

Op-ed **T**

From My Lai to Minab: A question every American should ask themselves

Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN — After the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran said it had reasonable grounds to believe that the United States had committed war crimes in two attacks — on a school in Minab and a sports stadium in Lamerd — during its military assault on Iran, Washington responded with a hasty denial, offering no evidence to substantiate its rejection of the findings. The denial came as a Bloomberg investigation reported that, within hours of a U.S. missile strike on an elementary school in Minab that killed more than 120 children, some Pentagon personnel already knew that American missiles had caused the massacre. ▶ **Page 3**

How has Yemen's role reshaped the regional conflict?

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Yemen, which was long viewed as the weakest link in the Arab world, is now influencing shipping and energy and holds one of the most sensitive cards in West Asia.

The fall of Mokha to Ansarallah, alongside the seizure of Mayyun Island, was not just another development in a long-running war. Mokha lies roughly 75 kilometers from the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, meaning that any shift in the balance of power there extends beyond Yemen's borders to one of the world's most important maritime passages.

On September 10, 2026, UN envoy Hans Grundberg warned that Yemen faced its most serious risk of returning to ▶ **Page 5**

Gonbad Kabud Mosque: Nine centuries of history, art and memory in northeast Iran

TEHRAN – Situated in the historic landscape of Kalat in northeastern Iran, the Gonbad Kabud Mosque stands as a remarkable record of nine centuries of architectural change, artistic expression and cultural continuity.

Also known as the Blue Dome Mosque, the Naderi Mosque, and Jameh Mosque of Kalat, ther religious structure is more than a place of worship. Its successive architectural layers reflect the influence of different periods of Iranian history, from the Seljuk era to the Ilkhanid and Afsharid periods and later Qajar renovations. ▶ **Page 6**

Ed Sheeran backlash marks Palestine's South Africa moment

The attempt to punish rapper Macklemore for speaking out against Israel's genocide in Gaza has become a public relations disaster for mega-star Ed Sheeran and billionaire Israel supporter Robert Kraft.

Sheeran's supporting acts withdrew from his tour and prominent artists and politicians have rallied around the rapper.

This confrontation is a cultural turning point – a shift that recalls the mainstreaming of the South African anti-apartheid campaign in the 1980s.

And the Israel lobby, confident of its power, didn't see it coming.

At Sheeran's MetLife Stadium concerts in New Jersey on 4 and 5 September, Macklemore called for a "free Palestine" and performed "Hind's Hall," his song honoring Palestine solidarity protesters. ▶ **Page 8**



Undated photo of plane damaged by Iranian strikes at Prince Sultan AFB, Saudi Arabia.

Lying to Its People, Denying Its Crimes

Seven months of concealment: the price Americans aren't told, the crimes Iranians won't forget

By Mahmoud Mahmoudian Ravi

TEHRAN — Seven months after the United States and Israel launched their war against Iran, a growing body of reporting, congressional scrutiny, military documents and international investigations is exposing a widening gap between Washington's public narrative of the conflict and the scale of its human, military and financial consequences.

The war began on February 28 with Washington and Tel Aviv presenting the destruction of Iran's nuclear and missile capabilities as central objectives. President Donald Trump repeatedly said Iran could not be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon and, immediately after the opening strikes, described the operation as necessary to prevent that outcome.

Yet the premise of an imminent nuclear threat has remained contested. The Arms Control Association noted that, at the time of the February attack, neither Trump nor Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly presented evidence of an ongoing Iranian nuclear-weapons effort, while International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Grossi said ▶ **Page 3**

Iran tests new anti-ship missile near US aircraft carrier

TEHRAN — Iran has recently tested a new anti-ship missile near a US aircraft carrier, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei said, as Tehran warned that any further US attack would trigger a stronger response against American bases and interests across the region.

Iran has conveyed its conditions for negotiations to Qatar and Pakistan as mediators.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, Rezaei said Iran had identified vulnerabilities in the US military and was now better prepared than before to confront American air attacks. He stressed that Iran was

serious about defending itself and would strike US bases and American interests in the region with greater force if attacked.

Rezaei said the calculations and assessments made by US President Donald Trump regarding Iran and the war had been wrong. ▶ **Page 3**

15th International 100-Second Film Festival concludes in Tehran



▶ **Page 8**

Araghchi: ME security must be shaped by regional countries, not foreigners

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has called for a fundamental shift in the international approach to security, urging the world to move away from militarism, foreign intervention and coercion toward sustainable development, respect for national sovereignty, equal application of international law and lasting peace.

Addressing the virtual forum of Global Town Hall 2026 on Saturday, September 19, Araghchi said the Middle East should pursue a security framework shaped by the countries of the region rather than imposed by foreign powers.

The forum, hosted by the Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia (FPCI), was held under the theme "Calling for a Global U-Turn: Recentering Development, Reclaiming Humanity, Restoring Justice in a Crazy World." ▶ **Page 2**

Iran's delegation marches at Nagoya

TEHRAN – The opening ceremony of the 20th Asian Games got underway on Saturday at Mizuho Park Stadium in Nagoya, Japan, with Iran's delegation taking part in the parade of nations.

Iran is represented at the Nagoya Asian Games by 308 athletes, competing across 37 sports federations and associations.

Zahra Kiani and Fazel Atrachali served as Iran's flag bearers during the opening ceremony. Kiani, a two-time Asian Games silver medalist from the Jakarta and Hangzhou editions, shared the honor with Atrachali, the captain of Iran's national kabaddi team and a record five-time Asian Games participant.

The Iranian delegation, carrying the name "Shajareh Tayyebbeh", entered Mizuho Park Stadium wearing matching white sports uniforms featuring the Iranian flag.

The ceremony began with the official hoisting of the Japanese flag, accompanied by the national anthem, marking the formal opening of the Games in the host city. ▶ **Page 6**

Exclusive

'I would encourage Iranian people to be the way they are'

Mexico's Ambassador to Iran speaks with the Tehran Times on culture, diplomacy, and the ties between two ancient nations

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – In a warm and wide-ranging conversation at the Mexican Embassy in Tehran, Mexico's Ambassador to Iran, Guillermo Puente Ordorica, sat down with the Tehran Times to discuss a special exhibition that was on display at the embassy, titled 68 Voices, 68 Hearts.

The exhibition, held as part of the third week of Mexico's Indigenous Peoples and Communities Abroad, featured 40 images paired with 20 stories and was accompanied by audiovisual materials that narrated tales from various Indigenous traditions in their original languages.

Through these graphic and audiovisual resources, the exhibition sought to offer an opportunity to explore different ways of understanding and representing the world that form part of Mexico's cultural and linguistic heritage, an embassy staff member told the Tehran Times.

During the interview, the ambassador also spoke about the deep parallels between Mexican and Iranian cultural diversity, the role of art in building people-to-people bridges, the state of bilateral ties, Mexico's experience hosting the Iranian national team at the World Cup, and his personal reflections on living in Iran. ▶ **Page 2**

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

No meeting can force Iran to surrender

Siasat-e-Rooz examined the meeting of senior military commanders from the United States, Israel, and several Arab countries in Germany, writing that Arab states are currently facing a major crisis: the collapse of their security-building strategy based on US presence and, in some cases, normalization with Israel. This reality became clear not only during the Ramadan War but also in recent developments in Yemen. Although these states have previously formed coalitions with the US, making this nothing new, the key point is that the Berlin meeting will ultimately not change regional equations. Such a gathering will neither improve regional security nor reduce tensions; instead, it will intensify them and further contribute to the tightening of the Strait of Hormuz. Arab countries that rejected the Oman meeting cannot now expect the Berlin meeting to force Iran to surrender or reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Therefore, before becoming trapped in a difficult situation, they should abandon the illusion of an American security umbrella and take steps toward localized security alongside Iran.

Shargh: Why has China entered the Hormuz file?

Shargh evaluated the importance of the Strait of Hormuz for China. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi considers reopening the Strait of Hormuz essential for stabilizing energy transport and preventing the crisis from spreading to Yemen and the Red Sea. Beijing's motivation is not merely political. China has long been the largest buyer of Iranian oil, and any disruption in Persian Gulf energy exports directly affects its economy. Thus, when Wang Yi speaks about reopening Hormuz, there is a clear economic and security concern behind his position. Attacks on Saudi energy infrastructure and pressure on the Bab al-Mandab route have expanded the crisis from a single strait to a network of vital energy corridors. As a result, Beijing can no longer treat Hormuz as merely an Iran-US issue; each day of continued crisis makes the energy and trade implications more serious for China.

Hamshahri: The map of Middle East trade routes

Hamshahri wrote that disruptions in shipping caused by the Iran-US war have pushed Middle East countries toward roads, railways, pipelines, and even new fiber-optic routes, reshaping the region's trade map. The war has challenged the region's historic dependence on maritime routes. Disruptions in ship traffic through Hormuz have ushered in a new phase of regional trade—one in which roads, railways, land borders, pipelines, and

even alternative sea routes have become core elements of economic security. At the same time, recent events—such as the attack on Saudi Arabia's East-West pipeline—show that even alternative oil routes are not immune to war. Thus, the issue is not simply replacing Hormuz; the conflict is exposing the vulnerability of an entire chain of regional corridors. The new transformation in the Middle East is therefore not just the revival of land routes but a simultaneous competition and reconfiguration among multiple trade and energy corridors.

Sazandegi: The JCPOA is still alive

Sazandegi analyzed Thursday night's event at the UN Security Council, where China and Russia vetoed the US draft resolution against Iran. The incident shows the JCPOA can still influence Iran's legal and political dynamics. Russia and China vetoed the US resolution to extend the mandate of the Iran sanctions expert panel by citing the very clause in the JCPOA and Resolution 2231 that outlines the termination of Iran's file at the Security Council. For this reason, the Islamabad understanding should be taken more seriously, and efforts should be made to implement it. The issue is not merely the text of an Iran-US understanding; it is about creating a pathway for resolving disputes—especially given that both countries have experienced the costly consequences of withdrawing from agreements and returning to confrontation. The veto by Russia and China once again revealed the divide among permanent Security Council members over the legacy of the 2015 nuclear deal.

Farhikhtegan: Why BRICS matters for Iran

The composition of BRICS shows clearly that it is not a unified bloc. Russia, facing Western sanctions, has adopted firmer positions toward the West. China seeks to avoid confrontation, and India does not want BRICS to be defined as anti-Western. Nevertheless, a large portion of Iran's economy depends on interactions with BRICS members. China, the UAE, India, Brazil, and Russia are among Iran's main partners—and all are BRICS members. Emphasizing national currencies and creating alternatives to SWIFT can reduce much of the impact of unilateral sanctions. Beyond economics, the West has tried for at least two decades to isolate Iran diplomatically, but BRICS membership has undermined that strategy. Another reason BRICS is important is its ability to prevent anti-Iran statements: since Iran is a member and final communiqués require unanimous approval, no anti-Iran statement will be issued within BRICS.

Trump signs Russia-Iran sanctions bill

TEHRAN — In another manifestation of Washington's reliance on economic coercion and extra-territorial overreach, US President Donald Trump has signed sweeping legislation that arbitrarily extends unilateral coercive measures against Iran while intensifying economic warfare against Russia.

The legislation, disingenuously styled as the Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 (H.R. 5334), directly renews the foundational Iran Sanctions Act (ISA) of 1996 for an additional five years, keeping it active through 2031. By pushing this extension, Washington continues its decades-long, legally flawed campaign to weaponize domestic US statutes against international commerce, seeking to penalize foreign investments and independent sovereign trade tied to Iran's vital petroleum and energy sectors in blatant disregard of international law.

