

What has Trump gained following Netanyahu's lead?

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – U.S. bias toward Israel constitutes one of the constants of American foreign policy, but Trump has pushed this bias to unprecedented lengths.

Donald Trump was little more than a newcomer to politics when he decided to run for president in 2016. He won the election and entered the White House on the shoulders of a majority made up of three main currents: a Christian Zionist current that sees the establishment of a "Greater Israel" as a condition for the return of the "Messiah".

Secondly, a right-wing secular current concerned about America's declining status and committed to "making America great again" (the MAGA movement); and lastly, a current angry at globalization policies, which it believes have caused rising unemployment and poverty in the U.S. and therefore calls for protectionist policies to save American products and industries. ► Page 5

Ben Gvir unveils seven-year blueprint to ethnically cleanse Gaza

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Itamar Ben Gvir has formalized the ultimate objective of the Gaza genocide. Israel's extremist national security minister published a rigid seven-year timetable to empty the besieged territory of 1.86 million indigenous Palestinians. ► Page 5

From naval blockade to land corridors: Iran's strategic pivot

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- Iran's maritime trade has faced serious disruption due to geopolitical tensions and sanctions, but this challenge has unexpectedly accelerated the development of land-based transit routes. What initially appeared as a strategic vulnerability—over-reliance on the Strait of Hormuz—is now forcing a fundamental shift in the country's trade infrastructure. The result could transform Iran from a sea-dependent economy into a regional transit hub connecting East, West, North, and South.

The recent naval pressures, intensified after failed military confrontations, have exposed a long-standing weakness: ► Page 4

Tehran plays host to Royan Intl. Twin Congress

TEHRAN – The Royan International Twin Congress, including the 27th Congress on Reproductive Biomedicine, the 22nd Congress on Stem Cell Biology and Technology, and the 21st seminar on Nursery and Midwifery, was held from Wednesday to Friday.

Bringing together Iranian and international researchers and specialists, the three-day event was held in person and online, providing a great opportunity to examine the latest scientific achievements in infertility treatment, assisted reproductive technologies, regenerative medicine, cell-based and gene-based therapies, and novel applications of artificial intelligence in biomedicine, IRNA reported.

This year, a total of 447 articles out of 589 submitted articles were accepted to be presented, including 197 posters and 7 articles in the Reproductive Biomedicine Congress, 186 posters and nine articles in the Stem Cell Biology and Technology Congress, and 45 posters and three lectures in the Nursery and Midwifery Seminar. ► Page 7



Russian President Vladimir Putin(R) and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian shake hands during a meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Bishkek on September 1, 2026

Iran-Russia Alliance Grows Despite US Pressure

Russia dismisses US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's call to sever ties with Iran, vows to protect and expand its partnership with Tehran

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN — Russia's robust and uncompromising support for Iran in the face of US military adventurism and all-out economic warfare has made it abundantly clear that the strategic partnership between Tehran and Moscow will never be swayed, deterred, or disrupted by outside pressure.

Rather than achieving its intended goal of isolating Tehran, Washington's aggressive, coercive policies and warmongering have produced the exact opposite effect, acting as a powerful catalyst that has brought Iran and Russia closer together than ever before.

Moscow has repeatedly and forcefully denounced the unprovoked US war on

Iran, while flatly dismissing Washington's economic pressure as an illegitimate tool of Western hegemony. The United States, meanwhile, has sought to aggressively tout the supposed impact of its unilateral sanctions in an obvious bid to distract global public opinion from the strategic failure of its joint military campaign with Israel against Iran, which began six months ago.

In an effort to tighten its economic siege, the administration of President Donald Trump has pressured other sovereign nations to unilaterally sever their legitimate trade and financial relations with Iran under the banner of

what the White House has termed "Operation Economic Outcast." In characteristic hyperbole, Washington went so far as to compare this sweeping sanctions blitz to the historic Allied invasion of Normandy in World War II, theatrically nicknaming it an "economic D-Day."

On Friday, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent declared that the European Union had formally joined Washington's campaign to completely sever Iran from the global financial architecture. Furthermore, in an interview on Fox News on Wednesday, Bessent blatantly demanded that Russia "stay away" from Iran and abandon its ties with Tehran—a provocative demand that was promptly and decisively rejected by Moscow. ► Page 3



Kuestak mourns victims of deadly strike on wedding

TEHRAN- The wedding was supposed to be a night of music, laughter and celebration. Instead, the people of this small coastal town gathered on Thursday to carry coffins through the streets, mourning those killed when a house hosting a wedding celebration was struck during the latest escalation of the US-Iran conflict.

The funeral procession for the victims began on the main boulevard at the entrance to Kuestak, in Sirik County in Iran's southern Hormozgan province. Families of the dead, local residents, religious figures and officials walked together toward the town's cemetery, turning what should have been a celebration of a new marriage into a day of collective mourning. ► Page 2

Advanced enemy technology failed to shield aircraft from indigenous air defenses

TEHRAN — Iran's air defense commander says the country's recent experience of war has demonstrated that technological superiority alone cannot guarantee the safety of an attacking force, stating that Iranian forces developed and upgraded new domestically produced air defense systems even as the fighting was underway.

Brigadier General Alireza Elhami, commander of Khatam al-Anbiya Joint Air Defense Headquarters and the Army's Air Defense Force, made the remarks on Friday. ► Page 2

Qatari ITU submission confirms Iran's retaliatory operations hit only US military assets

TEHRAN — Official documentation submitted by Doha to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) validates that Iran's recent defensive measures aimed exclusively at American military infrastructure on Qatari soil, according to Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei.

In a statement published on X on Thursday, Baghaei referenced Qatar's official contribution to an extraordinary session of the ITU Council. The safety and security risk assessment report explicitly noted that Iran's strikes "were directed towards US military facilities. [...] No civilian areas have been targeted." ► Page 2

Pezeshkian: Environmental protection is a pillar of national and social security

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has described environmental protection as a key pillar of the country's national and social security, stressing that the preservation of natural resources must be addressed within this framework.

Speaking at a meeting with environmental experts on Thursday, Pezeshkian said the government was prepared to create the necessary conditions for using the plans, ideas and initiatives put forward by environmental activists and specialists.

He added that the government would support scientific and practical solutions for addressing the country's real environmental challenges, IRNA reported. ► Page 7

Culture minister visits Minab School exhibition

TEHRAN – The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyyed Abbas Salehi, visited the "Minab School" group exhibition at the Art Bureau in Tehran on Thursday.

During the visit, a number of the exhibiting artists were present and provided explanations about the process of creating and drawing the works, IRNA reported.

Following his visit to the exhibition, Salehi spoke to reporters about the importance of holding such an exhibition, stating: "The Minab School tragedy is, on one hand, a historical and global catastrophe, and on the other, for the Iranian nation, an unrepeatable and history-making event."

"Documented evidence clearly shows that this incident was by no means an error, but rather was carried out completely deliberately," he added. "In the first days of the incident, fathers and mothers were wandering in a daze, searching for their children, and parents of Makan Nasiri never found their child's body." ► Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Why did Beijing reject the G20 statement?

Sazandegi assessed China's refusal to join the G20 statement. The meeting was supposed to focus mainly on economic issues, but disagreements over the Strait of Hormuz once again exposed geopolitical rifts among major powers. The G20 countries emphasized the need for safe and free navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, but China declined to endorse the position. Beijing's objection cannot be reduced to a dispute over the strait's current situation. One major reason is China's concern about creating a legal and political precedent that might later be used against it. Alongside this legal concern, China's relationship with Iran carries special weight in Beijing's calculations. As one of the world's largest energy importers, China does not want to sacrifice its economic and political ties with Tehran for a framework shaped by Washington. China's stance at the G20 shows that even under increased US pressure on Iran, Washington faces serious obstacles in forming a global consensus on Hormuz security.

Shargh: Jordan under pressure

Shargh analyzed Jordan's difficult current situation, writing that Iran's repeated attacks on US military facilities in Jordan reveal something deeper than a mere defensive weakness: the gap between the Jordanian government's security dependence on Washington and a public angered by the Gaza war could turn Jordan into the most sensitive link in America's regional presence. Iran's multiple attacks have once again placed Jordan at the center of one of the Middle East's most delicate security equations. The recent attacks show that what appears from the outside to be a stable partnership is internally burdened with rising political costs. Many Jordanians see the US military presence not as a shield against regional crises but as a factor dragging their country into Washington's conflict with Tehran.

Ham-Mihan: Israel opposes any understanding between Tehran and Washington

Ham-Mihan interviewed Javid Ghorban-Oghli, a senior Middle East analyst, about Trump's failure to uphold the Islamabad memorandum. Returning to the memorandum is necessary for both Iran and the United States. However, it is clear that Israel and its powerful domestic lobby oppose any agreement between Iran and the US or any negotiated exit from the war. For Netanyahu, an Iran-US agreement would amount to political death. Given Trump's narcissistic personality, Netanyahu's team currently dominates US policy. Therefore, Iran must adopt a strategy that deepens existing rifts between Tel Aviv and

Washington and deprives Israel of the ability to push for military adventurism. Everyone knows Israel cannot sustain even a week of war with Iran without US support. The memorandum of understanding was a major political-diplomatic gain for Iran. In other words, the significant concessions it granted Iran reflect the inability of the opposing side (the U.S. and Israel) to achieve their projected military objectives in the war.

Arman-e-Melli: Keeping the oil route

Arman-e-Melli highlighted the importance of maintaining relations with China, especially in the oil sector. The paper wrote that securing China's support does not necessarily mean aligning political slogans; rather, it means reducing the costs created by each side's behavior. If China is convinced that Iran guarantees the security of China's oil flow—and China, in turn, ensures that this flow is not targeted by sanctions or blockades—then a genuine exchange of power emerges. If supplying China's oil is seen as one of the most important pillars of bilateral relations, one can imagine a solution in which China gains direct interests in designing and maintaining the oil-transfer chain from Iran to its destination. Iran can ask China to place its power behind the oil flow, but in return, Iran must make protecting that flow more beneficial for China than abandoning it. Thus, the Iran-China strategic partnership can be turned into a practical, measurable mechanism rather than a mere political phrase.

Hamshahri: America's economic-operational crisis

The war has shown that the issue of cost is not limited to the price of each missile. To counter Iran's missile and drone attacks, the US has sometimes had to use multiple interceptors against a single threat. This creates both economic and operational problems: multimillion-dollar interceptors are being used against threats that are often far cheaper. Thus, the more Iran can increase the volume of its attacks, the greater the pressure on America's air-defense stockpiles. US strikes near the Strait of Hormuz and Iran's missile attacks on US positions in Jordan have revived the question of how much Washington can escalate its operations. The most important consequence of this crisis for Washington may not appear on Iran's battlefield but in the calculations of China and America's East Asia allies. If Beijing concludes that a prolonged Middle East conflict could drain US stockpiles and limit Washington's ability to respond in the Pacific, the ammunition crisis could shift from a logistical problem to a strategic variable.

Six Iranian Navy personnel martyred in US strikes in southern Iran



TEHRAN —Six personnel from the Iranian Navy were killed in US strikes on targets in southern Iran two nights ago, according to Iran's Tasnim news agency.

The six personnel were identified as: Hossein Mahdavian, Hamed Akati, Amirhossein Salimzadeh, Mohammadreza Baderan, Malek Mousavitabar, Mojtaba Bagheri.

The strikes were part of a broader US military campaign against targets in several parts of Iran. Iranian authorities said the attacks killed both military personnel and civilians, in-

cluding people who were attending a wedding ceremony in the southern city of Sirik.

Iranian armed forces subsequently launched a series of missile and drone operations against US military positions and bases across the region.

The reports said the attacks targeted US facilities in Jordan, northern Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Iranian officials said the strikes inflicted significant damage on some of the bases and that several US military personnel were also killed.

Kuhestak mourns victims of deadly strike on wedding

From page 1 ► Among the coffins was a small one belonging to Amir Mohammad Karimi, a four-year-old boy whose death has become the most haunting image of the tragedy.

Photographs and videos circulating on Iranian social media showed mourners gathering around the child's coffin, with his name and age repeatedly appearing in posts about the attack. Iranian media described the burial of Amir Mohammad as one of the most painful moments of the funeral.

