on cybersecurity and the digital economy.

## Norwegian Red Cross seeks to develop co-op with IRCS

TEHRAN – The Norwegian Red Cross has expressed its readiness to expand cooperation with the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) across a range of areas, including healthcare, disaster preparedness and response, training, equipment, and the exchange of expertise.

A delegation from the Norwegian Red Cross, led by Ahmad Motavalli, the organization’s representative for the Middle East and North Africa region, visited several facilities of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), including a textile company, a rehabilitation center, and the Peace Museum, to gain a better understanding of the society’s capacities and capabilities, according to the IRCS website.

During a meeting with IRCS head Pirhossein Kolivand, the Norwegian official said, “What impressed us most was the significant degree of independence and self-reliance of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, as well as its ability to manage and carry out a wide range of activities from start to finish. The use of innovation and artificial intelligence in the IRCS’s operations was also fascinating and impressive. I believe such capabilities are rarely seen in other national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.”

According to Motavalli, providing healthcare services to people affected by armed conflict, along with sharing knowledge and experience, are among the key areas of cooperation between the two societies.

“There is also significant potential for collaboration in areas such as in-person training, emergency preparedness, and pre-hospital care,” he added.

In response to the extensive list of items requested by the IRCS, the Norwegian Red Cross has agreed to procure the equipment and raw materials needed by the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

Lauding the IRCS’s capabilities and its specialized teams in the fields of rehabilitation, search and rescue, the Norwegian official said, “We are ready to dispatch Norwegian health experts to cooperate with the Iranian Red Crescent Society and benefit from its training programs and expertise in these areas.”

“We are here to help treat and support people affected by the US-Israeli war in line with humanitarian principles. We will seek to serve as a voice for the Iranian Red Crescent Society in Norway by informing the Norwegian public and government about the events that occurred during the war, as well as the extensive efforts undertaken by the IRCS to assist those affected,” the Norwegian official concluded.

### 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 Kolivand, 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.

## Health ministry holds committee meetings with Kazakhstan, Belarus

TEHRAN – To strengthen bilateral cooperation across various sectors, the Ministry of Health held separate virtual meetings with health officials from Kazakhstan and Belarus via webinar on Monday.

During the meetings, the two sides discussed ways to enhance cooperation in medical education, research and technology, pharmaceuticals and vaccines, medical equipment, health services, pre-hospital emergency care, health tourism, cancer treatment, and organ transplantation, IRNA reported.

In this line, the participants agreed to establish specialized sub-committees and boost links through diplomatic channels.

The committee meetings are planned to be held every six months. The next meetings are scheduled for November to discuss joint operational plans.

In June, the head of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Mehdi Pirsalehi, and the Belarusian ambassador to Iran, Dmitry Koltsov, explored avenues to enhance ties in the health sector, particularly in supplying medicines and medical equipment, and expediting medical trade exchange.

The officials met in Tehran, during which Koltsov announced his country’s willingness to facilitate the import of medicine and pharmaceutical raw materials from Iran, IRNA reported.

The Belarusian official stressed the importance of utilizing reliable banking mechanisms and formal trade channels to ensure the sustainability of the pharmaceutical supply chain needed by Belarusian citizens.

For his part, Pirsalehi highlighted the high capacity of the country in manufacturing high-quality medicines and medical devices, and called for the removal of potential impediments to the export of the vital commodities.

The two sides agreed to continue technical consultations to establish a proper platform for the entry of high-quality Iranian medical

products into the Belarusian health product basket.

### Self-sufficiency in medicine, medical equipment

The issue of medicine and medical equipment production and self-sufficiency in these areas is one of the government’s priorities, Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi has said.

Medicine and medical equipment are two important areas related to people’s health, he said, adding: “We are trying to reach self-sufficiency for the supply of medicine and medical equipment,” IRNA reported.

In 2025, the head of Iran’s Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters said that medical equipment worth around \$20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually.

More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made, IRNA quoted Abdolreza Yaqoubzadeh as saying.

Also, over 95 percent of specific ICU and CCU beds and more than 85 percent of operating room medical equipment, such as anesthesia machines and other equipment, are manufactured with cutting-edge technology in the country, he added.

Yaqoubzadeh went on to say that the country’s need for medical equipment production is three to four billion dollars per year, some one billion dollars of which is imported.

Some 600 medical equipment companies are active in the country, producing around 99 percent of the medicine supplied to the domestic market.