Beyond doubling down on its failed maximum-pressure tactics against Tehran, the statute introduces aggressive secondary economic measures targeting the Russian Federation. It grants the US executive branch sweeping authority to impose punitive tariffs of up to 100% on goods imported from sovereign nations that refuse to bow to Washington's dictates and continue purchasing Russian crude oil and natural gas.

Furthermore, it authorizes astronomical tariffs of up to 500% on direct US imports



of Russian-origin goods, while carving out hypocritical self-serving exemptions for commodities critical to American domestic industries, such as nuclear reactor uranium and medical isotopes.

The enactment of H.R. 5334 follows months of intense, politically motivated posturing on Capitol Hill. The aggressive sanctions push originally began in April 2025 with an unfeasible proposal aimed at penalizing independent global trade. Following backroom negotiations with the White House, the legislative framework was recalibrated to hand the US president sweeping unilateral authority to wave or enforce economic penalties at whim.

The revised bicameral measure was subsequently rushed through Congress, clearing the Senate 86-11 on August 7, 2026, before securing a final 262-159 vote in the House of Representatives on September 16, 2026. President Trump formally signed the bill into law on September 18, 2026.

Araghchi: ME security must be shaped by regional countries, not foreigners

From page 1 ► In his address, Araghchi argued that war, intervention, sanctions and the use of force have increasingly become instruments of international policy rather than exceptional measures, raising fundamental questions about the effectiveness of the international system established to prevent war, protect human dignity and uphold justice.

He said decades of foreign intervention, military pressure and successive wars in the Middle East had demonstrated that military intervention does not produce sustainable security and that coercive pressure cannot provide a foundation for lasting peace.

Instead, he argued that the normalization of military force has entrenched cycles of confrontation and conflict.

Gaza and Lebanon: A broader regional pattern

Araghchi pointed to the situation in Gaza as one of the most severe manifestations of a failed approach to regional security.

“What is taking place in Gaza is not merely a humanitarian tragedy,” he said, describing the situation as a test of the international community's collective responsibility.

He cited the killing of civilians, forced displacement, collective punishment and the destruction of vital infrastructure, and said the absence of effective accountability had allowed the pattern to extend beyond Gaza to Lebanon.

According to the Iranian foreign minister, military force is increasingly being used not as a last resort but as a mechanism for reshaping the region's political and security landscape.

He warned that when aggression becomes normalized and escalation is institutionalized, destruction can evolve from a consequence of conflict into an instrument for pursuing political objectives.



Iran war and sovereignty

Araghchi also linked US and Israeli military aggression against Iran to the broader pattern of conflict and the erosion of restrictions imposed by international law.

He characterized the war as “illegal, unjust, aggressive and unprovoked,” and referred to ‘a wider record of unpunished aggression,’ including targeted assassinations of Iranian officials, threats against political authorities and violations of national sovereignty.

He warned that failure by the international community to respond effectively to such actions would gradually weaken the boundaries established by international law.

Araghchi also referred to the killing of 168 students in Minab, saying the victims should not be reduced to casualty figures.

“Behind each of these lost lives, there was a family, a future, and a life,” he said, asking when the international community would draw a line and say that enough was enough.

‘Multilateralism must be made more effective’

The Iranian foreign minister argued that the erosion of international law would ultimately undermine the credibility of the institutions responsible for upholding it.

If international law is disre-

garded whenever major powers' interests are at stake, he said, the international community can no longer credibly speak of the rule of law.

Likewise, he argued that human rights cannot be considered universal if they are treated as inherent rights for some nations but conditional privileges for others.

Araghchi said the inability of international institutions, including the United Nations, to effectively respond to aggression and hold violators accountable would inevitably damage their credibility and legitimacy.

He nevertheless rejected abandoning multilateralism, saying the answer to the shortcomings of the existing international system is to build “genuine, effective and just multilateralism.”

From militarism to development

Araghchi said a genuine global turnaround would require the political will to change the current trajectory of international affairs.

He outlined a shift from militarism to sustainable development, interventionism to respect for national sovereignty, collective punishment to civilian protection, selective accountability to universal justice, and endless wars to lasting peace.

The world, he said, needs a new paradigm in which develop-

ment is regarded as an integral component of security, national sovereignty is respected and international law is applied equally and without discrimination.

“No political, strategic or geopolitical interest,” he argued, should take precedence over human life.

Iran's vision for regional security

Turning specifically to the Middle East, Araghchi said sustainable security could not be dictated from outside the region.

“Regional security must belong to the region itself,” he said, arguing that regional countries should be able to discuss their security, stability, development and common future and devise solutions without the intervention of foreign powers.

For Iran, Araghchi said, the position is rooted not merely in theory but in historical experience.

He said Iran believes sustainable regional security should be built through dialogue, confidence-building, cooperation and mutual respect among regional states rather than through the military presence of foreign powers or the imposition of their political will.

‘The time is now’

Araghchi concluded by describing the current international environment as a historic choice between continuing along a path of militarism, intervention, confrontation and recurring wars, or changing course.

He called for development to be returned to the center of the international agenda, human dignity to be placed ahead of power calculations, and justice to be freed from ‘monopoly and selectivity.’

He also called for the restoration of credibility to international law, saying the global turnaround he advocated was not a task for an uncertain future.

“Now is the time,” he said.

‘I would encourage Iranian people to be the way they are’

Mexico's Ambassador to Iran speaks with the Tehran Times on culture, diplomacy, and the ties between two ancient nations

From page 1 ► Below is the full text of the interview, edited for clarity and conciseness:

Your Excellency, thank you so much for granting us this interview today. For our first question, let's begin with this beautiful exhibition here before us, **68 Voices, 68 Hearts**. For those unfamiliar with the demographics of Mexico, could you tell us what this specific number signifies?

First of all, thank you for your interest. Thank you for coming to the Mexican Embassy and thank you for following up and promoting—and informing people about—what we are trying to showcase here at the Mexican Embassy with this particular exhibition. The title refers to Mexico's 68 Indigenous linguistic groups and reflects the country's broad cultural and linguistic diversity, one that is bigger and wider than this number in terms of cultural diversity and, of course, linguistic diversity in Mexico. It reflects, of course, the enthusiasm of the artist and director who has assembled the exhibition, trying to reflect, trying to have a piece of all the different idiomatic and ethnic cultural expressions of contemporary Mexico, but attached to our very long ancient past and traditions. Just to give you an example, we are talking about 360 different linguistic expressions in Mexico.

The people of Mexico and Iran are both very diverse. What do you think are the traits that

both countries share, especially among their people?

Well, I think it's difficult to name them all specifically because, again, it's diversity. It's wide, and it's rooted in ancient expressions and ancient traditions. But beyond that general fact, I do believe that Iranian people—particularly Iranian people—will be able to understand what I am referring to, because this diversity, this ethnicity, is very much attached to the geography of our countries. If you go to the north, to the south, to the west, and to the east of the country, you will find this particular diversity—these diverse, different expressions that come to us from the plurality of our cultures. For example, I don't know the numbers in Iran, but in the case of Mexico, we are one of the richest nations in terms of cultural diversity, which means different ethnic groups, which means different languages that have come to enrich the national Mexican culture as a whole. The national culture is integrated, if I can say so, by all these different expressions—sometimes local, sometimes in a wider sense, more let's say provincial in terms of geographical extension. And nevertheless, they have a continuum in the diversity which creates and gives meaning to Mexico as a country, as a society, and of course as a culture. You will see in this exhibition the colors, the diverse expressions of color attached to the particular artistic expressions. I



think you find this in Iran as well. Iran is, for many reasons, colors. And that makes a big difference when you make this exercise of comparing to other kinds of cultural expressions worldwide, without even mentioning one in particular.

Aside from this specific exhibition, what other cultural exchanges have existed that have helped build people-to-people bridges between our societies?

We have organized a number of activities in which we have been able to reflect the similarities between the Iranian and Mexican people. Just to give you an example, some years ago here at the embassy—and we continue to organize them—we held a kind of workshop devoted to popular expressions of Iranian and Mexican cultures. It was very important because, at one point in these workshops, we decided to work with an Iranian master who has devoted her

life to promoting the popular expressions of Iran, reflected in this particular case in dolls—dolls that can be ornaments, but dolls that can also be used for kids to play with. We have something very similar in Mexico. In this particular workshop I was referring to, this Iranian teacher decided to create Mexican dolls with Iranian techniques. It was a very nice mixture. The other particularity of this workshop is that they were developing, creating Frida Kahlo dolls. The dolls were then showcased some years ago in the Niavaran Cultural Complex, in a beautiful exhibition of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. That was the first time it was showcased over there, and it was integrated by three chapters. The first chapter I already explained. The second chapter was a photographic exhibition that was sent to us by Mexican cultural institutions.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Lying to its people, denying its crimes

Seven months of concealment: the price Americans aren't told, the crimes Iranians won't forget

From Page 1 ► in early March that the agency did not see a structured program to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Trump nevertheless repeatedly suggested that the conflict would be short. In early March, he said that Iran would have had a nuclear weapon had the United States not acted within two weeks, while subsequent reporting documented a series of shifting predictions about when the war would end. By September, the conflict had entered its seventh month.

Against that backdrop, the question increasingly confronting Washington is not simply what the war has achieved, but how much of its human and material cost has been fully disclosed.

Civilian casualties and the Minab investigation

The most consequential challenge to the official narrative concerns the February 28 strike on the Shajareh Tayyebah school in Minab, southern Iran.

A recent investigation by the United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran found “reasonable grounds” to believe that the United States committed a war crime in the Minab strike and in a separate attack on a sports complex and residential area in Lamerd. The mission said the two attacks killed at least 178 civilians.

The Minab attack became one of the war's most devastating incidents, killing many civilians, including more than 100 children. UN findings said the school was a clearly identifiable civilian facility and that US forces had failed to take the necessary measures to establish that it was a legitimate military target.

The significance of the findings goes beyond the death toll. They challenge the explanation that the Minab strike was simply an unavoidable consequence of the fog of war.

A separate investigation reported by Bloomberg has shed further light on the military decision-making that preceded the attack. According to the investigation, Pentagon investigators identified flawed intelligence, outdated imagery and excessive reliance on artificial-intelligence systems as factors that contributed to the strike that killed 123 children.

The emerging picture is therefore one in which the tragedy cannot readily be reduced to a single technical error. Questions have instead been raised about the entire targeting process — from the intelligence entering the system to



the human decisions made after it was processed.

For Tehran, Minab has become a symbol of the civilian toll of the war. Internationally, the UN findings have transformed the incident from an Iranian allegation into the subject of a formal international investigation and legal assessment.

Washington, however, has rejected the UN mission's conclusions. The White House and State Department have disputed the findings and questioned the mission's impartiality.

That disagreement does not resolve the underlying issue: whether the full US investigation into Minab should be made public.

Kuestak: another strike, another demand for answers

The question of transparency has gained renewed urgency following the September 1 strike on a home in Kuestak, Hormozgan Province, where a wedding gathering was taking place.

Six Democratic senators — Brian Schatz, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Jack Reed, Mark Warner and Chris Coons — have called for a “fully and impartially” conducted investigation into the attack.

The lawmakers said reports indicated that four civilians, including women and a child, were killed and more than 60 people wounded, and that weapons experts and visual analysis suggested the strike was caused by a US bomb. They demanded that the Pentagon release its findings to Congress and the American public.