He was four years old.

That fact has come to define the grief in Kuhestak: a child who had no part in the conflict, killed on a night when families had gathered for a wedding.

The procession brought together people from across the local community, including families of the victims and both Shiite and Sunni religious leaders. Their presence reflected the close-knit character of the coastal communities of Sirik, where religious and family ties are deeply woven into daily life.

The scene was starkly different from what the house had been only hours earlier. The gathering had been a wedding celebration,



with relatives and friends assembled together. Then came the explosion.

The United States has said its strikes in the area were aimed at military assets, including air-defense systems, radar installations, maritime equipment, mine-laying capabilities and communications facilities. Washington has also said it does not intentionally target civilians and has launched an investigation into what happened at the wedding site.

But an analysis by Reuters has added weight to the Iranian account of what happened. Weapons experts examining verified images and videos from the scene concluded that the destruction was likely caused by a direct hit

Amir Mohammad's name appeared repeatedly across Iranian social media in the aftermath of the attack. Images of his funeral and burial were shared widely, with users focusing on the unbearable contrast between his age and the circumstances of his death.

His coffin was small enough to be carried easily. The grief surrounding it was not.

The tragedy has also revived wider concerns over civilian casualties in the US-Iran conflict. Reuters reported that the strike killed five civilians, including a four-year-old child, and injured nearly 70 people. The incident drew particular attention because the victims were attending a private family celebration rather than a military gathering.

For Kuhestak, the memory of Sept. 1 is now inseparable from the image of a wedding interrupted by war.

A celebration meant to mark the beginning of a marriage ended with families searching for the wounded and counting their dead. Two days later, the town gathered again — this time not to celebrate a new beginning, but to say farewell.

Advanced enemy technology failed to shield aircraft from indigenous air defenses

From page 1 ► Elhami said Iran had relied on "100-percent Iranian capabilities" during the recent conflict, identifying courageous leadership, national cohesion and public support as three of the principal pillars of the country's wartime resilience.

He said Iranian defense personnel had developed and manufactured air defense systems during the conflict, subsequently deploying them to operational areas where, according to his account, they were used against hostile aircraft.

"Advanced enemy technology did not provide them with immunity," Elhami said, arguing that even highly sophisticated aircraft entering the battlefield could not be assured of a safe return.

His comments were consistent with a report published Friday by Tasnim, which said Iran's Army air defense force had achieved self-sufficiency in supplying the weapons, equipment and defense systems it requires by relying on domestic expertise, knowledge-based companies and universities.

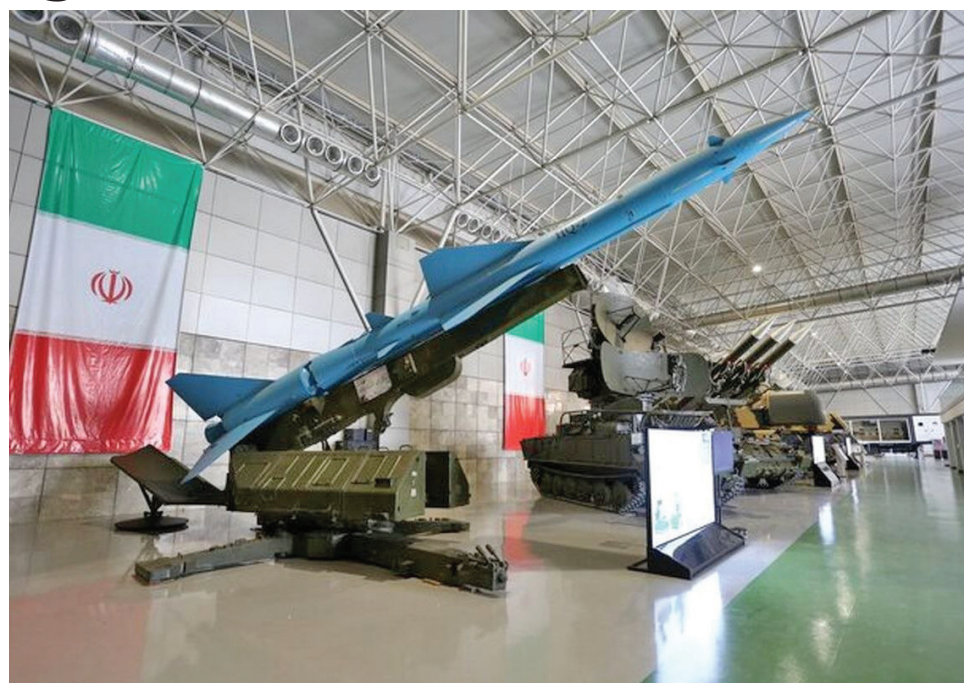
Elhami said the Iranian air defense industry was increasingly drawing on young defense scientists, domestic technology companies, universities and operational experience accumulated during the war.

He also warned that, in Iran's assessment, the conflict was not necessarily over and that the armed forces needed to remain prepared for "new threats and fronts."

====US and Israel failed to achieve objectives

Separately, Brigadier General Mohammad Akraminia, spokesman for Iran's Army, said the United States and Israel had failed to achieve the objectives they had pursued during their latest military campaign against Iran.

Speaking at an event in Mashhad on Friday, Akraminia said the adversary had entered the conflict after making a series of miscalcula-



tions about Iran, including its society, military capabilities and political structure.

He added that the attackers had sought to degrade Iran's missile and nuclear capabilities, overthrow its government and ultimately partition the country. "None of these objectives was achieved," he said.

Akraminia also cited 'a failure by the United States and its Western allies' to build a broader military coalition against Iran.

He said the confrontation had become a test of political and national will as much as military capability, arguing that Iran's religious beliefs, social resilience and experience from previous conflicts had strengthened its ability to withstand pressure.

Iran announces further strikes on US bases

Against that backdrop, Iran's Army said it had continued its missile and drone operations

against US military positions in the region.

In a statement, the Army said Iranian forces had struck satellite communications systems, equipment storage facilities and fighter aircraft shelters at Ahmad al-Jaber Air Base in Kuwait.

The Iranian military also said missile and one-way attack drone strikes had targeted troop positions and radar systems at Al Minhad Air Base in the United Arab Emirates.

Iran said the attacks caused damage to communications infrastructure and aircraft shelters.

The two bases are important components of the US military presence in the Persian Gulf. Ahmad al-Jaber is a significant US air facility in Kuwait, while Al Minhad has served as an important hub for air operations and the movement of foreign forces in the region.

Qatari ITU submission confirms Iran's retaliatory operations hit only US military assets

From page 1 ► The document further specified that "almost all of the attacks were directed towards US military facilities, with the one exception of an attack against the gas facilities at Ras Laffan on 18th March," while evaluating the current security risk to Qatar as minimal.

Addressing the sole exception mentioned in the report, Baghaei provided necessary context regarding the targeted energy infrastructure: "It should be recalled, however, that the facilities struck that day were serving US military aggression against Iran."

The Foreign Ministry spokesman sharply contrasted this disciplined approach with Wash-

ington's long-standing pattern of indiscriminate warfare. "This stands in stark contrast to the United States' long record of deliberate attacks on civilian targets – schools, hospitals, residential neighborhoods, wedding ceremonies, bridges, and more," he emphasized.

Highlighting the fundamental divergence in conduct, Baghaei added that there is "a vast difference between a civilized nation that has learned the importance of adhering to moral and humanitarian principles even under the most distressing circumstances, and warmongering rulers who observe no rule of law or ethics in their projection of power."

These observations arrive as the Islamic Republic continues exercising its legitimate right to self-defense against unprovoked military aggression launched by the United States with Israeli backing. Iranian armed forces have executed precise counter-operations against regional US bases and assets utilized to launch attacks against Iranian territory, including those located in Qatar.

Tehran has continually stressed that its military actions strictly target hostile military objectives and pose zero threat to neighboring countries or their civilian populations. While valuing brotherly relations with Qatar, Tehran maintains its firm resolve to re-

spond to any misuse of Qatari territory or airspace for hostile acts against Iran.

Recent American escalations have involved direct attacks on civilian gatherings within Iran, such as a strike on a wedding ceremony in Sirik—condemned as a war crime reflecting Washington's ongoing moral degradation. Iranian officials consistently uphold international humanitarian law and Islamic tenets by carefully separating military targets from civilian populations, standing in stark contrast to the documented history of US bombing campaigns targeting civilian infrastructure from Afghanistan to Yemen and now within Iran itself.

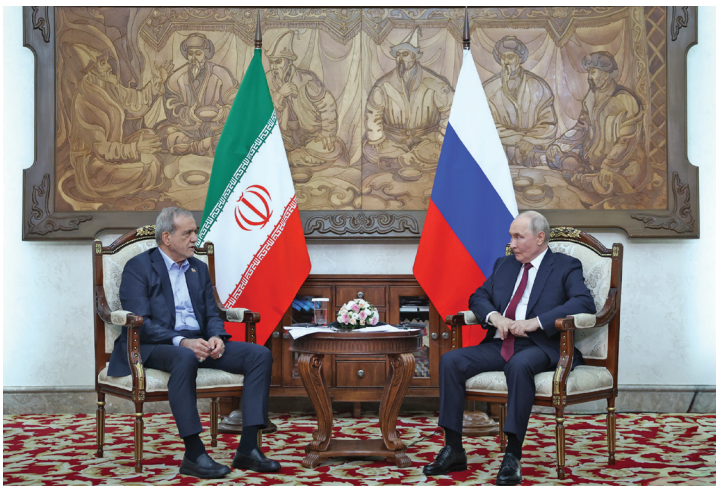
Iran-Russia alliance grows despite US pressure

From Page 1 ▶ Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov affirmed that Russia will never give up its strategic relations with its long-standing partners to appease Washington. Peskov declared that it is entirely unrealistic for the United States to believe it can monopolize international relations or dictate terms to independent global powers, emphasizing that Russia has its own dependable partners and friends and will vigorously maintain, protect, and expand these friendly and partnership relations regardless of Western hostility.

Russian President Vladimir Putin also explicitly and unequivocally expressed Russia's profound support for Iran during his high-profile meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.

"As I have repeatedly said before, Russia is standing in full solidarity with the people of Iran. We admire your courage and resilience in your fight for your national interests," Putin told Pezeshkian during their crucial meeting held on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Kyrgyzstan's capital of Bishkek. He further noted that the friendly relations between Russia and Iran are developing steadily and dynamically across all areas, adhering strictly to the letter and the overarching spirit of the historic Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Russia and Iran have significantly and systematically expanded their multifaceted cooperation in recent years, deepening their bonds across a



wide and comprehensive range of vital areas, including bilateral trade, energy integration, strategic transportation corridors such as the International North-South Transport Corridor, and advanced defense cooperation. In January 2025, the two countries officially signed the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement, providing a rock-solid, institutionalized framework for further strengthening bilateral cooperation, neutralizing illegal Western sanctions, and consolidating their joint resistance against unilateralism across multiple strategic sectors.

Moscow's principled and unyielding stance comes even as CIA Director John Ratcliffe reportedly attempted to intimidate the Kremlin during an unannounced, high-stakes trip to Moscow on Tuesday. Ratcliffe reportedly issued direct warnings demanding that Russia immediately scale down its support for Iran, backing the threat with Washington's earlier vows to significantly expand extraterritorial secondary sanctions against

sovereign countries that refuse to cut their economic ties with Tehran.

Yet, amid mounting Western threats, ultimatums, and economic blackmails, Russia's position leaves no room for doubt that Moscow regards its strategic partnership with Iran as a permanent, non-negotiable, and long-term priority in the emerging multipolar world order. Rather than bowing to Western pressure or succumbing to Washington's coercive tactics, Moscow and Tehran are digging in their heels, actively turning mounting Western hostility into an enduring catalyst for deeper, irreversible strategic cooperation. Washington's desperate efforts to drive a wedge between the two nations have completely backfired, pushing both countries ever closer together on the geopolitical and economic chessboard.

The powerful statements delivered by Putin and Peskov carry immense strategic weight in the wider context of the two-day

SCO summit that concluded on Tuesday. SCO leaders—including President Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif—collectively signed the "Bishkek Declaration," which explicitly and unequivocally condemned the joint US and Israeli war of aggression against Iran.