Medical equipment manufacturers in the country produce and supply over 10,000 types of medical equipment to domestic and foreign markets. Now, various pieces of laboratory equipment are manufactured at prices much lower than the same foreign products.



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AUGUST 26, 2026

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*He who is greedy is disgraced; he who discloses his hardship will always be humiliated; he who has no control over his tongue will often have to face discomfort.*

**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times » Noon:12:06 Evening:18:59 Dawn:4:04 (tomorrow) Sunrise:5:32 (tomorrow)

## “Land of Angels” to go on screen at Kazan International Film Festival

TEHRAN- Iranian filmmaker Babak Khajeh-pasha's “Land of Angels” is set to be screened at the 22nd Altyn Minbar Kazan International Film Festival, marking the beginning of the film's international screenings.

Written and directed by Khajehpasha and produced by Manouchehr Mohammadi, the film will be presented at the festival, which will take place from September 4 to 8 in Kazan, the capital of Russia's Republic of Tatarstan, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

The international screenings of “Land of Angels” will coincide with the unveiling of two international posters for the film, designed in English and Arabic by renowned Iranian graphic designer Mohammad Rouholamin.

Produced jointly by the Tasvir-e Shahr Institute and the Soureh Cinema Center, “Land of Angels” portrays the human consequences of war and crisis in Gaza through the story of a woman who struggles to survive while protecting a group of innocent children from the horrors of war.

The film features Arab actors and focuses on the lives, dreams and struggles of children amid the war in Palestine, offering a human-centered narrative of a crisis that has extended beyond regional borders.

“Land of Angels” was the most decorated film at the 44th Fajr Film Festival in February, receiving five Crystal Simorgh awards and eight honorary diplomas. Khajehpasha received the jury's special prize for best director, while Syrian actress Sulaf Fawakherji was honored with the jury's special prize for her performance in the film.

Payam Hossein Souri won the award for Best Set Design, while Mohammad Hassan

Izadi received the Crystal Simorgh for Best Visual Effects.

This year, Kazan has been named the Cultural Capital of the Islamic World, with the 22nd Altyn Minbar Kazan International Film Festival serving as one of the main events of the program.

The Altyn Minbar Kazan International Film Festival has been held since 2005 and is among Russia's established cinematic events. The festival focuses on films addressing human, cultural, social and spiritual themes and brings together productions from different countries.

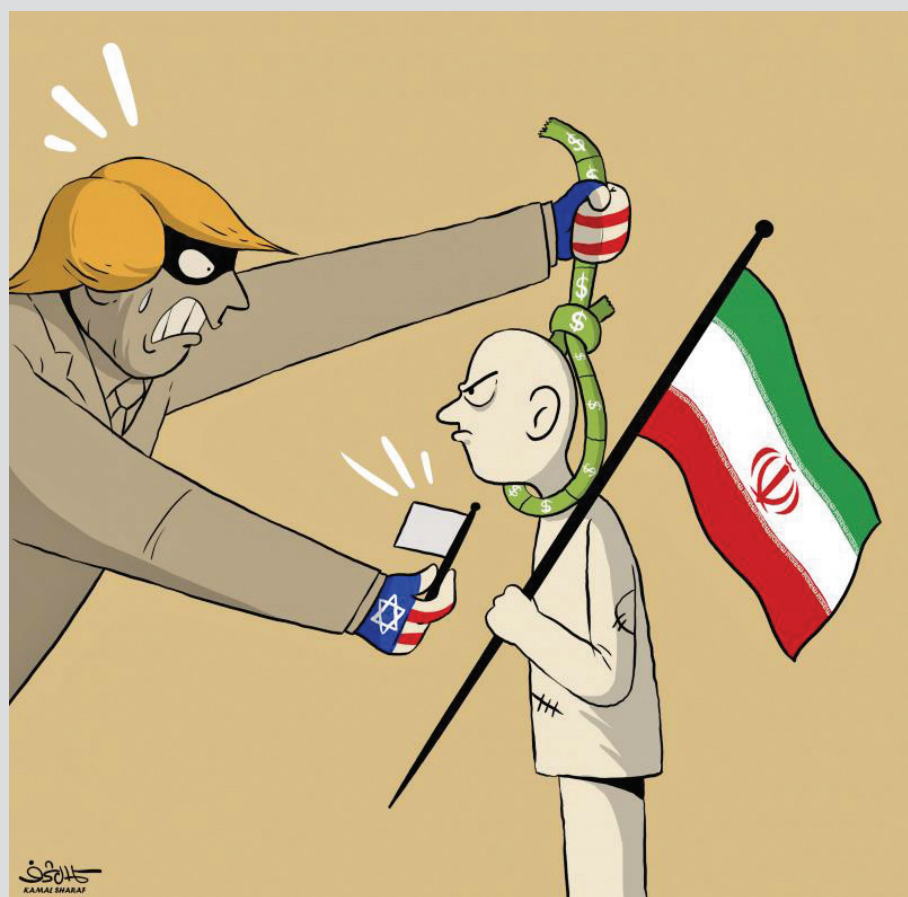
Taking place from September 4 to 8, the festival will once again bring together filmmakers from the Islamic world and beyond, further promoting cultural dialogue and international cooperation through initiatives such as the Russia-Islamic World: KazanForum.