The senators also said Congress had yet to receive the full findings of the Pentagon's investigation into the February 28 Minab strike.

Their intervention is significant because it places the issue of civilian casualties inside the US political system itself. The demand is not coming only from foreign governments or international organizations; members of the Senate are asking the Pentagon to disclose what it knows about

the conduct and consequences of American military operations.

The Kuestak case therefore adds a second, more recent test of Washington's commitment to transparency.

A casualty count under scrutiny

The questions surrounding transparency extend beyond Iranian civilian deaths.

On September 18, The Washington Post reported that more American service members had died during the Iran war than the Pentagon had publicly acknowledged.

Five US officials familiar with the Defense Department's internal casualty accounting told the newspaper that at least 22 US military personnel had died — four more than the number appearing in the Pentagon's public casualty database. A sixth official put the figure at 23, although that person said not all of the additional deaths were directly attributable to combat and involved US personnel deployed in the Middle East during the hostilities.

The same official said three US contractors in the region had also died since combat operations began.

The Pentagon declined to address the discrepancy in the figures, according to the newspaper.

The issue is not merely statistical. The Pentagon's public casualty database serves as the official record of military deaths and provides the public with information about the human cost of US military operations.

The Washington Post reported that, as of September 18, the public database listed 18 US military fatalities since the beginning of the conflict, while more than 820 service members had been wounded.

Discrepancy has therefore raised a basic question: if the Pentagon's internal accounting contains additional deaths, why are they not reflected in the public record?

What the photographs of US bases reveal

Another part of the story has emerged from photographs taken inside American military installations across the Middle East.

CBS News recently obtained photographs from active-duty US service members showing extensive damage at American positions in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere following Iranian missile and drone attacks.

The images included damaged buildings and vehicles at Camp Buehring and Camp Arifjan in Kuwait and severe damage to an E-3 Sentry aircraft at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia. CBS said the photographs were provided by serving military personnel who spoke anonymously because of military restrictions on the media.

The Pentagon's inspector general has separately reported equipment losses worth up to \$3.7 billion, including losses involving nearly 60 aircraft, while recording Iranian attacks on US bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman and Jordan.

The photographs matter because they provide a visual record of damage that is difficult to capture in official statements consisting largely of aggregate figures.

They also complicate the image of an American military campaign conducted with overwhelming protection from retaliation.

One US service member quoted by CBS described the situation in stark terms, saying the damage being inflicted on American bases had not been adequately communicated to the public.

Other reporting has independently documented damage to American aircraft. CBS reported that an A-10 at a US base in Jordan lost a wing in an Iranian strike, while several F-15s sustained damage.

The bill comes to \$43.6 billion — and counting

The most tangible measure of the war's cost is financial.

According to an updated estimate from US Central Command provided to Congress, the conflict had cost the United States approximately \$43.6 billion by September 3. About \$28.1 billion of the total was attributed to expended munitions. The estimate does not include damage to US bases across the region.

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

Iran tests new anti-ship missile near US aircraft carrier



From Page 1 ► arguing that the conflict had been instigated by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

He said Washington would be better served by accepting Iran's conditions for ending the war, adding that Trump's threats would not produce any results and that Iran was prepared for a decisive confrontation if hostilities continued.

Rezaei said Iran had reached a conclusion to change its strategy toward Washington following the US withdrawal from a memorandum of understanding (Islamabad MoU).

He said Iran's military had tested the new anti-ship missile near a US aircraft carrier, describing the test as part of Iran's preparations to confront potential US attacks.

“We know the weak points of the US military and are more prepared than before to confront its air attacks,” Rezaei said.

Tehran sets conditions for ending the war

‘Not our war’: South Koreans rally against US pressure, reject military involvement in West Asia

TEHRAN — Hundreds of South Korean citizens, anti-war activists, and civil society groups staged a massive rally in central Seoul on Saturday to fiercely reject US demands for military involvement against Iran, urging their government to uphold its constitutional sovereignty and resist Washington's aggressive arm-twisting.

The widespread demonstration took place just a day after President Lee Jae-myung officially ruled out combat troop deployments that would draw the East Asian nation into the ongoing regional conflict.

Footage from the heart of the South Korean capital showed demonstrators chanting slogans including “Reject” and “Oppose the deployment of South Korean troops,” while waving anti-war placards, unfurling banners, and staging street performances demanding peace and an immediate halt to foreign military adventurism.

Rally participants condemned the hostile actions of Washington and Tel Aviv, warning that any military entanglement alongside American forces would render Seoul complicit in grave violations of international law.

“The US and Israel's invasion of Iran is clearly a war of aggression [...] Sending troops in any form would effectively support the US war of aggression, put Korean soldiers at risk, and potentially expose Korean citizens in Iran to harm,” said a protester addressed to the gathering.

Rally members urged Seoul to act according to its Constitution and the public interest, rather than bow to pressure from Washington.

Demonstrators also voiced skepticism over the government's lingering ambiguity regarding naval operations in West Asian waterways, particularly concerning the prospective operational scope of the Cheonghae Unit.

“[President Lee] did not specify what would happen regarding the operational control of the Cheonghae Unit, nor did he firmly reject the US request for deployment,” a demonstrator noted.

“I came here because I hope our government will be able to speak more independently in the future [...] This is an invasion war that even the United States has abandoned, and a war that has not gained recognition from the international community,” she added.

On Friday, President Lee had stated in unambiguous terms that “there will be no participation or intervention in war,” ruling out

Rezaei said consultations were continuing with Qatar and Pakistan as mediators and that Iran had conveyed its conditions for negotiations to both countries.

He said Iran remained in contact with the Qatari mediator, who had relayed Tehran's conditions to Washington for ending the war, and that Tehran was awaiting Trump's response.

Iran's conditions, he said, include an end to the war on all fronts, the release of frozen Iranian funds and an end to the maritime blockade.

Iran leaves NPT withdrawal as a possibility

Rezaei also said US and Israeli actions had created circumstances that could allow Iran to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons also known as NPT.

He stressed that Iran had not planned to leave the treaty and that any such move would depend on Washington's conduct.

“We remain committed to the fatwa issued by the martyred Leader and have not changed our nuclear doctrine,” Rezaei said, adding that Iran could not predict what might happen in the future.

Iran calls for end to Saudi-Yemeni conflict

Rezaei also expressed support for an end to the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, saying he believed the Yemenis also wanted a settlement with Riyadh.

troop deployments that would involve ROK in the conflict.

Speaking at a news conference in Seoul, the South Korean leader sought to distance his administration from Washington's military objectives.

“There won't be deployment that would involve or enter war. I can tell you that very clearly,” Lee told reporters. “We won't deploy military assets in any form to that end.”

Nonetheless, authorities in Seoul have been reviewing potential measures to strengthen the presence of the Cheonghae naval unit—a counter-piracy mission originally stationed off the Horn of Africa—under the rubric of protecting commercial vessels and energy shipments navigating the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

“[It] is also clear that we must do the minimum as other countries do to protect our commercial shipping and crude shipments, and also the safety of our people,” Lee added, attempting to navigate severe domestic anti-war sentiment on one hand and relentless pressure from the White House on the other.

Earlier in May, Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back noted that Seoul would consider a “phased contribution” to efforts to restore safe navigation through the strait, potentially including personnel, intelligence-sharing and military assets. He said direct military participation had not been discussed in detail.

The Strait of Hormuz remains an indispensable conduit for international energy supplies, and the escalating regional crisis—instigated by foreign aggression—has disrupted key shipping lanes, putting immense pressure on Seoul to safeguard its commercial navigation without becoming an accessory to unlawful military campaigns.

The official reluctance from Seoul comes amid deepening fissures within the long-standing military alliance between Washington and its East Asian partner. US President Donald Trump has repeatedly castigated South Korea for what he characterized as insufficient support for Washington's war effort against Tehran.

In an apparent retributive move that has alarmed strategic circles in Seoul, the Trump administration recently scaled back major joint military exercises between US and South Korean armed forces.

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

From My Lai to Minab: A question every American should ask themselves

From Page 1 ► Some may wonder how the U.S. government can deny such blatant crimes. Let us travel back in time, several decades.

On the morning of March 16, 1968, U.S. troops entered the Son Mỹ village complex in South Vietnam's Quảng Ngãi Province. One of the areas was known as My Lai. American forces expected to encounter Viet Cong fighters, but instead found themselves among a civilian population. Nevertheless, troops from a U.S. unit carried out a mass killing of civilians, slaughtering around 500 people.

The U.S. military covered up a crime of such magnitude, and for nearly a year there was little public knowledge of what had happened. It took a year before the disclosures of a former soldier, Ronald Ridenhour, followed by the investigative reporting of Seymour Hersh, shed light on the shocking episode and brought it to public attention.

Investigations showed that the crime was not simply the product of a collective breakdown or madness within a single military unit on the battlefield. The chain of command — and, beyond it, the political and senior leadership responsible for managing the war — bore responsibility for what had happened.

In cases like this, there is a natural tendency to point the finger at the person who

pulled the trigger and put that individual in the dock. But limiting responsibility to the soldiers who ultimately pull the trigger is itself where the problem begins.

The My Lai massacre was horrific enough to awaken any political system — and, more importantly, any society. But that did not happen in America.

Two years ago, around this very time, The New Yorker published a thought-provoking investigation into the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that followed the September 11 attacks. Titled “The War Crimes That the Military Buried,” the report was the product of four years of investigation. It found that the U.S. military had committed around 800 war crimes in the two wars, that only a small number of these cases had been prosecuted, and that an even smaller number had resulted in convictions.

The question of whether such a small number of convictions bears any reasonable proportion to the number of war crimes committed is a matter worthy of serious consideration in its own right.

Some would like to attribute the recent chaos and the crimes committed entirely to Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth, creating the impression that the storm will subside once they are gone. This view is less a reflection

of reality than an oversimplification — and a sanitization — of America's history of war crimes.

War crimes are a recurring feature of American history, and Democratic and Republican administrations have had a remarkably similar record in this regard. The problem runs deeper than the narcissism and authoritarian tendencies attributed to Trump, or Hegseth's attitudes and approaches that critics have described as irrational.

The American people, as those who elect their governments, should ask themselves serious and difficult questions.

What is their responsibility for these crimes?

From senior political leaders to the architects and commanders of elective and criminal wars, and those who ultimately pulled the triggers or pressed the buttons to launch missiles and release bombs, none of these people came from another planet.

Will Americans continue to measure the cost of war not in lives lost and crimes committed, but in the price displayed at the pump?

Iranians have a well-known proverb: “The world is round” — meaning what goes around comes around. History has a way of settling its accounts.

Iran’s fishery products export capacities outlined

TEHRAN- The pavilion of Iran at the International Fisheries and Aquaculture Exhibition in St. Petersburg hosted senior Russian officials, and Iran’s aquatic products export capacities were outlined.

According to a Mehr News Agency report, during the ninth International Exhibition of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Related Technologies in St. Petersburg, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Patrushev and St. Petersburg Governor Alexander Beglov visited the pavilion of Iran, where they were officially received by Vahid Salehi, Deputy Minister and Head of the country’s Veterinary Organization, and a number of representatives and members of the Iranian delegation.

During the visit, Salehi introduced the capacities of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the production, processing, and export of aquatic products and emphasized the country’s extensive capacities for developing specialized and commercial cooperation with Russia.

Referring to Iran’s position in aquaculture and the diversity of fishery products, the head of the country’s Veterinary Organization outlined production and export capacities and the capabilities of Iranian companies, saying: “With diverse capacities in the aquatic sector, production and processing infrastructure, and the active presence of the private sector, Iran is ready to expand its cooperation with Russia in this field.”