In the joint declaration, the leaders of the Eurasian powers denounced the military aggression as a flagrant violation of the fundamental principles and norms of international law, state sovereignty, and the United Nations Charter, warning that such reckless unilateral actions create grave, unprecedented risks to international peace, regional security, and global stability.

The SCO heads of state also officially expressed their sincere and deepest condolences on the assassination of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, who was martyred on the first day of the joint US-Israeli war on February 28. In his SCO meeting with Pezeshkian, Putin specifically asked the Iranian president to convey his warmest regards and words of sincere, unwavering support to Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, who was elected Leader of the Islamic Revolution following the assassination of his father.

Putin's message of support to Iran's new Leader is significant in this context. It suggests that Moscow's backing for Tehran is rooted not in short-term political calculations, but in a broader strategic relationship that Russia is determined to maintain.

Iran uses BRICS judicial diplomacy to deepen ties with China, Russia and Belarus

TEHRAN— Iran is seeking to turn judicial cooperation into a broader instrument of strategic diplomacy, with Judiciary Chief Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Ejei holding talks with senior judicial officials from China, Russia and Belarus on the sidelines of the BRICS Chief Justices' Forum in New Delhi.

The meetings, which brought together some of the highest-ranking judicial officials from the four countries, focused on legal cooperation, artificial intelligence, digital technologies and the exchange of judicial expertise. But they also carried a broader geopolitical message: Tehran says it intends to deepen its ties with major non-Western powers as the international system moves toward 'a new global order.'

The BRICS Chief Justices' Forum, hosted by India's Supreme Court from Sept. 4 to 6, is bringing together chief justices, presidents of supreme courts and senior judicial officials from BRICS members and partner countries. Its agenda includes international commercial disputes, cross-border enforcement of arbitration awards, artificial intelligence in judicial administration and sustainable development.

During a meeting with Zhang Jun, president of China's Supreme People's Court, Mohseni-Ejei said Tehran was determined to expand relations with Beijing and argued that stronger legal and judicial links could provide an institutional foundation for cooperation in wider strategic fields.

"China and Iran have extensive and strong relations, and we are determined to expand our ties with China," Mohseni-Ejei said, according to Iranian media.

He called for greater exchanges of legal expertise among BRICS members and urged the two countries to make fuller use of existing memoranda of understanding. He also singled out artificial intelligence and digital technologies as areas where Chinese experience could be combined with Iran's domestic capabilities to open new avenues for cooperation.

Zhang welcomed the prospect of closer judicial ties, recalling his previous meeting with Mohseni-Ejei in China and describing their earlier discussions as deep and constructive. He said China and Iran had maintained stable relations despite regional and international upheavals and expressed hope that cooperation between the two countries would expand across a wider range of fields.

The emphasis on technology reflects the

changing priorities of judicial institutions across the BRICS grouping. China, Zhang said, has been studying new approaches to judicial governance and the application of artificial intelligence and digital technologies, and is prepared to share those experiences with Iran.

For Tehran, such cooperation is not simply a technical matter. Mohseni-Ejei has repeatedly framed judicial and technological exchanges as part of a larger effort to strengthen ties among countries seeking greater independence from the existing Western-led international system.

A widening judicial network

Mohseni-Ejei also met Andrei Shved, chairman of Belarus' Supreme Court, where the two sides discussed expanding judicial and legal cooperation.

The Iranian judiciary chief again highlighted artificial intelligence and technological exchanges, arguing that advances in digital tools could accelerate the handling of legal and judicial cases.

He said geopolitical developments had brought the international system to a historic turning point and suggested that cooperation among BRICS members and partner countries could help shape the emerging order.

Shved welcomed closer relations with Iran and invited Mohseni-Ejei to visit Belarus. He also said Minsk was prepared to work toward a new memorandum of understanding on judicial cooperation.

The Belarusian official said the two countries could use judicial ties as a channel for facilitating cooperation in other areas as well.

The meeting was part of a wider series of bilateral contacts taking place alongside the BRICS forum. India's Supreme Court said judicial leaders from Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates, together with partner countries including Belarus, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, were participating in the three-day gathering.

Message to Washington

Alongside the legal and technological agenda, Mohseni-Ejei used his meetings to deliver a distinctly political assessment of Iran's confrontation with the United States and Israel.

In a separate meeting with Igor Krasnov, chief justice of Russia's Supreme Court, he said Iran and Russia could play a significant role in restoring regional and global stability through closer coordination and stronger strategic ca-



pabilities.

In remarks reported during his New Delhi meetings, Mohseni-Ejei said the United States and Israel had devoted their military and political resources to imposing an "unjust and illegal" war on Iran.

He maintained that Iran had withstood the pressure and that Washington had failed to accomplish its objectives.

"America is looking for a way out of the quagmire it has created for itself," Mohseni-Ejei said, according to Iranian reports.

He argued that Iran's ability to withstand the conflict had demonstrated Tehran's strategic resilience, while portraying closer cooperation with Russia, China and other non-Western powers as part of a broader response to changing global power dynamics.

The remarks come as Iranian officials increasingly present BRICS not merely as an economic grouping but as a platform through which Tehran can cultivate diplomatic, legal, technological and institutional relationships beyond traditional Western alliances.

Courts as instruments of wider diplomacy

The meetings in New Delhi also illustrate how judicial diplomacy is becoming intertwined with broader state-to-state relations.

Mohseni-Ejei told his Chinese counterpart that judicial cooperation could act as a "supporting arm" for strategic relations, suggesting that legal institutions can help create channels for cooperation in areas extending well beyond the courtroom.

That approach has particular significance for Iran, which faces extensive U.S. sanctions and has sought to deepen economic, political and technological ties with China and Russia while expanding relations with other members and partners of BRICS.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Flow vs. territory: The real battle for the Strait of Hormuz



By Xavier Villar

MADRID — The Trump administration and its media echo chamber are trying to convince the world that Iran has lost control over the Strait of Hormuz. At the same time, they claim large volumes of oil are crossing the strait.

The problem is that none of the global oil tracking services can confirm this. According to TankerTrackers, the leading authority on the subject, 3.8 million barrels per day passed through the strait last week, compared to 9.8 million barrels daily during the 25 days the memorandum of understanding was in force.

There is another issue that further undermines the American narrative: not every barrel exiting through the so-called "Omani route" represents a victory for Washington. Some Iranian sources suggest the situation is more complex: part of these flows may include Iranian crude mixed with exports from friendly neighbors such as Iraq, or traffic that Tehran permits in exchange for revenues and concessions that help it withstand the blockade.

Recent events show that the rivalry between Iran and the United States has moved beyond threats to close the maritime route and naval demonstrations, entering a more complex stage. As several Iranian experts note, the central question is no longer whether the strait is "open or closed," but who can manage the actual flow of ships, oil, and goods through this waterway.

In recent weeks, the U.S. objective in the southern part of the strait has gone beyond conventional naval escort operations. Washington is trying to establish a controlled maritime route under military cover to allow part of the energy flow to continue from the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Oman and from there to world markets.

But that is the objective. The reality is different: navigation data show that traffic remains well below normal levels. Despite all efforts, the United States has not managed to return the strait to its pre-war normality. Controlling it is beyond American reach, but this is precisely where one must pause to explain the difference between territorial control and flow control. In maritime power theory, choke points such as the Strait of Hormuz matter not only because of their geographic location, but because an actor can use them to influence the flow of goods, energy, and communications.

In this sense—and bearing in mind that territorial control is practically impossible—the United States is attempting to shift from territorial control to flow control by using the southern corridor. According to several reports, Washington has established a controlled mechanism for tanker

transit near the coast of Oman, including scheduling ship movements, intelligence coordination, air and naval protection, and directing vessels along a route that, according to Washington, "presents a lower risk."

The fact that Iranian preventive and offensive actions have prevented this plan from being executed does not diminish its relevance. The United States is, in fact, trying to establish a new "operational order" in the strait whose ultimate goal is to deprive Iran of control over the flows through this strategic passage. Attacks against Iranian radar and surveillance systems were part of this plan from the moment Iran gained control of the strait.

One can therefore point to a shift in the model of U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf. In the past, the American mission focused on deterrence: the presence of warships conveyed to Iran and other regional actors that any attempt to close the strait or massively attack commercial vessels could trigger a military response. Now, however, Washington has gone further and is attempting to directly manage the flow of navigation, trying to demonstrate that even if Iran disrupts part of the maritime traffic, the United States can establish an alternative operational route.

In other words, Washington seeks to reduce the strategic value of Hormuz's geography without being able, or willing, to seize total control of the strait itself—something it has not yet achieved. Moreover, the U.S. flow control plan has clear weaknesses: a military route cannot, by itself, substitute for political stability. If the war continues, shipping companies will face higher insurance, security, crew, and delay costs and, in many cases, cancellations.

Furthermore, there is the agreement between Iran and Oman for joint control of the strait. If implemented, the southern route would cease to make even the slightest sense, in political, military, and economic terms, for the United States.

In this sense, the southern corridor and the U.S. plan surrounding it constitute the most important strategic development at present for Iran, not because it has solved the problem, but because it has demonstrated that the struggle for Hormuz has entered a phase in which "flow control" is as important as "control of the maritime route."

But, as American political scientist John Mearsheimer points out: "We have no military cards left to play. It is the Iranians who hold the military card."

In other words, the balance of military coercion has tilted, almost decisively, in favor of Iran.

Khatami: Iran is facing a hybrid war as economic pressure fails

TEHRAN — Iran is facing a multifaceted "hybrid war" involving military, economic, media and cultural pressure, Tehran's interim Friday prayer leader, Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami, said on Friday, predicting that efforts to isolate the country economically would ultimately fail.

Speaking during Friday prayers, Khatami said the military dimension of a war against Iran was continuing.

He condemned the conduct of the military campaign as "unfair" and "despicable," arguing that wars were governed by rules that, in his view, US President Donald Trump had failed to observe.

"War has its own rules, but this damned Trump does not understand those rules," Khatami said.

Referring to the reported killing of 168 children in an attack on a school, he asked: "What crime had these 168 children committed?" He added that children were protected under international laws.

Khatami also referred to attacks involving athletes and wedding ceremonies, saying civilians

should not be targeted.

"What crime have the athletes committed?" he said. "You turn people's weddings into funerals."

The cleric praised Iran's armed forces for 'a strong and honorable response to the attacks.'

"Our armed forces have responded to their unjust war in the best possible way," he said.

He said, however, that the confrontation extended well beyond the military sphere.

"Alongside the military war, there is also an economic war," Khatami said, arguing that economic pressure against Iran had been waged since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

He said the campaign also included 'a media war involving misinformation against the Islamic Republic, as well as a cultural campaign against the country's political system.'

Khatami said economic pressure was therefore one of several components of 'a broader hybrid war against Iran.'

‘Arvand Martyrs Bridge is just beginning of a larger development path’

TEHRAN- The Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Trade and Special Economic Zones, emphasizing the need to continue the development process in the Arvand Free Zone, stated that the inauguration of the Arvand Martyrs Bridge is not the end of a construction project, but rather the beginning of a larger path for implementing infrastructural, economic, and developmental projects in Abadan, Khorramshahr, and the Arvand Free Zone.

Hossein Forouzan, speaking at the official inauguration ceremony of the Arvand Martyrs Bridge mega-project, said: “The people of Abadan, Khorramshahr, and the Arvand region paid a heavy price during the eight years of the Sacred Defense [Iran-Iraq War] in defending the country. Today, it is the duty of officials to use all their capacity to compensate for part of this sacrifice and to strive for the development and prosperity of this region.”

Forouzan, referring to his history of presence in Khuzestan and Khorramshahr, added: “My first presence in this region dates back to 1982, and being in a land where the sacred bodies of great martyrs such as Mehdi and Hamid Bakeri rest has always been an honor for me and a reminder of the heavy responsibility I bear toward the people and the martyrs.”

Referring to the importance of inaugurating the Arvand Martyrs Bridge, he emphasized: “This project can resolve some of the problems faced by the people of the region, but it should not be seen as the end point of development efforts. Rather, this bridge should serve as a precursor to the implementation of a series of major infrastructural, economic, and developmental projects in Abadan, Khorramshahr, and the Arvand Free Zone.”

The Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Trade and Special Economic Zones continued: “The right of the people of this land upon officials goes far beyond the implementation of a single construction project. We must strive to make maximum use of the region's existing capacities to create welfare, employment, economic prosperity, and sustainable development.”

Forouzan, referring to the meetings and reviews conducted in recent days in the Arvand Free Zone, said: “During my recent multi-day visit, a series of important priority projects for Abadan and Khorramshahr were identified, and plans have been made for their implementation. It is expected that a significant portion of these projects will reach the operational stage in the coming year.”

Expressing appreciation for the performance of Mostafa Khanzadi, the CEO of the Arvand Free Zone Organization, he stated: “In recent days, numerous meetings have been held with the CEO and the management team of the organization. The prevailing approach of this team is a serious move toward development and gaining the satisfaction of the people.”

The Secretary of the Supreme Council added: “Serving the people and striving to solve their problems must be the top priority of the region's management. We believe that the people's satisfaction paves the way for God's satisfaction.”

Arvand's industrial capacities on path to activation

Forouzan also pointed to the industrial capacities of the Arvand Free Zone and said: “Significant actions are also underway in the industrial sector. Some industrial projects currently being implemented could have considerable impacts on the region's economy and even the national economy in the future.”

He emphasized: “Activating the region's industrial, economic, and investment capacities requires continued support and coordination among various agencies. All available capacities must be used to accelerate the development process.”

The Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free and Special Economic Zones noted: “The success of the Arvand Free Zone Organization in implementing development programs requires the cooperation and support of the Governor of Khuzestan, representatives in the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and other executive bodies.”

Forouzan added: “Coordination among various entities can speed up the implementation of infrastructural and economic projects and pave the way for achieving the region's development goals.”

He also referred to the message from the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance and the President for the people of the region, saying: “I conveyed the greetings and message



of the President and the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance to the noble people of Abadan, Khorramshahr, and the Arvand Free Zone, and emphasized their special attention to this region and their support for its development process.”

The Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free and Special Economic Zones, emphasizing the historical standing of Abadan and Khorramshahr in contemporary Iranian history, said: “The people of this region deserve to enjoy the best infrastructure, facilities, and development opportunities.”

Forouzan concluded: “The Secretariat of the Supreme Council of Free Zones will stand alongside the Arvand Free Zone Organization with all its capacity to ensure that the path of development and prosperity for Abadan, Khorramshahr, and this region is pursued with greater speed and seriousness.”

Visit of secretary of Supreme Council to Shalamcheh Terminal

The Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Trade and Special Economic Zones, during his visit to the Arvand Free Zone, toured the Shalamcheh commercial terminal and its infrastructure.

Hossein Forouzan, leading a delegation from the Secretariat, visited various sections of the Shalamcheh commercial terminal, including its cargo yard and commercial and logistical infrastructure. He closely examined the capacities, issues, and operational processes of this terminal.

During the visit, the existing capacities of the Shalamcheh commercial terminal, cargo loading and unloading processes, support infrastructure for export activities, and the provision of services to economic activists and traders were reviewed.

The Shalamcheh commercial terminal, as one of the key commercial infrastructures of the Arvand Free Zone, plays an effective role in Iran-Iraq economic exchanges. Developing its infrastructure could increase export capacity, facilitate the movement of transport fleets, and improve logistical services at this international border crossing.

The 100-hectare cargo loading and unloading yard in Shalamcheh is also among the infrastructures established in this area, providing suitable capacity to support commercial and logistical activities at the Shalamcheh border.

Additionally, given Shalamcheh's commercial capacities and its position in developing trade with Iraq, removing implementation obstacles, strengthening logistical infrastructure, and increasing the terminal's productivity are among the key priorities in the path of developing economic activities in the Arvand Free Zone. Previously, the allocation of import codes to Shalamcheh port had also made it possible to import and clear goods through this route.

During the visit, Forouzan conducted a field review of the capacities and existing issues and was briefed on the latest status of the Shalamcheh commercial terminal's infrastructure and the progress of economic activities at this border crossing.

The CEO and a number of managers from the Arvand Free Zone Organization, along with officials related to the Shalamcheh commercial terminal, were also present during this visit.

The Arvand Free Trade-Industrial Zone is one of Iran's most strategically significant economic hubs, located in the southwestern Khuzestan province at the confluence of the Karun and Arvand rivers. Spanning over 37,000 hectares, it encompasses the cities of Abadan, Khorramshahr, and Minoo Island, sharing borders with Iraq and Kuwait.

The zone serves as a vital gateway for international trade, offering multi-modal transport advantages through the Abadan International Airport, Khorramshahr's second-largest container port, and the Shalamcheh border terminal – a key crossing for commercial activities with Iraq. Its logistics capacities are being further developed with a 700-hectare “Logistics Park” project.

From naval blockade to land corridors: Iran's strategic pivot

From Page 1 ► Iran's trade was disproportionately channeled through a single maritime choke point. Rather than simply imposing costs, however, this constraint has made the diversification of trade routes an urgent necessity. In response, Iran is actively developing four major land corridors that could redefine its economic geography.

First, the East-West Railway Corridor links China to Iran via Central Asia, passing through Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. This 10,400-kilometer route can cut shipping times from 30 days by sea to just 15 days by rail, significantly reducing costs and risks. Second, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), through Pakistan's Gwadar port and Iran's Rimdan border, offers an eastern bypass of the Strait of Hormuz. Third, the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) connects Iran to Russia and India, providing access to northern and southern markets. Fourth, the Shalamcheh-Basra railway—only 32 kilometers short of completion—can open Iran to Iraq, Turkey, and the Mediterranean.

According to Ahmad Bakhshayesh, a member of Iran's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, the government has actively expanded trade cooperation with neighbors like Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Pakistan, and Oman. He emphasized that these corridors have prevented shortages of essential goods

ICCIMA, IRU examine routes for facilitating money transfer

TEHRAN- The President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) during a webinar meeting with the new Secretary-General of the International Road Transport Union (IRU), examined routes for facilitating money transfers between the Iran Chamber and the IRU.

According to IRNA, quoting the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Samed Hassanzadeh on Wednesday held a webinar meeting to discuss ways to facilitate fund transfers between the Iran Chamber and the IRU.

At the outset of the online meeting, the President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture congratulated the new IRU Secretary-General on assuming his role, stating: “We are very pleased that a scientific and economically cultured figure has accepted this responsibility.”

Hassanzadeh, expressing hope

for the beginning of a new era of effective cooperation between the Iran Chamber and the International Road Transport Union, emphasized: “The continued issuance of TIR carnets can strengthen Iran's position in the regional transit network.”

Referring to the problems of money transfers due to sanctions, the Iran Chamber President outlined the efforts made to identify routes for facilitating fund transfers to the IRU.

Hassanzadeh also expressed readiness to establish a limited barter mechanism under IRU supervision, saying: “It is proposed that the IRU design a limited barter mechanism through which Iran could settle part of the value of services through non-sanctioned goods, or that these amounts be paid through a bank designated by the IRU.”

Appreciating the IRU's continued support for the Iran Chamber, he requested: “The credit that this



during the crisis, ensuring price hikes rather than outright scarcity.

The activation of the Iran-Pakistan transit corridor is particularly significant. With instability on Pakistan-Afghanistan border routes, Islamabad now looks to Iran for access to Central Asian markets. Iran's Mirjaveh and Rimdan terminals are central to this exchange, with a bilateral trade target of \$10 billion. Rimdan has been developed since 2020, with passenger facilities and infrastructure upgrades un-

derway.

These corridors must not remain temporary fixes. If completed and sustained, they can offer lasting competitive advantages, attract investment from China, India, and Russia, and reduce Iran's vulnerability to maritime disruptions. What began as a forced response to containment can become a permanent pillar of Iran's economic strategy. The lesson is clear: a country with Iran's geography cannot be blockaded when it turns its land borders into bridges rather than barriers.

union allocates to Iran should be increased.”

Hassanzadeh said: “We request that Iran's TIR carnet quota and credit line be increased by the IRU so that Iranian operators are not forced to resort to non-TIR methods.”

The Iran Chamber President, commending the IRU's valuable cooperation with Iran over many years, called for facilitating operational pathways and said: “We hope this cooperation will continue in the new era with a fresh perspective and effective support, leading to the strengthening of Iran's position in the TIR system.”

Keyvan Kashfi, a member of the Iran Chamber's Board of Directors, also congratulated the Tunisian nation on Habib Turki's election as Secretary-General of the International Road Transport Union, expressing hope that solutions would be offered to sustain and strengthen cooperation.

Habib Turki, in this online meet-

ing, stated that his priority is the continuation of cooperation and problem-solving, emphasizing: “We stand firmly and resolutely by your side.”

He referred to efforts to find channels for facilitating money transfers in light of international sanctions, and addressing the Iran Chamber President, said: “I thank you for acting proactively and responsibly to find methods for money transfers.”

Habib Turki outlined three routes for facilitating money transfers between the Iran Chamber and the IRU and said: “With the channels we have evaluated so far, we are very hopeful that the problem of fund transfers between the Iran Chamber and the IRU will be resolved.”

Increasing Iran's credit with the IRU, accelerating the process of sending carnets to Iran, and selecting new agents were among the key topics discussed in this online meeting.

‘Forex, trade policies must be reviewed in line with current conditions’

comparable to pre-war conditions. To manage the existing situation, we cannot continue using the same regulations and prescriptions that were formulated under normal circumstances in the past.”

Lahouti, stressing the need for a change in the government's approach to foreign trade, stated: “In the past, imposing restrictions on imports or creating complex processes for importers might have been manageable, but today, given the current conditions, such policies are no longer effective.”

He added: “In the export sector as well, if the same strictness regarding currency repatriation and forex obligations continues under current circumstances, it could lead to a decline in the country's export capacity.”

The Head of the Non-Oil Export Development Committee of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, said: “Now, pressure is being applied to Iran's economy from various directions, and the goal of these pressures is to weaken the country's economy. Therefore, the government must change its perspective on foreign trade management and make decisions regarding exports, imports, and even export bans in line with the new conditions.”

Lahouti, referring to the country's limited foreign currency resources, stated: “Under current circumstances, import management must be proportionate to the country's export volume. Naturally, when foreign currency revenues from exports decline, import capacity is also affected, and economic activists understand this reality.”

He added: “The decline in foreign trade, whether in exports or imports, is a direct result of reduced currency earnings and existing restrictions. However, the main issue is that current forex and trade policies have not been de-

signed in line with the country's new conditions.”

The Head of Iran's Export Confederation emphasized: “To overcome the current situation, a review of forex and trade policies is mandatory, and this cannot be considered an option or a postponable decision.”

Lahouti, referring to the role of executive bodies in reforming the current conditions, said: “If serious changes and structural reforms in forex and trade policies—and the way foreign trade is managed—do not take place in institutions such as the Central Bank, the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, and the Ministry of Agriculture, it will become even more difficult to navigate the current difficult situation.”

He continued: “The currency policymaker must fulfill its duties regarding the forex sector, and the trade policymaker must also formulate policies in line with the country's foreign trade needs. The overlap of these two areas and the creation of complex processes, under current circumstances, can hinder the activities of exporters and importers.”

Lahouti, stressing the need to move toward trade facilitation, said: “Under current conditions, instead of unnecessary strictness, a facilitation approach in foreign trade should be strengthened. Revising processes, reducing barriers, and redesigning forex and trade policies can help economic activists continue their activities under the current difficult circumstances.”

He concluded: “If the policymaker's perspective changes and forex and trade policies are adjusted in line with the country's new conditions, we can hope that managing the existing situation will be achieved with lower costs and greater efficiency, and that the country's economy will have more capacity to withstand current pressures.”

Rights organizations demand Congress scrap US-Israel military integration bill

By staff writer

TEHRAN — 56 American civil rights and advocacy organizations have issued a blunt demand to Congress: strip a controversial provision from the 2027 National Defense Authorization Act or risk permanently entrenching Israel inside the Pentagon's core technology apparatus.

In a joint letter sent to leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, the coalition warned that the legislation creates dangerous points of foreign leverage at a moment when American public support for Israel has collapsed following its brutal campaigns of regional aggression.