The festival has received a record 1,030 entries from 66 countries, with 146 films selected for its competition and non-competition sections. The lineup includes productions from the Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Alongside the screenings, the festival will host a range of business and educational events, including an international pitching session, film education programs and a film laboratory in Bolgar.

The Altyn Minbar Film Festival has established itself as both a venue for international film premieres and a platform for cultural cooperation. Its latest edition further underscores Kazan's position as one of Russia's leading centers for cultural engagement with the Islamic world.

## Cartoon of Day



Surrender or Punishment  
**Cartoonist:** Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

# Iranian animation “The Legend of Sepehr” released in Russian cinemas

TEHRAN – The screening of the Iranian animation “The Legend of Sepehr,” directed by Emad Rahmani and Mehrdad Mehrabi, began in 89 cinemas across Russia on Monday evening with a special ceremony honoring the memory of the martyred children of Minab.

The ceremony was held in the presence of the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Moscow, Kazem Jalali, and a number of cinema figures and enthusiasts at the cinema of a famous children's and youth shopping center in the heart of the Russian capital, IRNA reported.

In a speech at the ceremony, Jalali referred to the display of images of the martyred students of the Shajareh Tayyebah School in Minab on the screen of the cinema where the ceremony was held, and said: “168 Iranian children were martyred on the first day of the American and Israeli military aggression against Iran. The aggressors' act of martyring these children was a great and painful crime.”

Referring to the fact that last Saturday coincided with the 168th day since the martyrdom of the Minab school students, Iran's ambassador to Russia said that this crime must not be allowed to fade from humanity's memory.

Jalali added that with the aim of honoring the memory of these martyrs, the Iranian Cultural Days ceremony in Russia, which will be held this October in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kazan, will be held with the presence of Iranian artists in a group of 168 people in memory of the Minab martyrs.

The ceremony, attended by Abdolreza Rashed, the cultural attaché of Iran in Russia, also met Konstantin Elkin, one of Russia's renowned and prolific film and television producers and CEO of the film distribution and pro-



duction company Russian World Vision (RWV), who expressed satisfaction over the facilitation of screening the Iranian animation “The Legend of Sepehr” by his company, describing the animated film as a good work for children.

Elkin went on to express sympathy with the families of the martyred Minab students and the people of Iran, saying: “We sympathize with all those who lost their children in this tragic event, and we hope that such an incident does not occur in any other part of the world.”

“The Legend of Sepehr” is an adventure, fantasy, and family-oriented animation centered on themes such as family, responsibility, courage, and standing against darkness. It won the Best Animation award at the New York International Film Awards (NYIFA) in 2025.

In a fabled land, a young boy named Sepehr and his loyal cheetah, Baboo, embark upon a brave yet light-hearted quest to rescue their family and friends from the clutches of Ahriman, the dark lord of evil, who seeks an eternal reign of shadows.