Emphasizing the importance of complying with health and quality requirements in the trade of aquatic products, Salehi stated: “Compliance with the health and quality principles and standards of destination countries, especially the member states of the Eurasian Economic and Customs Union, is a fundamental requirement for developing Iran’s aquatic products exports.”

He added: “Iran’s aquatic products exports are carried out based on specialized health requirements and controls, the quarantine regulations of the country’s Veterinary Organization, and the standards agreed upon with destination countries, and strict adherence to these requirements plays an important role in maintaining product health, increasing mutual trust, and sustainable trade development.”

The head of the country’s Veterinary Organization also emphasized the need to facilitate technical interactions, accelerate the exchange of documents, and strengthen



en communication between the specialized bodies of the two countries, saying: “Developing expert cooperation and creating regular channels for information exchange can strengthen the process of exporting Iran’s aquatic products to the Russian market and other member states of the Eurasian Economic Union.”

Iran’s fishery industry is a vital part of the country’s economy and food security, providing direct employment for approximately 285,000 to 300,000 people and indirect jobs for one million more.

Strategically leveraging access to the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman in the south, the sector is divided into two categories: capture fisheries and aquaculture, with the latter being the dominant force driving growth.

Production focuses on high-value species, including rainbow trout, common carp, and especially Pacific whiteleg shrimp.

As a major pillar of the non-oil economy, fishery exports reached over \$700 million in 2025, with key markets including China, Iraq, and the UAE. Looking ahead, Iran aims to increase total fishery production to 1.8 million tons by 2030, with the goal of raising exports to \$1.0 billion annually.

Iran’s fish farming sector, a vital part of its non-oil economy, primarily produces rainbow trout, common carp, and whiteleg shrimp. Production is geographically distinct: cold-water trout farms are concentrated in provinces along the Alborz and Zagros Mountains, while shrimp farming is focused in the southern coastal provinces of Bushehr, Hormozgan, and Sistan-Baluchestan. In 2025, the sector saw significant growth, with shrimp production alone reaching 50,000 tons. This robust aquaculture sector is a key driver for exports, job creation, and regional economic development.

Iran’s technical achievement in implementing maritime single window presented at IMO meeting

TEHRAN- Iran’s experience in implementing and operating the Maritime Single Window (MSW) and the capabilities of the Integrated Maritime Management System (IMAS) were presented at the specialized and technical regional meeting of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in Georgia, drawing the attention of the organization’s experts and representatives of regional countries.

According to an IRNA report on Saturday from the Ports and Maritime Organization, the IMO regional meeting on the implementation of the Maritime Single Window was held in September 2026 in the city of Batumi, Georgia, with representatives from Caspian Sea and Black Sea region countries, including Iran, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Georgia, and Romania, in attendance.

At the meeting, the Islamic Republic of Iran, represented by Soheila Shibani-Moghaddam, senior expert in ICT and smart ports, and Hossein Sedighi, head of the Bushehr Port Affairs Department from the Ports and Maritime Organization, outlined the process of implementing the Maritime Single Window in the country and presented Iran’s technical experiences and achievements in the digitalization of maritime services.

The Integrated Maritime Management System (IMAS), a national system developed by domestic experts, was one of the main focuses of Iran’s presentation. The meeting highlighted the system’s capabilities in providing maritime services and the possibility of electronic data exchange with stakeholders—a feature aligned with the requirements of the International Maritime Organization and data exchange standards in the Maritime

Single Window.

Iran’s presentation, focusing on operational experience and the country’s indigenous capacities in implementing MSW, drew the attention of IMO experts and representatives of participating countries. The domestic development of the system and the electronic nature of its communications with stakeholders were among the points praised at the meeting.

The implementation of the Maritime Single Window has been mandatory since January 1, 2024, under the requirements of the International Maritime Organization and the amendments to the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL), for the electronic exchange of information related to the entry and exit of ships in the ports of member states. Therefore, Iran’s experience in this field is part of the country’s ports’ move toward smart services, data integration, and facilitation of maritime and port processes.

The workshop also examined topics such as data standardization, electronic information exchange among stakeholder agencies, the requirements of the FAL Convention and the IMO Compendium, national approaches to developing the Maritime Single Window and Port Community Systems (PCS), and areas for regional cooperation.

Another noteworthy aspect of Iran’s presence at the event was the active participation of an Iranian female expert in an international specialized meeting on modern maritime technologies—a presence that, alongside the presentation of the country’s technical achievements, reflects the professional capacity of Iranian women in maritime navigation and maritime technologies.

Contracts worth \$13.6b for development of oil, gas fields kick off

TEHRAN- The Director of Engineering and Development of the National Iranian Oil Company announced the ratification and start of executive operations of five oil and gas field development contracts worth \$13.6 billion in the 14th government, and said: With the implementation of these contracts, daily production capacity will increase by more than 600,000 barrels of oil and 30 million cubic meters of gas.

According to a Shana report, Reza Aqebati also announced the signing of new development contracts in the 14th government and said: In addition to the start of executive operations of five contracts, so far about \$9.3 billion in contracts have also been signed in the upstream development sector, and these contracts are in the stage of ratification and obtaining the necessary permits.

Referring to the memoranda of understanding signed for the development of fields, he stated: In the 14th government, about 40 memoranda of understanding have been signed, covering 39 oil and gas fields.

The Director of Engineering and Development of the National Iranian Oil Company added: If these



MOUs are converted into contracts, it will be possible to sign contracts with an investment value of more than \$37 billion.

Aqebati named the Lavan, Khartang, and Sefid Zakhur gas fields as part of the fields considered for development and said: Negotiations are also underway for the development of the Yadvan field with domestic and foreign investors, and we hope these negotiations will yield results in the shortest possible time.

Referring to the measures taken to facilitate the investment process in the upstream oil industry, he said: The National Iranian Oil Company, in cooperation with the government and the Plan and Budget Organization,

has received an approval from the Council of Ministers under which, based on the regulation for the development and increased production of gas fields and the allocation of produced gas to energy-intensive industrial units and petrochemical units, suitable capacity has been created to attract investment from these industries in the development of gas fields.

The Director of Engineering and Development of the National Iranian Oil Company, referring to the time gap between the signing of a contract and its ratification and the start of executive operations, said: After the signing of a contract, going through the ratification stages and the contract entering the executive phase

requires time; therefore, the National Iranian Oil Company has put a solution called signing initial and preliminary contracts on its agenda.

Aqebati emphasized: By using the capacity of initial and preliminary contracts in the period between signing and ratification of the main contract, part of the initial measures and preparations for field development can begin so that projects enter the executive and development phase more quickly.

Referring to the country’s significant capacities in the oil and gas sector, he stated: Iran holds the world’s third-largest proven oil reserves and second-largest proven gas reserves, and ranks first in the world in total oil and gas reserves.

The Director of Engineering and Development of the National Iranian Oil Company added: Converting potential reserves into actual and sustainable production capacity is one of the main tasks of the upstream development sector of the oil and gas industry, and in this path, important measures have been taken in the 14th government to develop fields and increase production capacity.

‘Free zones sixth generation turns borders into a platform for economic cooperation’

TEHRAN- CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization said that the sixth generation of free zones turns borders into a platform for economic cooperation.

Hadi Moghaddamzadeh stated: Free zones need appropriate tools to fulfill the great missions defined for them. Today, sixth-generation free zones are designed to work with countries, develop economic diplomacy, and create strategic ties.

Moghaddamzadeh added: If this approach is operationalized, free zones will move away from island-like performance in the industrial and commercial sphere and move toward becoming a driver and strategic tool of the country, and if this happens, they can certainly play a special role both in the country’s macroeconomy and, in the current conditions, in the field of economic resilience.

He continued: For free zones to be able to play a role in the current special conditions as a special operational tool in the field of economic diplomacy, there are a series of obstacles and problems, some of which are also common among the country’s free zones.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization named the first problem of free zones as the multiplicity of decision-making bodies and lack of coordination among agencies, and said: The multiplicity of decision-making bodies and the incoordination among agencies overshadow the single window and cause the investor not to be able to see the single window in a real and tangible way.

Moghaddamzadeh emphasized: Many matters are halted in the process of administrative bureaucracies, and this practically prevents the realization of free zones’ goals and the facilitation of investors’ activity.

Referring to the situation of the Aras Free Zone and the Nordooz border, he stated: In the Nordooz zone of the Aras Free Zone, which is one of the country’s active entry and exit points in the northwest and is considered the only land border of our country’s access to the Eurasian Union, the issue of facilitating and accelerating the movement of cargo is of particular importance.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization added: I have personally placed special emphasis on facilitating and accelerating cargo movement in the northwest of the country and at the Bazargan border, and various agencies also try, but because there is no integrated management in this area, each agency moves with its own particular approach, and the result is that, in a real sense, streamlining does not happen at the border.

Moghaddamzadeh continued: The border is not a place for standing still, and unnecessary stops should not form there. Necessary monitoring and controls should be carried out there, but unfortunately we see that the Border Guard has its own particular approach, the terminal follows its own approach, and the governorate may also have its own particular approach.

He said: Certainly, the free zone, in accordance

with the country’s spatial planning document and its responsibility in this area, in the matter of providing infrastructure and also considering Article 65, which friends also mentioned, can carry out the necessary organization in this area in proportion to its authority.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization, referring to the follow-ups carried out to resolve these problems, said: Dr. Pourmohammadi has also visited this region on the ground three times and has communicated certain matters in writing, but unfortunately, due to the arbitrary approaches of agencies, these decisions and measures are not fully operationalized.

Moghaddamzadeh considered the second problem to be the weakening of the fundamental laws and incentives of free zones and said: Instability in the fundamental laws and incentives of free zones has over time overshadowed the competitive advantages of these zones in a real sense.

Moghaddamzadeh added: Many economic activities in free zones have been affected by these very issues and have faced problems that are practically outside the limits and authority of free zones.

He also, referring to the tax exemption of free zones, said: The 20-year exemption of free zones and the exemption from performance tax, which are considered among the main incentives of free zones, have, frankly speaking, been overshadowed by arbitrary interpretations and in line with organizational interests.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization added: One of the most obvious incentives in free zones is the issue of tax exemptions. According to paragraph “A” and Article 10 and its related note, the Aras Free Zone meets all three mentioned conditions; it is enclosed, has a positive trade balance, and is distant from population centers, but the Tax Affairs Organization does not accept this.

Moghaddamzadeh emphasized: At least in the case of the Aras Free Zone, we cannot preserve this advantage in the current conditions, and this is one of the serious challenges of free zones.

He further referred to regional developments and the need to strengthen economic relations with neighboring countries and said: A few days ago I had a mission and examined the existing conditions in Armenia. The reality is that we have truly lost the Azerbaijani market, and in the recent regional arrangements we have only just thought that we must define common interests.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization added: In Armenia this capacity exists, and the issue of creating joint free zones has also been raised. Previously, a memorandum of understanding had been concluded between the Aras Free Zone and the Armenian side in this regard, but unfortunately it has not been operationalized to date.

Free zones must play a role in economic diplomacy

Moghaddamzadeh considered the third chal-

lenge to be the lack of shared belief and understanding in the country’s executive and governance structure regarding the role of free zones and stated: In order for free zones to play a role in economic diplomacy in the best and most effective way, there must be a shared belief and understanding in the country’s executive and governance structure about the role-playing of free zones.