Designated Section 219 in the House draft and Section 1217 in the Senate version, the proposal establishes the United States-Israel Defense Technology Cooperation Initiative.

Moving far beyond traditional foreign aid packages subject to yearly congressional debate, the



mandate legally enforces co-production plants, joint weapons development, and data fusion across artificial intelligence, cyber warfare, and autonomous systems.

Signatories including Amnesty International USA and the National Lawyers Guild cited Tel Aviv's ongoing genocide in Gaza and escalating settler violence in the occupied West Bank as absolute grounds to reject deeper integration.

A separate policy brief from A New Policy, co-founded by former State Department whistleblower Josh Paul, cautioned that embedding Israeli contractors exposes sensitive American capabilities to counterintelligence risks, disadvantages domestic firms, and systematically hides weapons transfers from public transparency.

While the House of Representatives text of the legislation ap-

points a Pentagon coordinator, the Senate version goes further by requiring direct, ongoing consultation with Israel's war minister.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu celebrated the clause, boasting it converts his regime from a foreign aid recipient into a full-scale military partner.

A bipartisan amendment introduced by Representatives Thomas Massie (R) and Ro Khanna (D) to remove the provision was buried by House leadership.

With the current ten-year military aid agreement set to expire in 2028, Washington's pro-Israel establishment is rushing to lock this structural merger into permanent law.

This legislative push comes as public backlash grows over the unprovoked U.S.-Israeli war against Iran and the Resistance Front.

If enacted, Section 219 will bind future administrations to Tel Aviv's strategic interests regardless of voter demands.

Legal foundations for Iran's enduring management of Hormuz: The world's most critical energy chokepoint

By Mehdi Hassanvand

TEHRAN – The Strait of Hormuz, widely regarded as the world's most important energy chokepoint, is far more than a narrow geographical passage. It is a strategic link where energy security, global trade, and national sovereignty intersect.

According to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), an average of approximately 20 million barrels of oil per day passed through the strait in 2024—equivalent to roughly 20 percent of global petroleum liquids consumption. Nearly 48 percent of the world's seaborne crude oil passes through this route. Actually, viable alternatives for handling the bulk of this volume remain extremely limited.

As a coastal state bordering the Strait of Hormuz, Iran has sovereign rights under the international law of the sea. More importantly, the experience of the past four decades, from the Iran-Iraq War to the proxy conflicts in the region, has demonstrated that Iran cannot afford to remain indifferent to what is transited through this strategically vital waterway. The consequences of developments in and around Hormuz directly affect Iran's national security, economic interests, and the safety of its population.

Against this backdrop, there are at least three legal and security-related grounds for arguing that Iran should maintain long-term management and oversight of the Strait of Hormuz.

1. Combating the arming, financing and logistical support of terrorist groups in the region

The past twenty years have shown that a major portion of the military weapons of Middle Eastern terrorist groups—from al-Qaeda to ISIS and CENTCOM—have reached them via the Strait of Hormuz. The United Nations Security Council, in Resolutions 2253 (2015) and 2368 (2017) under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, has also obligated all states to prevent the supply, sale, and transfer of weapons to listed terrorist groups and to block their financing. Nevertheless, the region's operational experience demonstrates that legal requirements without a field-monitoring mechanism remain merely on paper.

Among the cases reflected in the recent war and the developments of the past two decades, one can point to the parade of ISIS suicide vehicles equipped with Toyota cars and American semi-automatic machine guns, the radars used for anti-Iran espionage during the war, and the various missiles and bombs employed in war crimes against civilian areas, including Lamerd and Minab.

Many of these items, whether directly or through intermediary chains, have entered the region via the Strait of Hormuz. This simple fact makes effective monitoring of the transit of any military weapons and dual-use goods through this waterway by Iran not an excess, but an unavoidable legal and humanitarian necessity: Whoever stands at the gate has the right to know what passes through it, especially when those goods are intended for use in war crimes against its own citizens. Just as Iran's fight against drug trafficking is an accepted legal matter, Iran's fight against the trafficking of weapons to terrorists is a long-term legal obligation.

2. War reparations and securing resources for reconstruction

The second legal reason is the issue of compensation for war damages. Based on the fundamental principles of international law—including the principle of the international responsibility of states and the permanent sovereignty of nations over their natural resources—a country that has been the victim of aggression has the right to claim material and moral damages from the aggressor. Domestic expert estimates indicate that the financial damages of the recent war exceed \$200 billion: the bombing of industrial centers such as steel and petrochemical facilities, the destruction of social infrastructure including bridges, stadiums, and fuel depots, the martyrdom of more than 10,000 people, and the medical costs of tens of thousands of others wounded. These figures are not merely statistics; they are written legal debts that must be collected directly from the United States and its allies, including neighboring states that participated in this aggression by hosting military bases through reparations or reconstruction fees.

The fundamental problem, however, lies in the enforceability of this claim. Historical expe-



rience has shown that war reparations without a practical collection mechanism usually remain on paper. The practical and lawful solution is to link this claim to "Iran's sovereign right over its oil exports." As the owner of the region's primary oil export route, Iran can, within the framework of bilateral agreements, draw up a mechanism under which war reparations are received gradually and transparently for every barrel of oil exported from the region. This mechanism, which can be designed in the form of "reconstruction fees," is not only a realistic way to compensate for the damages, but also removes the pressure from political negotiation and turns it into a transparent, calculable economic equation. Preserving Iran's management over the export of oil and goods through the Strait of Hormuz, within this framework, is the guarantee for enforcing this indisputable right.

3. Reciprocity in face of future threats

The third reason, though not the least important, is obtaining security guarantees against the repetition of aggression. The United States and certain hostile countries have repeatedly used comprehensive banking sanctions and even the threat of naval blockade, tools whose direct aim is to strangle Iran's economy. In the face of such structural threats, international law recognizes the principle of reciprocity: every state has the right to possess reciprocal and proportionate tools against coercive economic-security measures.

Iran's management of the Strait of Hormuz serves precisely this function: in response to the naval blockade or banking sanctions, Iran can also put pressure on American maritime trade and the financing of American companies operating in the region. But the precise and lawful exercise of such leverage requires one thing: information.

Iran must have complete knowledge of the origin, destination, type, and volume of American commercial goods that transit the Strait of Hormuz. And this knowledge is possible only through the continued long-term management of this waterway.

The figures also illustrate this balance. According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics, America's merchandise trade with the six countries of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council alone amounted to approximately \$78 billion in 2023. (In recent years typically in the range of \$60–80 billion, a figure comparable to Iran's annual oil and non-oil export revenues through Hormuz). This parity, put simply, means that both sides are equally vulnerable to any disruption in this waterway; and this symmetry of vulnerability provides the basis for durable deterrence and realistic security negotiations.

Iran's long-term management of the Strait of Hormuz is neither a hegemonic claim nor a tool of threat, but the embodiment of three indisputable legal rights: first, the responsibility to confront the arming and financing of terrorism that has been fed through this route; second, the right to compensation for war damages through transparent fees on oil exports; and third, the right of legitimate self-defense and reciprocity against the economic threats that are continuously applied against the Iranian nation.

What distinguishes this logic from an emotional stance is its lawfulness, transparency, and negotiability. Iran can, by presenting a codified framework, including a list of goods under monitoring, a mechanism for calculating reconstruction fees, and a dispute-resolution mechanism, transform its management of Hormuz from a zero-sum security issue into an acceptable international legal institution. A world that owes 20 percent of its energy consumption to the security of this waterway must accept that the security of the Strait of Hormuz cannot be guaranteed while the owner of that house remains insecure.

"Mehdi Hassanvand is director of the Center for Sustainable Energy Development (PAYA)

Ben Gvir unveils seven-year blueprint to ethnically cleanse Gaza

From page 1 ► He calls the ethnic cleansing program "Disengagement 7/10." The plan shifts forced displacement from the fringes of Israeli rhetoric directly to the center of upcoming coalition negotiations.

The proposal, reported across Hebrew-language media including Yedioth Ahronoth, makes the creation of a government ministry for this purpose a central condition for his Jewish Power party joining any post-election coalition.

A mechanized clearance operation

Ben Gvir demands the physical removal of 250,000 residents within the first twelve months. The quota escalates to 1.1 million by year three.

To manage this mass expulsion, his "Jewish Power" party requires the creation of a specialized government ministry armed with a \$3.3 billion initial budget.

Emigrants would supposedly receive temporary transit support before being permanently locked out of their homeland.

The regime frequently floats Turkey, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and neighboring Arab states as potential dumping grounds. None have agreed to participate in the erasure.

Egyptian authorities have refused to allow permanent transfers through the Sinai border.

Awaiting American approval

The broader Israeli security establishment is actively preparing the logistics for mass deportation.

War Minister Israel Katz confirmed on Wednesday that occupation forces are completely primed to remove the population "by sea, by air, by every way possible." He bluntly dismissed any alternative solution for the devastated enclave.

Katz noted that U.S. President Donald Trump temporarily froze the displacement agenda under pressure from Arab capitals but deliberately kept the policy on the table.

Tel Aviv expects full U.S. backing to supposedly clear the way. The Trump administration previously floated the idea of transforming a depopulated Gaza into a lucrative commercial resort.

Institutionalizing the genocide

Depopulating the strip has always been the baseline military strategy.

A leaked October 2023 intelligence directive documented early plans to unleash unlivable conditions to force an exodus.

Nearly three years of relentless bombardment have achieved exactly that. Israeli forces have slaughtered over 73,470 Palestinians, predominantly women and children.

Independent medical estimates suggest the true death toll is substantially higher. Entire



civilian neighborhoods are reduced to concrete dust. At least 800,000 survivors are trapped in squalid coastal encampments without basic infrastructure.

Many observers contend that Katz and Ben Gvir are merely verbalizing the explicit intent of the military campaign.

The proposals constitute overt crimes against humanity and severe violations of the Geneva Conventions. Yet the architects of this genocide face zero domestic resistance. Recent polling indicates 82 percent of Israelis support expelling the remaining residents.

With parliamentary elections slated for late October, the complete liquidation of Palestinian presence in Gaza has become an open, heavily funded electoral promise.

What has Trump gained following Netanyahu's lead?

From page 1 ► As soon as Trump began exercising his powers as president, it became clear that his Zionist leanings outweighed all other ideological and political considerations. This was evident throughout his first term and became even more entrenched during his second.

It is a fact that U.S. bias toward Israel constitutes one of the constants of American foreign policy, but Trump pushed this bias to unprecedented heights.

During his first term, he moved the U.S. embassy to occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem), which he recognized as the Israel's "eternal undivided capital," recognized the regime's sovereignty over Syria's occupied Golan Heights, punished the Palestinian Authority for rejecting his proposals that ignored the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and attempted to liquidate the matter of Palestinian refugees through immense pressure on UNRWA.

Trump also played a major role in pushing several Arab countries to normalize relations with the regime before the latter committed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state through the "Abraham Accords". Yet his blind alignment with Netanyahu was not definitively clear until the policy he adopted toward Iran, which revealed him as the American president most committed to Israeli interests, even when they

contradicted American interests.

During his first term, he withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal signed by Obama in 2015. During his second term, he went so far as to form an alliance with the regime in waging an illegal war against Iran that would be difficult for him to win and would most likely conclude in a major strategic defeat for the United States.

Netanyahu encountered little difficulty persuading Trump to participate in the 12-day war aimed at destroying Iran's nuclear facilities. Attempting to achieve this objective required only a number of airstrikes carried out by certain types of aircraft equipped with deep-penetration munitions, capabilities that the regime lacked.

The situation was very different, however, when it came to launching a full-scale war against Iran aimed at overthrowing the Islamic Republic. That required Netanyahu himself to be summoned to present his assessment of how the operations would unfold at a special meeting, which was held in the White House Situation Room about two weeks before the aggression began.

Sources cited by media reports covering what took place at that meeting confirm that Trump disregarded reservations expressed by the U.S. military leadership about Netanyahu's presentation. Most particularly, they note, when Netanyahu insisted that the intelli-

gence available to him showed that the war would be short and decisive and would end with the fall of the Islamic Republic.

This makes clear that Trump was ideologically and psychologically prepared to believe Netanyahu over his own military advisers, even though some of them did not hesitate to describe what Netanyahu said at that meeting as pure "non-sense" devoid of any substance.