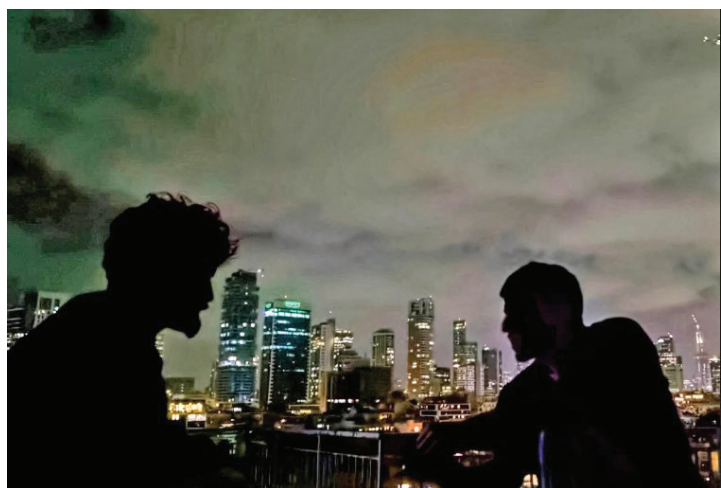
From peaceful island life to chaotic adventures across mystical lands, this duo faces monsters, meets eccentric allies, and discovers the power of laughter along their journey. As they strive to defeat Ahriman and save their world, Sepehr and Baboo prove that sometimes, the greatest weapon against darkness is a heart and an unbreakable spirit.

“The Legend of Sepehr” combines thrilling action and touching emotional moments with lighthearted humor, delivering a visually stunning tale of resilience and unity. With bright animation, humorous moments,

and its richly-knit plot, the animated movie depicts friendship and family worldwide and how a belief in minor acts of courage could light up even the darkest moments of life.

On February 28, the Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan province, became the site of a devastating massacre as the United States and Israel initiated their strikes against Iran. While dozens of girls and boys aged between 7 and 12 were beginning their lessons, the school was targeted by a missile strike that caused the building to collapse, trapping children and teachers beneath the rubble. Iranian authorities confirmed a final death toll of 168 people, with at least 95 others wounded, marking one of the most harrowing incidents of the conflict's opening day.

## Venice Film Festival adds Gaza documentary “NAZA” to competition lineup



pro-Palestinian protest during one of the busiest nights in hopes of redirecting the spotlight from the movie stars to the real world. The subject was also prominent in the program: Kaouther Ben Hania's “The Voice of Hind Rajab,” about the death of a 6-year-old girl attempting to flee Gaza City with her family in early 2024, won the festival's Silver Lion award.

Ben Hania is part of the Maggie Gyllenhaal-led jury that will be selecting the award winners at the festival, which begins on Sept. 2. Winners will be announced on Sept. 12.

“NAZA” will be screened at Venice Film Festival on Sept. 10 in the Sala Grande at the Palazzo del Cinema, in the presence of the directors, producers, Guardian journalists and the official delegation.

The film is the only documentary included in this year's Venice competition section. It joins a starry lineup including Lance Oppenheim's “Primetime,” Danny Boyle's “Ink,” Casey Affleck's

“Company,” Werner Herzog's “Bucking Fastard,” Hirokazu Kore-eda's “Look Back,” Martin McDonagh's “Wild Horse Nine,” Florian Zeller's “Bunker” and more. It marks Abraham and Szor's first time competing for Venice's Golden Lion.

Earlier this year, the Venice Biennale contemporary art exhibition opened with no Golden Lions after the jury quit in protest of Israel's and Russia's participation and loud protests outside their pavilions. In 2024 the artist and curators representing Israel at the Venice Biennale kept the Israeli pavilion exhibit closed, saying they would only open it if there were a ceasefire in Gaza.

The ongoing Israeli military campaign in the Gaza Strip has left more than 73,400 Palestinians dead, according to figures from the Gaza Ministry of Health, as the humanitarian crisis continues despite a ceasefire that began in October 2025.

The Gaza Health Ministry reported that the Palestinian

death toll had reached more than 73,400, with tens of thousands of others injured since the escalation of the conflict in October 2023. Recent reports continue to document casualties in Israeli attacks across the enclave, with four Palestinians, including two children, killed on August 24 alone, according to local health officials.

The scale of injuries has placed further pressure on Gaza's already severely damaged healthcare system. Thousands of Palestinians have suffered life-changing injuries, while hospitals and medical facilities continue to operate under extremely difficult conditions.

The humanitarian situation has also been aggravated by displacement, shortages of food and clean water, and restricted access to essential medical supplies. UN agencies have repeatedly warned of the devastating consequences of the prolonged conflict for civilians, particularly children.

Recent violence has continued despite the October 2025 ceasefire. Reuters reported that more than 1,280 Palestinians had been killed in Gaza since the ceasefire, according to Palestinian health officials, while Israeli strikes and exchanges of fire have continued in several parts of the territory.

The latest casualty figures underline the continuing human cost of the conflict and the fragile nature of the ceasefire, as diplomatic efforts to secure a lasting settlement and address Gaza's humanitarian needs remain ongoing.