He said: Let me honestly say that this shared understanding does not truly exist in practice, and serious resistance is observed in this regard.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization continued: Now, in the joint commissions we have with Armenia and Azerbaijan, given the geopolitical and geographical position of the Aras Free Zone, we should naturally be present in these commissions so that we can present the existing investment capacities in the best way, but unfortunately this has not happened so far.

Aras did not stop production cycle under war conditions

Moghaddamzadeh, emphasizing that this zone has not been a mere spectator despite the country’s restrictions and special conditions, stated: With all these restrictions and constraints, the Aras Free Zone has not been a mere spectator. I also presented this matter in the meeting we had with Dr. Pezeshkian.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization emphasized: In the country’s most industrial free zone, under these special war conditions, we did not stop the production cycle even for one day. Not only was the production cycle not stopped, but we also carried out activation.

Moghaddamzadeh continued: Currently, the Aras Free Zone plays a role in supplying essential goods for the northwest of the country and also in supplying raw materials for production units. As you are aware, the city of Tabriz and East Azerbaijan Province are an industrial and commercial province, and more than 95 percent of its economy is in the hands of the private sector.

He noted: To date, no industrial unit has been shut down due to the special war conditions, and it will not be.

The CEO of the Aras Free Zone Organization, referring to the energy sector and the president’s emphasis on developing renewable energies, said: In the energy sector, the president has placed special emphasis. Before the National Unity government, there was practically no solar power plant in free zones, but today the Aras Free Zone is active as the driver of this matter.

In conclusion, Moghaddamzadeh emphasized: If the legal authorities of free zones, especially Article 65, are fully implemented and the existing obstacles in the path of these zones’ activity are removed, free zones can transform from an island-like collection in industry and trade into a strategic tool for the country’s economy and economic diplomacy.

Denmark makes strategic blunder by giving in to Trump’s annexation threats over Greenland

Greenland may prove to be another Palestine

By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN – After threatening for much of his second term to annex the semi-autonomous Danish territory of Greenland by force, if necessary, Donald Trump announced on Friday that the United States had reached an Arctic security pact with the leaders of Denmark and Greenland.

Key details of the agreement, which Trump boastfully described as “very important, historic, and special,” have not been made public, including the extent of the U.S. military presence in the territory and whether any formal authority over foreign policy and natural resources would be ceded to Washington.

The announcement is a gift to a president whose illegal war against Iran, followed by Tehran’s response to the attack through the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, has disrupted global energy supplies and made the already unstable Middle East more insecure.

Denmark and Greenland expressed hope that the deal would end months of uncertainty triggered by Trump’s threats, which have centered on Greenland’s strategic location for defense purposes and its mineral wealth.

The deal is expected to be signed on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York next week.

“Next week could be a good week for Greenland, Denmark, and the United States,” Danish Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen said in a statement on Saturday.

“A time of uncertainty will hopefully give way to a binding agreement that strengthens security in the Arctic and the North Atlantic, and thereby our shared security within NATO and Europe, while respecting the (Danish) Kingdom’s red lines,” he said.

Despite such optimistic remarks, one cannot be certain whether Danish and Greenlandic officials genuinely welcome the pact or have simply submitted to Trump’s threats.

Had such an agreement been reached without Trump’s annexation threats, it could



be argued that the United States was approaching the 2,166,086-square-kilometer Arctic island from a geostrategic perspective.

However, given Trump’s background as a real estate developer, it is highly unlikely that he views the island solely as a strategic shield to protect the United States from perceived adversaries, particularly Russia and China.

Trump appears to view the island, with its vast untapped mineral wealth, as an asset to be acquired rather than merely a military advantage. This is especially concerning given that he has threatened to withdraw the United States from NATO and advocated the dissolution of the European Union. He sees a strong and united Europe as a rival rather than a partner.

While Trump continues to insist on his astonishing and absurd demand that Canada become part of the United States, and has punished Canada through various measures, including tariffs, for rejecting that demand, Denmark and Greenland are making a serious strategic mistake by planning to sign such a deal with Washington.

How can Denmark and Greenland trust the United States to address security concerns in the Western world without eventually behaving like Israel and turning Greenland into another Palestine?

Given that Trump and members of Congress loyal to him have threatened and sanctioned International Criminal Court (ICC) officials over the issuance of arrest warrants for Benjamin

Netanyahu on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, what assurances can Denmark, Greenland, NATO, and Europe reasonably expect from Washington?

Even if the Trump administration remains committed to the still-undisclosed terms of the agreement throughout his presidential term, how can Denmark and NATO be assured that a future president, another Trump, perhaps, will not take control of the White House and seek to expropriate territories across North America, including Greenland, which lies in close proximity to Canada?

NATO may believe that granting the United States extensive security control over the island could appease Washington and persuade it to halt its threats and pressure against Europe. This is particularly relevant as Russia’s war in Ukraine, which began in February 2022, continues to pose a security challenge in Eastern Europe. However, Europe as a whole, and Denmark in particular, must learn from history.

The clearest example is Israel’s continuing expansion and annexation of Palestinian territories.

Europe may feel caught between a rock and a hard place, facing U.S. pressure and annexation threats on one side and the war in Ukraine on the other. Yet, as UN Secretary-General António Guterres reportedly told the Financial Times in August, the great powers are discovering the limits of their power. He cited Russia’s war in Ukraine, the failed U.S. war against Iran, and

the emergence of new powers as concrete examples.

Although Denmark and Greenland have repeatedly insisted that Washington respect the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark and acknowledge that Greenland is not for sale, the agreement may, in practice, produce the opposite outcome.

The days when the United States was regarded as a law-abiding country are long gone. Trump’s abrogation of the hard-won 2015 Iran nuclear deal, which had been endorsed by the UN Security Council, and his alignment with Israel in launching a full-scale, surprise, and illegal war against Iran in 2026 serve as reminders before the eyes of the entire world, including Europe.

Greenland’s Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen welcomed the agreement with the Trump administration.

“I am delighted on behalf of Greenland that we are nearing the conclusion of an agreement. An agreement that will benefit not only the security of us all, but also the continued development of this country,” he said in a social media post on Saturday.

“The agreement recognizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our Kingdom and the right of the Greenlandic people to self-determination,” he added.

Earlier in his term, Trump argued that the United States needed control of Greenland for “economic security” and described ownership and control of the territory as an “absolute necessity.” During his first term, in 2019, he characterized the potential purchase of Greenland as “essentially a large real estate deal.”

Taken as a whole, Denmark, Greenland, Europe, and NATO may be turning a page against their own interests, a decision that could prove extremely detrimental to them in the long run.

It may not be long before they come to regret their acquiescence to the unpredictable Trump administration and the potential actions of future U.S. presidents who may adopt similar ambitions.



tegic location, resources, and maritime routes.

Allies in war, rivals for influence

At the beginning of the war, it was easy to place Saudi Arabia and the UAE in one camp and Iran in the opposing camp. But that picture has changed.

Iran remains a key player in the Yemeni equation. The political and reported military support that Tehran has provided to Ansarallah has given Iran leverage over Red Sea security.

Reducing Ansarallah to nothing more than an Iranian ally oversimplifies the Yemeni landscape. The movement has its own domestic agenda and calculations, and operates within a complex Yemeni conflict that has lasted for years.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Flames engulf Riyadh airport fuel tank as Saudi crisis deepens



By staff writer

TEHRAN — Fire climbed the side of what was reported to be an Aramco fuel tank near King Khalid International Airport on Saturday morning. Thick plumes of black smoke poured into the Riyadh sky.

Residents filmed the blaze from apartment balconies while commercial flight trackers showed the aviation hub completely paralyzed.

FlightRadar24, a global flight-tracking platform, listed the facility at its maximum disruption index of 5.0, with hundreds of outgoing flights grounded. Explosions had violently shaken the capital hours earlier.

The devastating war Saudi Arabia exported to Yemen for nearly a decade has arrived at its own doorstep.

Illusions of security

The panic began overnight. Saudi Civil Defense pushed emergency alerts directly to mobile phones across Riyadh and the adjacent al-Kharj governorate.

Messages ordered residents to stay indoors and step away from glass windows. Two powerful explosions then rattled western neighborhoods near the heavily fortified diplomatic quarter.

Similar sirens wailed in Yanbu on the Red Sea coast, as well as Khamis Mushait, Jizan, Abha, Jeddah, Taif, and al-Ula. These warnings marked the first air raid alerts in the capital since clashes with Yemen escalated in July.

As of writing this, Saudi authorities maintained complete silence on the extent of the damage, offering domestic audiences no explanation for the burning aviation fuel depot.

The coastal chokehold

The strike on Riyadh aligns with a severe shift in regional power dynamics. Ansarallah declared a strict naval blockade against Saudi Arabia on July 20.

Yemeni officials framed the move as a direct response to the suffocating siege imposed on their impoverished country by Riyadh. Sanaa’s armed forces have since systematically targeted Saudi commercial and military vessels in the

Red Sea.

They recently seized Yemen’s entire western coastline in a rapid territorial offensive. That specific advance placed the highly strategic Bab el-Mandeb Strait under Yemeni control.

American weapons and diplomatic hypocrisy

Saudi warplanes have answered the coastal losses with hundreds of strikes across Taiz, Marib, Hodeidah, and Saada.

The renewed bombing campaign mirrors the brutal offensive Riyadh launched in March 2015. Western allies poured billions into the Saudi military machine, providing targeting intelligence, logistical cover, and diplomatic protection.

Tens of thousands of Yemenis perished under American munitions. Washington continues to profit heavily from the bloodshed. The U.S. State Department recently approved a 24.3 billion-dollar weapons package, selling 48 F-35 fighter jets to Riyadh.

Yet advanced American stealth fighters cannot intercept the reality on the ground. Saudi interceptor missile stockpiles are reportedly running dry.

The United Nations Security Council condemned the Yemeni retaliatory strikes on Saudi infrastructure, predictably ignoring the daily Saudi bombardment of Yemeni civilian areas.

Such blatant diplomatic shielding aligns with Israeli and American hegemony in the region, but it fundamentally fails to secure Saudi airspace.

Yemeni military spokesman Yahya Saree vowed a severe operational response after foiling covert hostile activities in Sanaa on Friday.

Although the Yemeni military has not claimed responsibility for the incident, the towering column of smoke over Riyadh on Saturday may have been an early indication of that response.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman plans to host global investors and billionaires in Riyadh at a major investment summit this October. The flames at King Khalid airport send an undeniable message to those investors.

Israeli kills three Palestinians in Gaza including health official’s son

TEHRAN — Israel continues its systematic obliteration of Gaza. On Saturday, military forces killed three more Palestinians, blatantly violating the October 2025 “ceasefire agreement.” The death toll since the genocide began in 2023 now nears 74,000.

A strike in Jabalia killed Basir al-Bursh, son of Dr. Munir al-Bursh, Gaza’s health director. Al-Bursh has led Gaza’s healthcare system throughout the ongoing genocidal campaign.

A drone strike in Shujaiya killed another Palestinian. A young girl died from wounds inflicted by Israeli military gunfire north of Nuseirat camp.

Simultaneously, Israeli forces deployed military vehicles to open heavy fire across Tuffah, Khan Younis, and Rafah. They terrorize displaced civilians trapped in uninhabitable tents.

The devastation extends beyond airstrikes. A damaged six-story building collapsed in western Gaza City, crushing families sheltering inside. At least 20 Palestinians died, including five children.

Dozens remain missing. Civil Defense spokesperson Mahmoud Bassal said prior bombardments severely damaged the building’s foundation.