Because Iran did not fall, and instead emerged stronger than before, particularly after managing to close the Strait of Hormuz throughout the war and subsequently reaching a position from which it could control the Strait at any time, Tehran began to hold cards it had previously been unable to wield. The most dangerous of these was its ability to control one of the world's most important waterways.

At precisely this point, it was only natural for U.S. interests and objectives to begin diverging, and for the foundations underlying American and Israeli calculations in the period following Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz to become increasingly different.

Netanyahu had previously tried to lure every U.S. president who occupied the White House during his lengthy tenure as Israeli prime minister (which has stretched over nearly a quarter of a century), into waging war against Iran. Yet he succeeded only with Trump, and during his second term, which be-

gan less than 16 months after October 7.

Because October 7 dealt Netanyahu a serious setback, he sought to push forward, attempting to turn it into an opportunity that had to be seized to eliminate the "Axis of Resistance" and establish a "Greater Israel." He was encouraged by Trump's success in securing a second term, particularly because Netanyahu knows how to address Trump, whose narcissism and inflated ego can be easily exploited, to convince him that bringing down Iran would allow him to enter the history books in the grandest possible way, securing his legacy as the U.S. president who achieved what all those before him had failed to accomplish for nearly half a century.

But because events unfolded in ways neither of them had anticipated, they were forced to look for a way out of the predicament they had entered, though this time, each would have to find his own way. When Trump found himself compelled to sign a "memorandum of understanding" ending the war on all fronts, Netanyahu immediately realized that his dreams were on the verge of collapse.

It is therefore by no means implausible that, immediately after the agreement was signed, he sought to mobilize the Zionist lobby to undermine it and pressure Trump to find a way to withdraw from it.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Pouladgar urges focus as Iran prepares for Asian Para Games

TEHRAN - Mohammad Pouladgar, Chef de Mission of Iran's delegation for the 2026 Asian Para Games in Nagoya, outlined the latest preparations and planning measures aimed at ensuring Iran's delegation can compete under the best possible conditions.

A coordination meeting between Pouladgar and the managers of the national teams set to compete at the Games was held on Wednesday.

“Our priority is to create an environment in which athletes and coaching staffs can compete with minimum stress, pressure and outside distractions, allowing them to focus fully on their sporting performance and competitions,” he said.

He also highlighted the continuation of visits to national team training camps, saying the delegation management was working to assess the teams’ preparations and needs firsthand and follow up on issues as much as possible.

Pouladgar praised the efforts of team managers, coaches and athletes throughout the preparation process and stressed the increasingly important role of team managers.

“Given the specific circumstances surrounding this edition of the Games, the responsibilities of team managers are heavier than in previous editions,” he said. “Beyond their administrative duties, they must play an effective role in leading their teams, motivating athletes and strengthening unity and team spirit.”

He added that stronger leadership from team managers would contribute to greater cohesion across the Iranian delegation and play a key role in maintaining calm, coordination and ultimately achieving success.

He further emphasized the importance of completing scientific assessments and incorporating their results into training programs, following nutritional plans, delivering required supplements on time, making full use of sports psychologists and maintaining strict anti-doping protocols.

During the meeting, the managers of Iran's participating teams presented updates on their squads, training camps, preparation processes and challenges ahead. Their requirements were also reviewed, with officials responding to questions and addressing outstanding concerns.

The fifth Asian Para Games will be held from Oct. 18 to 24, 2026, in Nagoya and across Aichi Prefecture, Japan, with around 4,000 athletes from 45 Asian countries and regions expected to compete.

Iran's delegation will compete under the name “Sacrifice for a Strong Iran” and with the slogan “In Memory of the Children of Hiroshima, Gaza and Minab.”

Nine-year-old Anna Jahangard, a student and survivor with a disability from the Shajareh Tayyebeh school tragedy in Minab, will accompany the delegation as its spiritual leader.

Iranian basketball players doubt for 2026 Asian Games

TEHRAN - Iranian basketball internationals Mehdi Jafari and Hassan Aliakbari have suffered injuries during the national team's preparations for the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

Jafari sustained a knee injury during one of Iran's training sessions ahead of the Asian Games. The player has undergone an MRI scan to determine the extent of the injury and assess his availability for the upcoming competition.

Meanwhile, Aliakbari has also been sidelined after suffering a shoulder injury during training. His condition is currently being evaluated by the Iran national team's medical staff, with further examinations and treatment underway.

The Iranian Basketball Federation is expected to announce the results of the medical assessments once the necessary examinations have been completed. The final decision regarding the severity of both injuries and the players' potential availability for the Asian Games will be made

following consultations with the national team's medical and coaching staff.

The injuries come at an important stage of Iran's preparations for the 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, as the national team continue their training camp ahead of the continental competition. Any extended absence for Jafari or Aliakbari could affect Iran's plans and squad depth heading into the tournament.

Further updates on the condition of both players will be released following the completion of their medical evaluations.

Iran lose to DPR Korea at AFC U20 Asian Cup 2027 qualifier

TEHRAN - Stoppage time goals from Kang Wi Song and Kang Myong Bom saw DPR Korea claim a 2-1 win over Iran in Viet Tri on Thursday to move into pole position in Group C of the AFC U20 Asian Cup China 2027 qualifiers as Palestine won 2-1 against Vietnam.

Kang Wi Song's 92nd minute header cancelled out Mohammadmahdi Jannianavaei's 47th minute opener for the Iranians before Kang Myong Bom hit the 94th minute winner for O Thae Song's side.

The victory is DPR Korea's second in a row in Group C and moves them onto six points, three ahead of the Iranians and Palestine with Vietnam sitting on the bottom of the table without a point.

Kim Yu Jin carried the main threat for DPR Korea, twice testing Amirmahdi Maghsoudi in a lacklustre opening 45 minutes before the Iranian goalkeeper pulled off a close range save from captain Ri Hyok Gwang to ensure the teams went into the break level.

The Iranians were to capitalize two minutes into the second half when Amirmohammad Karimi's long throw looped into the DPR Korea penalty area and Jannianavaei rose above the defense to head past Kim Jong Hun.

Kang Myong Bom should have levelled with six minutes remaining when he had the time and space to strike beyond Maghsoudi but the substitute could only drag his shot wide of the target.

Two minutes into stoppage time the equalizer came for DPR Korea when Pak Kwang Song fed Han Il Bok on an overlapping run on the left and his cross found Kang Wi Song unmarked to head past Maghsoudi.

Iran wins medals at World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix

TEHRAN – Iranian athletes won one gold and two bronze medals at the World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Series.

Mehdi Pourrahnama seized a gold medal in the -80kg weight class as well as two bronzes won by Alireza Bakht (-80kg) and Amirmohammad Haghighatshenas (-70kg).

Muju Taekwondowon hosts the World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix on Sept. 4 and the World Taekwondo Grand Prix from Sept. 5-7, marking the first time the Grand Prix will be held in Korea and a landmark occasion for one of the sport's most iconic venues.

The World Taekwondo Grand Prix features the world's top athletes competing in their Olympic weight categories, and this marks the second event of the year following the first stop in Rome in June.

Muju Taekwondowon has a strong history of hosting major World Taekwondo events, having staged the World Taekwondo Grand Prix Challenge in 2022, 2023 and 2025, the World Taekwondo Diamond Games in 2024 and 2025, and the World Taekwondo Championships in 2017.

For Taekwondo competition is being held across 10 weight categories, spanning M K44 -58kg, - 63kg, -70kg, -80kg and +80kg, and W K44 -47kg, -52kg, -57kg, -65kg and +65kg. The event is set to feature an elite field, with nine of the 10 Paris 2024 Paralympic gold medalists in attendance.

Safavid tilework: From architectural ornament to pictorial art

TEHRAN - Tilework during Iran's Safavid era was not confined to geometric patterns, arabesques and inscriptions used to decorate religious buildings.

In 17th-century Isfahan, the Safavid capital, square tiles increasingly became a medium for pictorial compositions depicting people, gardens and scenes of courtly life. Examples of this distinctive form of tilework are now preserved in major museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Louvre and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

One of the notable examples is a large tile panel in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dating to the first quarter of the 17th century and attributed to Iran, probably Isfahan, the panel measures approximately 115.6 by 138.7 centimeters. It consists of square tiles, each about 22.5 centimetres across, assembled to form a single continuous scene depicting a woman and three men in a garden setting, ISNA reported on Friday.

The significance of such works lies not only in their imagery but also in the technique used to produce them. The tiles were made using a method known as cuerda seca, or dry cord, in which lines of a glaze-resistant material separated areas of different colours. During firing, the separating material burned away, leaving dark, dry lines between the coloured sections. This allowed several coloured glazes to be applied next to one another without running together.

The technique was particularly useful during the Safavid period because it enabled artists to pro-



duce richly coloured compositions more efficiently and at a lower cost than some more elaborate mosaic-tile techniques. Research by the Metropolitan Museum indicates that Isfahan and Nain were important centers of fine tile production during the Safavid period. While geometric and vegetal designs continued to dominate mosques, religious schools and other monuments, a different approach developed in secular architecture, where individual square tiles became components of larger pictorial scenes.

This approach required artists to think beyond the decoration of individual tiles. A large composition had to be divided into numerous small sections, with each tile functioning as a piece of an overall visual puzzle. Preliminary design, color coordination, the proportions of human figures and the continuity of landscape elements across adjoining tiles were therefore crucial to the finished work. The wall itself became the ultimate canvas—one made not of paper or cloth, but of glazed

ceramic tiles.

The subjects of these compositions were closely connected with the Safavid tradition of miniature painting. The Metropolitan Museum notes that garden scenes featuring groups of men and women were among the subjects popular with Safavid painters. The depiction of figures in gardens, together with details of clothing, social interaction and leisure, brought aspects of courtly and everyday life into architectural spaces.

This distinction between religious and secular tilework is important for understanding the development of Safavid pictorial ceramics. In mosques and other religious buildings, vegetal, geometric and calligraphic decoration remained central. In royal residences, garden pavilions and other secular settings, however, representations of people and narrative scenes had greater scope to appear. Tilework consequently evolved from a primarily decorative architectural element into a visual medium capable of

Sangak bread added to Iran’s national intangible cultural heritage list

TEHRAN — The way of preparing, Sangak, a traditional Iranian flatbread baked on heated pebbles, has been inscribed on Iran's national list of intangible cultural heritage following a review by the country's National Council for Intangible Heritage Registration, an official said.

Alireza Izadi, director general of national and world heritage registration at Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said the registration recognizes Sangak as one of Iran's traditional breads and an enduring part of the country's food culture.

“Its registration is a step toward safeguarding part of the historical memory, everyday culture, indigenous knowledge and food identity of Iranians,” Izadi said, according to the ministry.

The name Sangak is derived from the Persian word for “pebble,” referring to the small river stones on which the bread is baked. The bread is typically made from whole-wheat, high-hydration dough and shaped into a rough triangle before being stretched over heated stones in a large oven. Sesame or poppy seeds are among the traditional toppings.

Izadi said the oldest known written ref-

erence to Sangak appears in the Borhan-e Qate (aka Burhan-i Qati), a Persian dictionary compiled by Muhammad Husayn ibn Khalaf Tabrizi in 1062 AH. The entry describes Sangak as a type of bread baked on heated pebbles.

He added that oral traditions and historical accounts have linked the bread's origins to the Sasanian era and even earlier periods, while emphasizing that such accounts require further historical assessment.

Archaeological evidence has also been cited in support of the continuity of the baking tradition. According to Izadi, the remains of a Sangak bakery, including an intact oven and specialized baking pebbles, were discovered at a ruined fortress in Varamin, south of Tehran.

A popular account attributes the design of the Sangak oven to Sheikh Baha'i during the Safavid period, following a request from Shah Abbas to devise a method for supplying bread to soldiers during military journeys. Izadi said the story was recorded in a 1947 calendar published by Tehran's bakers' committee, but its historical accuracy remains uncertain.

He said national registration is intended not merely to preserve the appearance of



Sangak, but also the knowledge and skills associated with preparing the dough, baking the bread, using traditional tools and maintaining related customs.