Rescue operations are completely para-

lyzed. Israel blocks the entry of heavy machinery and fuel. This is a siege tactic fully enabled by Washington to maximize Palestinian suffering.

Behind concrete walls, Israel wages a parallel war against Palestinian captives. The Palestinian Prisoners’ Media Office reports that inmates at Rakevet prison endure systematic torture.

Israeli guards isolate detainees for brutal beatings, spray closed cells with gas, and fire rubber-coated bullets at unarmed men.

Gaza detainees have reported severe genital assaults. They are deprived of food, sunlight, and the right to pray.

Conditions are equally horrific at Ofer Prison. Maher Rizq Abed al-Naasan, a 60-year-old detainee, faces extreme medical neglect.

Soldiers beat him and extinguished cigarettes on his body during his arrest in July. He suffers from a herniated disc and chronic inflammation but receives zero medical care.

Backed by American arms shipments, Israel has destroyed 90 percent of Gaza’s civilian infrastructure.

Many consider the October 2024 “truce” as a deceptive framework. Israel has killed over 1,380 Palestinians since the agreement was signed.

How has Yemen’s role reshaped the regional conflict?

From page 1 ► full-scale war since the 2022 truce, amid escalating fighting along the western coast.

The war that began over control of the Yemeni capital gradually took a different direction: from Sanaa to Taiz, from the Saudi border to the coast, and from cities to islands, ports, and maritime routes.

The farther the conflict moves away from the question of the Yemeni state, the closer it comes to the question of geography. This is what makes Yemen today different from the Yemen that Saudi Arabia and the UAE waged war against in 2015.

The war that moved beyond Sanaa

When Saudi Arabia and the UAE began their military intervention in Yemen in 2015, the main objective was to prevent Ansarallah from consolidating its control over the Yemeni state and to restore the former government to Sanaa.

The prolonged war changed the nature of the conflict, and Yemen was no longer a battlefield between two clearly defined sides. Multiple local forces emerged, each with its own interests, calculations, and external networks. The south became an issue in its own right, the western coast developed into a separate theater, and ports and islands became central elements in the balance of power.

This created differences between the Saudi and Emirati visions. Saudi Arabia viewed Yemen primarily through the lens of

national security and its land border, seeking to prevent the emergence of a power along its southern frontier.

The UAE, by contrast, developed a stronger focus on the coast, ports, islands, and maritime routes, while building close relationships with local forces in the south and along the coast.

This did not mean that Riyadh and Abu Dhabi immediately moved from alliance to hostility. But the coalition that brought them together in the war did not erase their differing interests over what kind of Yemen should emerge from the conflict.

Here lies one of the paradoxes of the Yemeni war: the closer allies came to achieving military gains, the larger the political questions became about the future of those gains.

Saudi-Emirati rivalry in Yemen has become increasingly visible in recent years. At the end of December 2025, Saudi Arabia bombed sites in Mukalla, saying the targeted weapons and equipment had reached the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council. The development reflected the scale of divergence between the former war partners.

For this reason, interpreting the fall of Mokha simply as an “Ansarallah” victory over Saudi-backed forces is not enough. Mokha reveals something deeper: the Yemeni front is no longer a single front, and control of territory has become tied to a broader competition over influence, stra-

Iran’s delegation marches at Nagoya

TEHRAN - The opening ceremony of the 20th Asian Games got underway on Saturday at Mizuho Park Stadium in Nagoya, Japan, with Iran’s delegation taking part in the parade of nations.

Iran is represented at the Nagoya Asian Games by 308 athletes, competing across 37 sports federations and associations.

Zahra Kiani and Fazel Atrachali served as Iran’s flag bearers during the opening ceremony.

Kiani, a two-time Asian Games silver medalist from the Jakarta and Hangzhou editions, shared the honor with Atrachali, the captain of Iran’s national kabaddi team and a record five-time Asian Games participant.

The Iranian delegation, carrying the name “Shajareh Tayyebeh”, entered Mizuho Park Stadium wearing matching white sports uniforms featuring the Iranian flag.

The ceremony began with the official hoisting of the Japanese flag, accompanied by the national anthem, marking the formal opening of the Games in the host city.

Afghanistan was the first delegation to enter the stadium during the parade of nations.

Japan’s Emperor Naruhito, Empress Masako, Crown Prince Akishino, Crown Princess Kiko, and Kirsty Coventry, President of the International Olympic Committee, were among the distinguished guests attending the ceremony.

The stadium was not yet at full capacity when the ceremony began, with a significant number of empty seats visible in the stands. However, the atmosphere grew livelier as the delegations entered the venue.

The arrival of China’s delegation drew loud cheers from the crowd, with a large section of the stadium appearing to be occupied by Chinese supporters.

Iran’s delegation will now turn its attention to competition, with its 308 athletes set to represent the country across 37 sports at the Nagoya Asian Games.

Iran lose to Kuwait in Asian Games handball opener

TEHRAN – Iran’s men’s handball team suffered a narrow 26-24 defeat to Kuwait in their opening match of the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya on Saturday.

Team Melli, coached by Nenad Kljai?, produced a strong performance in the first half but were unable to maintain their advantage as Kuwait secured victory in the closing stages.

Iran have been drawn in Group B alongside Kuwait, Bahrain, South Korea and Kazakhstan.

Iran’s Preliminary Round Schedule:

Monday, Sept. 21: Iran vs. Bahrain

Tuesday, Sept. 22: Iran vs. South Korea

Wednesday, Sept. 23: Iran vs. Kazakhstan

Iran’s sabre team ready to win medal in Nagoya

TEHRAN - Mohammad Rahbari, who won individual and team bronze medals in fencing at the Hangzhou Asian Games three years ago, will now return to the continental showpiece in a different role.

After retiring from competitive fencing following the Paris Olympics, Rahbari joined Iran’s national sabre team coaching staff and is set to make his Asian Games coaching debut in Nagoya.

The former national team sabreist believes Iran have put the difficult period following the Olympics behind them and are now in a strong position to challenge for a medal at the 2026 Asian Games.

Speaking about his team’s preparations,

Rahbari said the squad have made significant progress in recent months.

“The team went through some problems and disagreements over the past few months, but most of those issues have now been resolved. That helped the players train much better, and they are now more prepared than ever for the Asian Games.”

Rahbari said training camps in Italy and Ankara had also played an important role in the team’s preparations.

“We are currently in good shape and ready to compete for a medal in Nagoya. The training camps in Italy and Ankara have certainly helped.

Overall, the combination of these programs and the improved atmosphere has allowed us to arrive at this stage without internal disagreements and with greater confidence and readiness.”

The national team coach acknowledged the strength of the Asian field, pointing to the depth and quality of several leading fencing nations.

“The Asian Games are important for every country in Asia, and fencing is particularly competitive on this continent because several Asian nations are among the world’s leading fencing powers. The competition will be very close.”

However, Rahbari believes Iran have a realistic chance of reaching the podium.

“I see my team as capable of winning a medal. I am not saying that one of the podium places is reserved for Iran, but based on what I know about the players’ technical and mental condition at the moment, I am very hopeful that we can achieve it.”

Ali Pakdaman, Mohammad Fotouhi, Nima Zakeri and Taha Kargarpoor will represent Iran in the men’s sabre competition in Nagoya.

Iran are expected to face strong challenges from South Korea, Japan, China and Uzbekistan.

“South Korea have always been our traditional rivals, while Japan, China and Uzbekistan are also among our main opponents. Japan, in particular, have caused problems for our fencers recently. It is not only Iran; even South Korea have sometimes struggled against Japan.”

Teymourian part ways with Iran football team

TEHRAN - Andranik Teymourian has ended his time as an assistant coach of the Iran national football team, bringing his collaboration with head coach Amir Ghalenoei to a close.

Teymourian, a former Iran international and experienced midfielder, joined Team Melli’s coaching staff in April 2023. During his time with the national team, he worked alongside the coaching staff in preparing the squad for major international competitions and qualifiers.

The reason for Teymourian’s departure has not yet been officially announced. His exit comes at an important stage for Iran, as the national team has recently begun their first training camp in preparation for the upcoming AFC Asian Cup.

Iran are scheduled to play two international friendly matches during the camp, facing Uzbekistan and Russia.

The matches are expected to provide valuable preparation as Ghalenoei continues to assess his squad and coaching staff.

Teymourian’s departure marks a change within Iran’s coaching setup, although the national team have yet to announce whether another coach will be appointed to fill his position.

From 2006 to the end of 2010, Teymourian played for three clubs in England, namely Bolton Wanderers and Fulham in the Premier League and Barnsley in the Football League Championship.

He played his first match for Iran in 2005 and has featured in their squads for the 2006 and 2014 World Cups, as well as also the 2007, 2011 and 2015 Asian Cups.

Gonbad Kabud Mosque: Nine centuries of history, art and memory in northeast Iran

TEHRAN – Situated in the historic landscape of Kalat in northeastern Iran, the Gonbad Kabud Mosque stands as a remarkable record of nine centuries of architectural change, artistic expression and cultural continuity.

Also known as the Blue Dome Mosque, the Naderi Mosque, and Jameh Mosque of Kalat, ther religious structure is more than a place of worship. Its successive architectural layers reflect the influence of different periods of Iranian history, from the Seljuk era to the Ilkhanid and Afsharid periods and later Qajar renovations.

According to historical researcher Alireza Yavari, evidence suggests that the original structure of the Jameh Mosque of Kalat dates to the Seljuk period. The mosque, however, was substantially altered and expanded over the centuries, with each period leaving its own architectural and artistic imprint.

The main dome is attributed to the Ilkhanid period, while Nader Shah Afshar, the 18th-century ruler who made Kalat one of his important strongholds, is credited with completing parts of the complex. The surrounding buildings and iwans were constructed or developed during the Afsharid period, adding another layer to the monument’s long history.

The mosque’s most distinctive feature is its blue-turquoise appearance. Extensive use of turquoise tiles on the dome and iwans gave the monument its name, with the color traditionally associated in Islamic architecture with the sky and infinity.

Architecturally, the mosque has four iwans and a large, two-tiered blue dome. The cylindrical drum supports the dome, while the space beneath it forms a regular octagon, with each side measuring about four meters. The principal courtyard is rectangular, measuring approximately 19 meters wide and 27 meters long.

Fragments of yellow-and-blue tilework survive on the four iwans, while extensive examples of seven-color tilework can be seen in both the interior and exterior decoration. Floral and arabesque motifs, together with intricate geometric patterns, adorn the spandrels above the iwans and arcades.

For Yavari, these decorations are not merely ornamental. They reflect the religious and cultural symbolism of the periods in which



A view of Kalat in northeast Iran with the Gonbad Kabud Mosque in the foreground

they were created and demonstrate the technical skill of Iranian craftsmen in combining color, geometry and form.

The monument also carries physical evidence of its continued use and restoration. A Qajar-era stone inscription in Nastaliq script near the main entrance records major repairs undertaken in 1250 AH by Yalang Tush Khan ibn Fath Ali, the then governor of Kalat.

The mosque was officially registered as a national heritage site of Iran in 1967, under registration No. 661. Historical photographs from the 1960s, however, document significant deterioration and damage to parts of the structure.

Preservation efforts intensified in the decades that followed, with heritage authorities undertaking restoration and conservation work to prevent further deterioration. Today, the mosque is regarded as one of Kalat’s important cultural and tourism landmarks.

A new restoration project has recently begun, according to Yavari. The project, reportedly allocated 500 million toman, includes roof reconstruction, repairs to damaged structural sections, extensive repointing and restoration of the roof structure. The work is intended to strengthen the building against rain, temperature fluctuations and earth-

quakes.

The conservation program also includes repairing and repainting more than 500 square meters of interior and exterior surfaces. Yavari stressed that historically compatible materials and colors should be used so that modern interventions do not overwhelm the monument’s historic character.

For Kalat, the importance of Gonbad Kabud Mosque extends beyond its architecture. Over centuries, the mosque has been a place where different communities and local groups gathered and interacted, making it part of the area’s social as well as religious history.

Its preservation, therefore, is not simply a matter of repairing an old building. It is an effort to retain a physical record of the cultural layers that have shaped Kalat over centuries.

As restoration progresses, the mosque is expected to accommodate more visitors and strengthen its role within cultural tourism in Razavi Khorasan province. For travelers interested in Iran’s architectural heritage, Gonbad Kabud offers something that few monuments can: a single structure in which successive chapters of Iranian history remain visible in its dome, iwans, inscriptions, tilework and surviving architectural fabric.

Iran presents climate-resilient tourism experiences at COMCEC meeting



A view of Soheili village on Qeshm Island, southern Iran

placing increasing pressure on natural, coastal and desert destinations and underscoring the need to reconsider tourism development policies.

Sadeqzadeh highlighted the villages of Soheili on Qeshm Island and Shafiabad in Kerman as notable Iranian examples. Both villages were included in the UN Tourism Best Tourism Villages list in 2025.

Soheili, located near Qeshm’s

mangrove forests, has sought to link tourism development with environmental protection through local community participation, particularly the involvement of women and young people. Its measures include the use of quieter boats, the annual planting of about 200,000 mangrove seedlings and the establishment of more than 40 eco-lodges. These initiatives have created direct employment

for nearly 940 people, according to the Iranian presentation.

In Shafiabad, located near the Lut Desert, a women group has allocated part of its handicraft income to rehabilitating drying qanats, linking tourism with water-resource management, environmental protection and women’s economic empowerment.

Sadeqzadeh said meaningful community participation, active ecosystem protection, the use of local architecture and materials, and directing part of tourism revenues toward conservation could provide useful approaches for other OIC countries.

The meeting is expected to produce policy recommendations for consideration at the 42nd COMCEC Ministerial Session.

COMCEC is the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the OIC, with its coordination office based in Ankara.

Global tourism growth slows to 0.4% in H1

TEHRAN - International tourism grew by 0.4% in the first half of 2026, with around 690 million tourists travelling abroad as rising travel costs, geopolitical tensions and the conflict in West Asia weighed on global demand, according to the latest World Tourism Barometer from UN Tourism.

International arrivals rose 2% in the first quarter but declined 1% in the second quarter. Arrivals fell 3% in April and again in June, when a 6% decline in Western Europe and a 5% drop in Southeast Asia contributed to the global slowdown.

Africa recorded the strongest regional growth, with international arrivals up 4% in the first six months, followed by Europe at 3% and the Americas at 2%. Asia and the Pacific registered 1% growth but remained 11%

below 2019 levels. North-East Asia grew 3%, while South Asia and Southeast Asia declined 5% and 1%, respectively.

The Middle East (West Asia) recorded the sharpest decline, with arrivals down 22% amid the regional conflict. UN Tourism said disruptions to air traffic eased in May and June following a ceasefire, allowing some routes to reopen, although recovery remained uneven.

UN Tourism has lowered its forecast for 2026 international tourism growth to 1%-2%, from its earlier projection of 3%-4%.

The organization said travelers are increasingly seeking value for money and may opt for closer or domestic destinations as prices and uncertainty remain elevated.



File photo depicts foreign travelers visiting the UNESCO-listed Imam Square in Isfahan, central Iran.

Tehran, Moscow seek closer cooperation on disaster management, emergency response

TEHRAN – Iran and Russia have discussed ways to expand bilateral cooperation in disaster management, including joint training programs, emergency response, and the use of advanced technologies in dealing with natural and man-made hazards.

Omid Mohtarami, deputy head of Iran's National Disaster Management Organization, and Alexander Kurenkov, Russia's minister of emergency situations, held talks on bilateral cooperation in disaster management, IRIB reported on Saturday.

Kurenkov said that, in addition to cooperation within the framework of the five Caspian Sea states and an active bilateral agenda, Russia and Iran interact in international organizations and frameworks, including the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS.

He added that the two countries consistently support constructive initiatives that serve their fundamental interests.

Russia supports the comprehensive expansion of cooperation between universities and is ready to explore opportunities



for training Iranian specialists through the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations, as well as organizing short-term training courses within its agencies, Kurenkov said.

Referring to Iran's successful experience in providing relief and public services during the recent war, Kurenkov said Russia is also interested in sending a delegation to Iran to learn from the country's experience in protecting critical infrastructure against threats.

The two sides also exchanged views and discussed potential

joint initiatives in a range of specialized areas, including aerial firefighting, assessment and estimation of damage caused by natural disasters using satellite and drone imagery, improving the safety of high-rise buildings, river dredging, establishing disaster management command and control centers, and search and rescue operations.

Mohtarami, for his part, said that, given Iran's high vulnerability to natural hazards and disasters, drawing on the experiences and technical expertise of other countries, including Russia, is of

great importance to Iran, adding that Tehran is ready to undertake joint initiatives with the Russian Federation in this field.

He also stressed the importance of rescue operations for people affected by war, saying that Iran and Russia are currently facing adversaries that, according to him, violate international rules of warfare and use prohibited weapons against residential and civilian areas, sometimes causing harm to children and other civilians.

He called for further strengthening the capabilities of disaster management teams in rescuing the injured and carrying out firefighting operations.

Mohtarami further said Iran is ready to provide any necessary assistance and support to Russia in the event of emergencies.

Over recent years, Iran and Russia have witnessed increased cooperation and joint action in disaster management, he said, adding that Iran is prepared to develop a long-term framework for bilateral cooperation across the disaster management cycle under a joint document agreed upon by the two countries.

IRCS, Iraqi health ministry agree to deepen ties in health sector

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and Iraq's Ministry of Health have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in healthcare, with a focus on medical education, treatment, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment.

The head of the IRCS, Pirhossein Kolivand, and the Iraqi health minister, Abdul Hussein Aziz Al-Moussawi, met in Baghdad on Thursday, the IRCS website reported.

The meeting focused on holding joint specialized and subspecialized educational courses, sharing clinical experiences, enhancing specialized skills of Iraqi health staff, and fostering cooperation in manufacturing pharmaceutical and medical tools.

The Iranian official highlighted the high capacity of the IRCS in the field of health, including the extensive network of medical centers, polyclinics, specialized medical and nursing capabilities, large number of volunteers, noting that the IRCS is ready to benefit from its expertise and knowledge to foster collaborations between the two sides.

He also announced the IRCS's readiness to train Iraqi physicians, nurses, and specialized personnel, dispatch Iranian experts, distinguished professors, and medical teams to Iraq, as well as help establish medical and nursing schools in Iraq, particularly Najaf.

For his part, Al-Moussawi lauded Iran's help, saying that "I am deeply grateful for your support. We are committed to directing all of our efforts toward establishing and further developing this cooperation."

Setting up humanitarian training center in West Asia

In June, Kolivand proposed that the United Nations resident coordinator and the director of the Regional Office for West and Central Africa launch a humanitarian training center in West Asia, announcing readiness to take the leading role in this regard.

The IRCS head offered the proposal in a meeting with the UN resident coordinator, Christine Weigand, and the director of the Regional Office for West and Central Africa at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Charles Bernimolin.

Benefiting from 110,000 specialized and trained staff, as well as six million young volunteers, the Iranian Red Crescent Society has a high capacity in providing relief, educational, and humanitarian services, IRNA quoted Kolivand as saying.

The IRCS has an active presence in offering rescue and relief services to people in accidents and natural disasters. It is the only national society in the world that utilizes mounted volunteers to provide rescue services in insurmountable areas. The IRCS also has significant achievements in air rescue and the use of drones in rescue missions, he added.

Currently, the IRCS is cooperating with 19 countries across the world in manufacturing artificial and smart organs. The society has also developed the capacity to produce medical and pharmaceutical products.

The official highlighted that the IRCS measures during the recent US-Israeli war

against Iran have drawn the attention of the international community and humanitarian institutions, which has paved the way to the expansion of collaborations.

He went on to say that the IRCS is ready to foster cooperation with the UN and its affiliated agencies in sharing relief experiences, holding joint educational courses, developing regional cooperation, enhancing human capacities, and even establishing a UN regional coordinating office in Iran.

For her part, Weigand lauded the IRCS efforts and accomplishments in concurrent management of the recent war and floods in the country, noting that the IRCS's precise and up-to-date reports and documents on the war have been a key factor in reflecting the realities, making humanitarian demands, drawing the attention of the international community, and attracting their support and aid for impacted individuals.

Bernimolin, for his part, said the activities and capabilities of the IRCS have been recognized internationally for years; the IRCS is known as a professional, capable, and respected society.

The IRCS's accurate reports and documents have greatly contributed to monitoring humanitarian conditions, assessing needs, and planning humanitarian responses, he added.

He said that the future collaborations between UN and IRCS will be centered around promoting educational cooperation, sharing expertise, and benefiting from reciprocal capacities. The official called for enhancing joint efforts in addressing the needs of those affected, and strengthening humanitarian actions.

Upcoming precipitation expected to help revive Hour Al-Azim wetland



TEHRAN – Increased rainfall forecast for the coming two seasons is expected to help restore the Hour Al-Azim wetland, Ahmad-Reza Lahijanzadeh, the deputy head of the Department of Environment (DOE), has said.

Located in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, on the border of Iran and Iraq, the wetland is part of the Mesopotamian marshes and is known as one of the region's valuable ecosystems. The wetland serves as an important wintering and breeding habitat for migratory birds to breed and pass the winter.

It also plays a crucial role in managing dust, moderating the environment, and creating a shield against extreme weather events in the region, Mehr news agency quoted Lahijanzadeh as saying.

The wetland is primarily fed by Karkheh River in Iran and the Tigris in Iraq. Over the previous water year (September 23, 2024 – September 23, 2025), it grappled with a severe lack of water due to a drastic reduction in water inflow to the Iraqi section, which dried up the wetland and led to spontaneous combustion, releasing a large amount of air pollution and smoke, adversely affecting cities in Khuzestan province, the official highlighted.

The wetland serves as an important wintering and breeding habitat for migratory birds to breed and pass the winter.

In the current water year (September 23, 2025 – September 23, 2026), the increase in precipitation in the last month of winter and the first month of spring helped part of the wetland to be filled with water, which has significantly dropped due to a lack of water in summer, Lahijanzadeh added.

The constant inflow of water, the provision of the wetland's water rights, and transboundary cooperation are among key factors to preserve the ecological function of the wetland and prevent it from turning into a dust hotspot and fuel for wildfire, the official further noted.

With the El Niño phase developing across the Pacific Ocean, the country is forecast to receive considerable rain in the fall and winter.

'El Niño' or "the boy" is widely used to describe the warming of sea surface temperature that occurs every few years, typically concentrated in the central-east equatorial Pacific.

Rainfall, restoration projects replenish many wetlands

In spring, heavy rainfall, along with restoration projects, increased water flow into many wetlands, including Shimbar, Zarivar, Helleh, and Hour al-Azim, bringing them back to life.