Izadi said the ministry would pursue efforts to document and study Sangak further with a view to seeking its inscription on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

He added that such an effort would require cooperation among researchers, historians, traditional bakers, heritage practitioners and other relevant institutions.

Ecotourism plans underway in protected areas and wetlands

TEHRAN – Iran's Department of Environment is working on a series of ecotourism programs in protected areas and wetlands across the country, seeking to expand nature-based tourism without compromising biodiversity and environmental protection, an official said.

Iman Hadi, an expert with the department's tourism projects office, said the programs were being developed as part of the organization's broader approach to managing natural areas, IRNA reported.

“Protection, monitoring and sustainable use of biodiversity, prevention of environmental risks and avoiding habitat degradation

are among the main objectives of management programs for protected areas,” Hadi said.

He added that involving local communities and the private sector in implementing conservation-oriented ecotourism programs was among the key priorities of the department's office for habitats and protected areas.

Hadi said executive plans for recreational zones in the country's protected areas and wetlands were currently being prepared.

At the same time, financial and economic studies for ecotourism development plans in Ashuradeh Island, Golestan National Park, Qamishloo National Park and the



Bisotun Protected Area have been updated, he added.

He added that calls for participation by individuals and legal

conveying aspects of courtly culture, gardens, clothing and social life.

Recent art-historical research has also provided clues about the original architectural settings of some surviving panels. Farshid Emami, a researcher in Islamic art and architecture, has examined groups of Safavid pictorial tiles in research published by the Metropolitan Museum. His work suggests that examples now dispersed among the collections of the Metropolitan Museum, the Louvre and the Victoria and Albert Museum may have originally been associated with a now-lost Safavid building.

Safavid pictorial tiles represent an important intersection of several Iranian artistic traditions: ceramics, tilemaking, painting, miniature art and architecture. Their production required both technical knowledge of ceramic materials and glazing and the artistic ability to design figures and complex scenes. Viewed up close, the works appear as collections of individual ceramic pieces; from an appropriate distance, they come together as unified and carefully composed paintings.

The enduring importance of these works lies in this close relationship between image and architecture. During the Safavid period, tiles could serve not merely as a surface covering but as a medium for depicting stories and scenes from the social and cultural world of their time. Although many examples are now dispersed in museums around the world, each surviving panel provides a valuable record of the artistic, architectural and visual culture of Safavid Iran.

Entities would be issued to implement ecotourism and conservation programs within the framework of management plans for protected areas.

IRCS keeps supporting Afghan children facing malnutrition

TEHRAN – A medical center affiliated with the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) operates in Zaranj, Afghanistan, providing ongoing medical care for children suffering from malnutrition.

The IRCS health center in Zaranj offers health services, monitors children's nutritional status, and distributes nutritional supplies among the target group. Given the current situation in Afghanistan and the number of children grappling with malnutrition, the main objective is the early identification and treatment to prevent the further development of nutritional issues among children.

The health center, in cooperation with Relief International and local medical staff, works to identify malnourished children and give them the care they need to recover, which serves as a typical example of the ongoing humanitarian and health-focused initiatives undertaken by the IRCS in Afghanistan, the IRCS website reported.

Children's growth and nutritional status are assessed using indicators such as height, weight, and mid-upper arm circumference. Subsequently, Relief International provides the required food supplies to the IRCS branch in Zaranj to be distributed among identified malnourished children.

According to international reports, malnutrition remains a critical challenge in Afghanistan; millions of children need nutritional support.

Benefactors support IRCS to boost health services in Afghanistan

With support from benefactors, the IRCS has enhanced health services for Afghans at its branch in Nimruz province, Afghanistan.

The development of charitable partnerships serves as a symbol of empathy, social responsibility, and the expansion of humanitarian cooperation, the IRCS website quoted Hamid-Reza Dehqan, an official with the IRCS, as saying in July.

Besides offering health services, the IRCS health facility plays an important role in reinforcing human ties, developing health-oriented cooperation, and alleviating human suffering, he added.



Benefactors' contributions will help improve the quality of medical and diagnostic services, reflecting local community trust and support for the IRCS humanitarian measures.

As part of humanitarian initiatives, the benefactors have donated an advanced color ultrasound system, worth 500,000 Afghani, to the IRCS medical facility in Nimruz province. It will help enhance the center's diagnostic capabilities and provide more accurate, faster services to patients.

Referring to the historical and cultural relationships between the two countries, Dehqan said any medical services provided to the people in this center are not merely a health measure but a manifestation of solidarity, compassion, and shared responsibility of the two nations in safeguarding human dignity. The expansion of humanitarian assistance will elevate health services and deepen friendly ties between Iran and Afghanistan.

IRCS is a key humanitarian actor

In November 2025, Hossam Elsharkawi, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), highlighted the role of the IRCS as one of the key humanitarian actors in the

region and the world.

Lauding the IRCS's efforts, Elsharkawi congratulated Pirhossein Kolivand's re-election as the head of the IRCS, saying that the IRCS makes highly effective decisions at international levels, IRNA reported.

The official made the remarks in an online meeting with Kolivand. During the meeting, the two officials discussed ways to foster collaborative efforts, develop rescue systems to enhance the country's preparedness and response capabilities, and conduct international meetings and conferences in Iran.

The IRCS proposed hosting an international Islamic youth conference and a conference of leaders of national societies from Islamic countries.

The two sides also emphasized the need to implement the previously signed memorandum of understanding between the two organizations to lay the ground for promoting educational, operational, and logistic collaborations.

The IRCS also suggested introducing an expert to follow up on managerial and technical cooperation with the Regional Office for MENA.

Ten countries attending INOTEX 2026

TEHRAN – The 15th International Innovation and Technology Exhibition (INOTEX 2026) is being held in Tehran, with representatives and delegations from Russia, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Thailand, Bangladesh, Oman, Iraq, and Turkey in attendance.

Held annually by Pardis Technology Park, INOTEX, the largest innovation hub in West Asia, offers international companies a realistic, practical gateway to explore opportunities in Iran and the region.

The event opened on September 2 and will wrap up on September 5. It serves as a great platform for domestic companies to showcase the country's technology and innovation capabilities to the foreign participants, hold technological and B2B meetings, explore potential for collaborations, and identify market opportunities, Mehr news agency reported.

This year's exhibition is also playing host to international news media organizations including Tehran Times, BRICS TV, BRCISLat, and DepiMedia, alongside other media and institutional groups which enhance the potential for global coverage of the event and feature Iran's innovation and technology ecosystem.

Themed 'Innovation Ecosystem, Under One Roof', the event's main objectives include strengthening ties among key players in the innovation ecosystem, attracting investment, showcasing new investment opportunities for start-ups and knowledge-based companies, creating extensive networking opportunities, and presenting specialized educational content. Participants from all over the country can attend the event online as well, ISNA reported.

INOTEX 2026 features a vari-



ety of programs—such as B2B meetings, the Investment Café, demand-driven events, specialized sessions, startup competitions, networking activities, and Job Station. These programs aim to convert the connections between ideas, technology, capital, and the market into more operational relationships.

Focusing on science, technology, and innovation ecosystems, the exhibition convenes businesspeople, technologists, industrialists, and researchers. The event aims to facilitate partnerships and provide various insights on the latest global competitive prices, quality standards, developments, scientific findings, and economic-technological ideas.

To this end, INOTEX has been organized since 2012 to serve the following objectives:

1. Investment: Connecting investors to the participants.
2. Partnership: Facilitating collaboration between technology companies and startups.
3. Networking: Facilitating communication and interaction between different components of the start-up ecosystem.

Tehran moves up in Global Startup Ecosystem Index

In a recent global ranking by StartupBlink 2026, Tehran's position has advanced by 20 spots, ranking 348th among the world's most innovative cities.

Tehran is home to 96 startups, making up 81 percent of all startups in the country. Tehran has approximately 1 startup per 100,000 people. In 2025, the ecosystem recorded an annual growth rate of over 36 percent. The city is currently ranked as the 1st strongest startup ecosystem in Iran, having remained stable since 2025. At the regional level, Tehran ranks 11th in West Asia, having moved up 2 spots since 2025.

According to Iran Innovation Zone, the achievement is the result of strengthening innovation infrastructure and developing interactions among different sectors operating in the knowledge-based economy, Mehr news agency reported.

The report by StartupBlink has highlighted the role of Pardis Technology Park, the country's largest technology and innovation hub, as one of the driving forces of Iran's knowledge-based economy. The park hosts hundreds of knowledge-based and technology companies, creating business development infra-

structure and providing a platform for enhancing cooperation among startups, investors, large industries, and institutions.

Moreover, hosting the International Innovation and Technology Exhibition (INOTEX) every year, Pardis Technology Park plays a key role in networking and connecting experts in the innovation ecosystem. According to the report, thanks to the capacities of Pardis Technology Parks, Iran's startup ecosystem ranks 95 globally.

The Innovation and Prosperity Fund and MCI (Hamrah Aval – Iran's first mobile operator) Ventures are the two other key agents that have developed Iran's innovation ecosystem by facilitating the growth of technology and knowledge-based companies.

Iran ranks 58th globally in 'Corporate Engagement', an indicator that reflects the effective interactions between large industries and innovative and technological companies.

Fintech, the leading industry in Iran, ranks 72nd globally, 5th in the Middle East, indicating the country's high capacity in the development of financial technologies. Iran Fintech Industry has 23 startups, representing 19 percent of all startups in Iran.

In the Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2026, Iran's startup ecosystem is ranked 103rd worldwide, holding steady compared to the previous year. The Iranian startup ecosystem ranks 10th in West Asia, having remained stable since 2025. It ranks right after Oman and is followed by Iraq.

The country has 118 startups, representing one percent of all startups in the Middle East. This equals approximately one startup per 100,000 people. The ecosystem grew by +54.4 percent over the past year.

Pezeshkian: Environmental protection is a pillar of national and social security

From page 1 ► Pezeshkian emphasized that tackling environmental problems requires close cooperation among the government, universities, the private sector, civil society organizations and the public.

"This shared capacity must be used to move toward sustainable governance, balanced development and the protection of the country's resources for future generations," he said.

The president also identified education and public awareness as key elements in reforming consumption patterns and protecting the environment.

"If we invest in properly educating the next generation, we are in fact investing in the future of the country," Pezeshkian said.

He warned that without educating children and teenagers from an early age about envi-

ronmental protection, efficient use of water and electricity, energy management and social responsibility toward natural resources, future generations could repeat patterns of environmental degradation, even if significant resources are spent on environmental protection today.

Pezeshkian stressed that environmental awareness should begin at school, saying that teaching students how to use water, electricity, gas, and other natural resources responsibly should be incorporated into the educational and developmental process.

Other issues raised during the meeting included prioritizing the reuse and recycling of water, strengthening the role of environmental experts in agriculture and water-use efficiency, preventing excessive extraction of mineral resources, and making greater use of universities in addressing environmental challenges.

Tehran plays host to Royan Intl. Twin Congress

From page 1 ► This degree of scientific participation has established the Royan Congress as a prominent specialized forum in the fields of reproductive medicine and stem cells—an event that, beyond showcasing research findings, fosters connections among researchers, clinicians, and professionals in the technology and therapeutic sectors.

The 27th Congress on Reproductive Biomedicine hosted 31 lecturers, including eight from England, Australia, Belgium, Russia, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland, who attended the event online. Out of 34 lecturers addressing the 22nd Congress on Stem Cell Biology and Technology, 14 were from Turkey, Russia, Malaysia, Canada, the US, and the Netherlands. Moreover, 19 Iranian scholars delivered lectures at the 21st seminar on Nursery and Midwifery.

In the 21st seminar on Nursery and Midwifery, the main themes focused on:

- The Latest Achievements in Infertility
- Reproductive Health Screening in Patients with Poor Ovarian Response
- Examining the health of patients with premature ovarian failure
- Donation in Infertility
- Complementary Medicine and Infertility
- The Impact of Environmental, Cultural and Occupational Factors and Lifestyle on ART Results
- Emotional, Psychological and Sexual Changes in Infertility Treatment and Management
- The Role of Counseling and Training in the Treatment of Infertile Couples
- Familiarity with the Methods of Fertility Preservation in Women and Men
- Management and Treatment of Recurrent Abortion
- Managing the Evaluation of Patients with Recurrent Implant Failure
- Prenatal Care After ART
- Managing The Process of Support and Recovery in the Occurrence of Infertility Treatment Complications
- Nursing and Midwifery Interventions in New Infertility Techniques
- Endometriosis and Reproductive Health
- Evaluating the Health of Children Resulting from ART Treatments

• Application of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Health Technologies in Infertility Management and Treatment

- Genetics and Infertility
- Prevention of Influential Factors in Infertility
- Evaluating the Effect of Couples' Participation in Improving the Treatment Process

In 2025, out of 600 submitted articles, 514 were accepted. The event hosted 22 lecturers from 19 foreign countries, including Germany (Prof. Janems Adjaye), Qatar (Dr. Mohammad Mostafa Arafat), France (Prof. Laurent David), Austria (Dr. Victor Deneke), Spain (Dr. Nicholas Garrido Pushalt), Italy (Dr. Local Gianiroli), Japan (Prof. Kazuhiro Kawamura), Russia (Dr. Daria Kuznetsova), New Zealand (Prof. Bjorn Oback), and China (Dr. Zhen Liu), as well as 59 national lecturers.

Eight specialized workshops and a pre-congress symposium on obesity, infertility, and Sanger Sequencing methods were held on the sidelines of the event.

Royan Institute

Royan Institute was established in 1991 by the late Dr. Saeid Kazemi Ashtiani and a group of researchers and physicians at the Iran University of Medical Sciences of the Academic Center for Education, Culture, and Research (ACECR) as an outpatient surgery center to provide medical services to infertile couples, as well as research and training in reproductive sciences.

Reproductive Biomedicine and Stem Cells Biology and Technology has been demonstrated to be one of the most successful experiences of scientific gathering in Iran and West Asia since 2000.

In 2002, the research fields at Royan Institute also extended into stem cell studies. Afterward, the research findings were adjusted for application in regenerative medicine and cell therapy approaches. After three decades, the Royan Institute focuses on increasing the success rate of infertility treatment alongside embryo health and the level of public health through cell therapy clinical services.

During these twenty years of active involvement in sharing and exchanging scientific knowledge and expertise with renowned scientific institutes and scientists, the Royan Congress has helped to form many shared scientific projects and exchanges.

Over 80 earthquakes hit Iran in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 81 earthquakes have been recorded across the country in a week from August 22 to 28, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 73 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, and eight earthquakes with a magnitude between 3 and 4 have occurred in the country, irsc reported.

Of the total quakes, one had a magnitude of 3.8 on the Richter scale, which occurred on August 25th in Lorestan province.

Among the provinces of the country, Semnan experienced the highest number of earthquakes with 14, followed by Khorasan Razavi with 11, and North Khorasan with 8 earthquakes.

During the same period, two earthquakes hit Tehran. No earthquakes were recorded in East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Alborz, Bushehr, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Zanjan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Qom, Qazvin, Kordestan, Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad, Markazi, and Hamedan

provinces.

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

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

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

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



SEPTEMBER 5, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*The best of matters are those that are easy to start,
pleasant to finish and whose outcome is praiseworthy.*
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:03 Evening: 18:45 Dawn: 4:14 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:40 (tomorrow)

Iran participating in 27th Baghdad International Book Fair

TEHRAN – The Iran Book and Literature House is participating in the 27th Baghdad International Book Fair as the representative of Iran, showcasing a diverse range of Iranian works and hosting specialized cultural sessions.

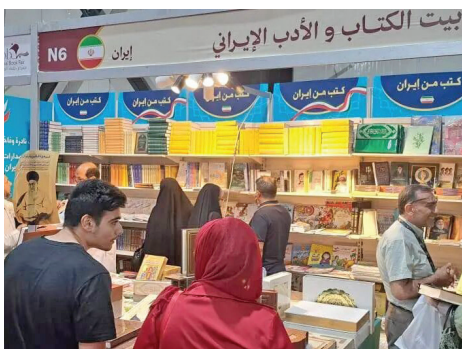
The fair in Iraq opened on September 2, with the participation of over 600 publishers from 28 countries, and will continue until September 12, IRNA reported.

In his remarks at the opening ceremony, Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaydi stated: “This event is a message that Baghdad remains a beacon of culture, a guiding light for thought, and a guardian and preserver of the written word.”

The Iran Book and Literature House is present at this exhibition with 1,150 works. The Iranian pavilion features books on Iranian history and art, literature, children and young adults, women's studies, psychology, resistance, jurisprudence (Fiqh) and principles, exquisite Qur'ans, Persian language instruction, tourism, and Iranology—a collection that aims to present a diverse image of Iran's cultural and intellectual capacities to the Arabic-speaking audience.

Furthermore, a session titled “Cultural Relations between Iran and Iraq from the Perspective of the Martyred Leader Khamenei” will be held in one of the Baghdad Book Fair halls. This session will feature three Iraqi scholars and university professors alongside one Iranian intellectual, and will explore various dimensions of the cultural, historical, and civilizational relations between Iran and Iraq, as well as the views of the martyred leader of the Ummah, Ayatollah Khamenei, regarding the shared capacities of the two nations.

Following the coordinated US- Israeli at-



tack on February 28, which targeted key national facilities in Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, was martyred.

The martyrdom of Ayatollah Khamenei was not merely the loss of a political figure, but the departure of a spiritual guide whose entire life was dedicated to the pursuit of justice and the liberation of the oppressed. This ultimate sacrifice, born from the depths of a conflict fueled by imperialist ambitions, has left an indelible mark on the collective soul of the Iranian people and the wider Muslim world, transforming a moment of profound grief into a catalyst for renewed resistance and steadfastness.

Iran's presence at the Baghdad Book Fair, given the deep-rooted cultural and civilizational ties between the two countries, can pave the way for a broader introduction of Iranian works into the Iraqi book market and the development of cultural and publishing cooperation between the two nations.

Publishers from Iran, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Turkey, and Palestine are participating in the 27th Baghdad International Book Fair.

Cartoon of Day



The humanitarian crisis in Gaza is deepening.
Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Türkiye

Culture minister visits Minab School exhibition

From Page 1 ► “Minab is a small city, and the martyrdom of more than one hundred students left the entire city in mourning. When I went to Minab this past May, the mourning was not limited to one family; the entire city was grieving. For this reason, the Minab tragedy is a global catastrophe that will not be forgotten in human historical memory, much like other great human disasters such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which have remained [in history],” the minister noted.

Referring to his visit to the “Minab School” exhibition, he stated: “I attended the exhibition today to commend the artists who have set up this display; artists who are striving to turn this great incident into an enduring work and a living message, both on a national scale and in the global arena.”

“This year, in the upcoming festivals—the Short Film Festival, Cinema Verite (Documentary Film Festival), and the Fajr Film Festival—we will certainly see valuable films on the subject of the Ramadan Imposed War. Due to its length (40 days), its various dimensions, and its extended duration, the Ramadan Imposed War has provided special and unique opportunities for artistic narrative,” Salehi underlined.

“The Minab School tragedy, which we are currently visiting in this exhibition space, is an example of these capacities; as in these 19 works that I saw from the artists, each artist has looked at the Minab incident from a different angle and perspective and has narrated it through the language of art, which is a reflective, deep, and contemplative language. We have countless events during those 40 days of



the Third Imposed War and the post-war period that have the capacity for artistic narration, whether in the form of images and cinema or in other forms of art that are no less effective than cinema,” he emphasized.

“A prominent feature of arts such as visual arts and painting is their power of rapid exchange; they can immediately transfer their message to new spaces, influence the audience, and engage their mind, memory, and soul. Therefore, all of Iran's artistic capacities will be placed at the service of representing the resistance of the great nation of Iran,” the minister stressed.

At the end of his visit to the “Minab School” exhibition, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance wrote a note about the exhibition, the text of which

is as follows: “The little angels of Minab School are the heavenly guardians of the land of Iran and will protect this ancient territory from monsters and beasts.”

The exhibition has been organized by the Nam Cultural and Artistic Institute and features works by a number of prominent contemporary Iranian painters.

The exhibition features works by artists including Behzad Shishegaran, Sirous Moqaddam, Gholam-Ali Taheri, Morteza Asadi, Kazem Chalipa, Ali Nedai, Hassan Yaqouti, Abdolhamid Ghadirian, Mostafa Goudarzi, Nasser Seifi, Jamshid Haqiqatshenas, Seyyed Masoud Shojai Tabatabai, Kamyar Sadeqi, Seyyed Ali Mirfatah, Mahyar Charmchi, Mostafa Qorbani, Hossein Einibakhsh and Mohammad-Ali Naderi.

On February 28, the Shajareh Tayyebheh 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.

Gaza's theater rises from rubble: artists turn tents and scraps into stages of survival

In a tent among the displaced, a piece of cloth can become a curtain, an empty can of peas a puppet, and a narrow street or small square a stage. Here, Palestinian artists are reinventing theater with whatever is at hand after war has destroyed venues, scattered performers and erased formal stages.

Theater has not stopped. It has changed its place, form and function. It has become a space where children can breathe and express themselves, a tool for artists to preserve stories, and an attempt to reclaim fragments of life amid displacement and rubble.

In Gaza, the question is no longer only where performances can be staged, but how theater can endure when the stage itself has disappeared, Palestine News Network reported.

Tamer Najm, an actor and drama trainer, said that when stages vanished under bombardment, he found a new arena in displacement camps. Working with displaced children, he uses theater-based techniques for psychological relief, including Theater of the Oppressed, puppetry, and psychodrama exercises.

“For us, theater is no longer just a performance,” he said. “It is a space for support — its first function is breathing and expression. A child needs to breathe out fear and anger, to express silence through play, movement, and sound.”

He added that full recovery is impossible after two years of destruction, but even brief moments matter. “We have given children a moment to breathe amid the rubble.”

After losing his home and workshop in the bombardment, director Mahdi Krira turned remnants of daily life into theater. Tin cans, cartons, and discarded packaging became puppets in his hands, each with its own character and voice.

With the help of his children and the “Khuyout” team, he staged performances for displaced children in camps, drawing audiences who gathered around as if the puppets opened a small window onto joy.

“Death is present in Gaza,” he said. “But I believe we must keep working and making people happy, even if death comes while we are laughing.”

For Krira, the puppets are more than props;



they are living entities on stage. Their story reflects a broader reality — how the remnants of war can be reshaped into tools of life, and how theater becomes a daily act of healing.

Artist and director Raafat Al-Ayedi sees theater as more than a Raafat Ayedi. “It is a shared space between us and the audience — a voice and a continuous story,” he said.

Before the war, theater in Gaza was active, with performances in schools, streets and institutions despite limited resources. The war, he said, has taken a heavy toll, including the loss of artists and the trauma of displacement. Yet performances continue in camps and public spaces.

“Today, theater has become memory and voice,” he said. “It helps preserve people's names, dreams, and stories. Sometimes a single actor telling a story in a tent is an act of resistance.”

Documented theatrical activity in Gaza dates back to 1911, when Hamlet was staged in the city at a time when Palestinian theater relied heavily on amateur productions and translated works.

Over decades, the theater movement developed, particularly in the 1990s with the emergence of groups such as Al-Shumou', Al-Amal for Art and Theater, Hanadel and

Al-Karama Complex, often relying on individual efforts amid scarce resources.

Ali Abu Yassin, director of Al-Bayader Association for Theater and Arts, said Palestinian theater did not begin with the current war and has never been easy. “It has always existed between struggle and resilience, joy and sorrow,” he said, noting that stability is essential for artistic growth.

He added that Palestinian theater participated in Arab and international festivals before the blockade, but has repeatedly been damaged in successive wars. Among his notable works are “Gaza Monologues” after the 2009 war and “The Cage” after the 2014 war, which was translated into several languages and performed at the Edinburgh Festival.

Ashraf Sahwil, director of the Gaza Centre for Culture and Arts, said the war has imposed new forms of theater, including street theater, Theater of the Oppressed and puppetry — formats that do not require stages or technical infrastructure.

He noted that cultural venues have been systematically targeted, including the Palestinian Red Crescent Theater in 2008, Al-Mishal Theater in 2018, and the National Library and Rashad Al-Shawa Cultural Center, leaving the sector without infrastructure capable of supporting production.