"Thanks to a 3.7 percent increase in average rainfall, the water inflow to wetlands across the country has improved compared to last year," IRIB quoted Arezou Ashrafzadeh, an official with DOE, as saying

In Gilan province, Bojaq wetland was in good standing. Anzali wetland was in fair condition after the removal of invasive water hyacinths. However, Gorgan Bay, and Miankaleh wetland required additional measures to be restored. Sadly, in Golestan province, Alagol wetland was not in a favorable condition due to low rainfall, the official noted.

About 70 percent of Quri Gol wetland, the only fresh wetland, in East Azarbaijan, was filled with water. Compared to the same period last year, the water level of the wetland increased by 27 cm, reaching 1912.43 meters.

Some 116 hectares of the wetland were filled with water. It had about 700 million cubic meters (mcm) of water, which was lower than the 3.8 mcm amount designated for the wetland.

Quri Gol wetland hosts over 92 bird species, which are all migratory birds, except redhead coots, 14 species of reptiles, 4 species of amphibians, and one species of fish, as well as 280 plant species.

In Fars province, 80, 30, and 10-15 percent of Maharloo, Arjan, and Bakhtegan wetlands were filled with water.

With an area of 600 sq. Km, Maharloo Lake in southern Fars Province is a perfect stop-over for migratory birds, including flamingos. In mid-summer, the lake loses its water due to high evaporation, leaving behind a white bed and pinkish-colored water.

The Arjan restoration project is in the beginning phase; it covers 2000 hectares. The water of the wetland depends on the amount of rainfall. The wetland is one of the main habitats for migratory birds like cranes, flamingos, wild ducks, and geese.

Bakhtegan is a Salt Lake with a surface area of 3,500 square kilometers, once Iran's second-largest lake. Several dams on the river had significantly reduced water flow into the lake, increasing its salinity and endangering the lake's populations of flamingos and other migratory birds.

Bamdej wetland is being revived. The project to restore the wetland kicked off about two years ago with the help of the private sector, investing 1.3 trillion rials (around 8 million dollars), with 2 trillion rials (about 12 million dollars) more which is needed to complete the project.

Intense rainfalls led Shimbar, Zarivar, and Helleh wetlands to be filled to 100 percent and overflow.

Located at the foot of the Zagros mountains, Zarivar is a freshwater wetland designated as a Ramsar Site.

Marreh wetland in Qom province was in a favorable condition. Known as the "Desert Gem", the wetland stands as one of the five significant wetlands in Qom province, becoming a sanctuary for various bird species.

Sprawled about 40 kilometers north of the city of Qom and adjacent to the Qom – Tehran highway, Hoz-e-Sultan wetland, a salt lake, is struggling with water scarcity.

Miqan wetland, in Markazi province, also revived after years of drought. The wetland's 12,000-hectare water body was restored following years of drought, thanks to favorable rainfall.

The last time more than 100 million cubic meters of water entered the wetland was in 2019, when the entire basin became submerged, Press TV reported.

Miqan Wetland hosts around 12,000 migratory birds annually, including species arriving from Siberia. More than 16 percent of Iran's bird species and 60 percent of the bird species recorded in Markazi province inhabit the wetland.

Spanning over 927 hectares, Kani Barazan wetland, which is one of the most important satellite wetlands south of Lake Urmia, was also recovered.

Over 95 earthquakes hit Iran in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 96 earthquakes have been recorded across the country in a week from September 12 to 18, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 86 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, nine earthquakes with a magnitude between 3 and 4, and one earthquake with a magnitude between 4 and 5 have occurred in the country, irsc reported.

Of the total quakes, one had a magnitude of 4.2 on the Richter scale, which occurred on September 14 in Khorasan Razavi province.

Among the provinces of the country, Khorasan Razavi experienced the highest number of earthquakes with 19, followed by North Khorasan with 10, Kerman with 9 earthquakes, Semnan and Fars each with 8 earthquakes.

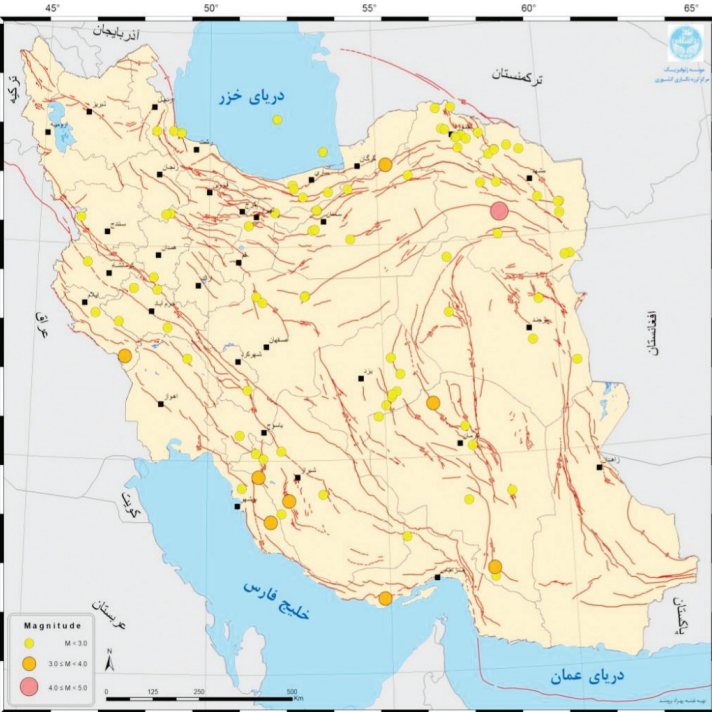
During the same period, two earthquakes hit Tehran. No

earthquakes were recorded in East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Alborz, Qom, Qazvin, Sistan-Baluchestan, Golestan, and Markazi 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.



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SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

When this world favors somebody, it lends him the attributes, and surpassing merits of others and when it turns its face away from him it snatches away even his own excellences and fame.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:58 Evening: 18:23 Dawn: 4:27 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:51 (tomorrow)

15th International 100-Second Film Festival concludes in Tehran



Ahmad Heydarian, winner of the best film award in the "National: Battle for the Future" section, holds his award at the closing ceremony of the 15th International 100-Second Film Festival at the Art Bureau in Tehran on September 18, 2026.

TEHRAN – The closing ceremony of 15th International 100-Second Film Festival was held on Friday at the Art Bureau in Tehran.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Mohadeseh Pirhadi, the festival's secretary, welcomed the attendees and said: "Spending time with young filmmakers who made films for Iran and remained hopeful for the future was truly delightful, and I am grateful to all of them".

"Tonight, regardless of who receives an award, you are all winners, because you maintained a hopeful perspective and made films for Iran," she added.

Subsequently, the jury of various sections announced the winners who received their awards on stage, Mehr reported.

This year's edition of the festival was held from September 15 to 18. This edition hosted works focusing on three main themes: "National: Battle for the Future," "International: Battle for the Children of the World," and "Special: Battle for the Homeland."

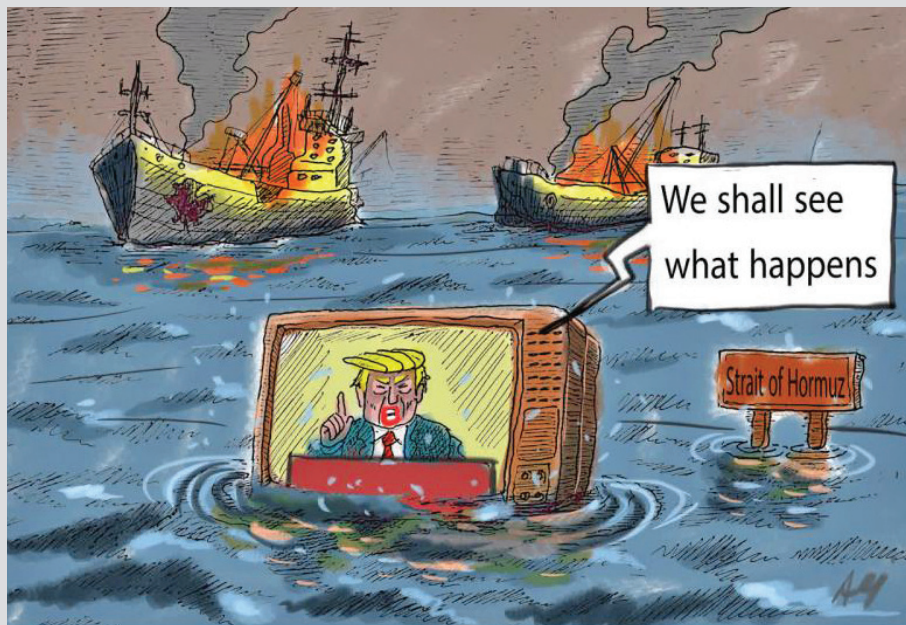
The themes were designed to provoke thought on the precarious nature of the future, the urgent need for the protection and rights of children globally, and the enduring spirit of patriotism and national identity.

The selected 170 works for this edition included fiction, animated, artificial intelligence, and documentary films.

Organized by the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, the festival is renowned for its stringent time constraints, which challenge creators to deliver a complete and impactful narrative within a very limited window.

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

Cartoon of Day



Strait of Hormuz

Cartoonist: Ali Ghanaat from Iran

First university textbooks on resistance literature unveiled in Tehran

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN- The first collection of university textbooks dedicated to resistance literature was unveiled at a ceremony held at the Art Bureau in Tehran on Saturday, providing academic resources for a field that has been taught at Iranian universities for nearly two decades.

The ceremony was attended by the authors and researchers of the books, along with university professors and veteran figures in the field of resistance literature.

Speaking at the event, Mohamadreza Sangari, head of the Resistance Literature Think Tank of the Art Bureau, said the think tank was established in 2019 following a directive from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, with addressing the scientific and academic needs of resistance literature as one of its main concerns.

He said that 35 subjects were initially identified for academic work, with the plan calling for the participation and expertise of professors and universities across the country. According to Sangari, work is currently underway on 16 of those subjects, some of which are represented in the collection unveiled at Saturday's ceremony.

Sangari noted that resistance literature has been taught as a university field for about 18 years, but there had been no comprehensive textbooks specifically developed for many of its courses.

He added that some areas of the



field had also remained insufficiently addressed in university curricula, making the development of academic resources an important need for both students and instructors.

The books unveiled at the ceremony cover different aspects of resistance literature and its research methods. Among them is "Horizons of Resistance Literature" by Hosein-Ali Qobadi, "Analysis and Interpretation of Biographical Writings of the Islamic Revolution and the Sacred Defense" by Mohammad-Hasan Shahangi, "Dar Barou-ye Bavar" by Gholamreza Kafi, and "Research Methods and Reference Studies in Resistance Literature," authored by Hamed Safi.

Resistance literature is a field of literary studies concerned with works that reflect experiences of resistance, struggle, war, oppression

and social challenges. It encompasses genres such as poetry, fiction, memoir, drama and literary criticism, while exploring themes including sacrifice, perseverance, freedom, justice, collective memory and resistance.

In Iran, the field has developed particularly through literary works documenting the Islamic Revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. Memoirs, autobiographical writings, poetry and fiction have provided literary accounts of individual and collective experiences during these periods. The field has also expanded to include broader discussions of resistance and the ways in which historical and social experiences are represented in literature.

The academic study of resistance literature therefore involves not only examining literary texts, but also

studying the relationship between literature, historical memory, biography, oral history and methods of documenting individual experiences.

The initiative to prepare university textbooks seeks to provide a more systematic academic framework for a field that has developed considerably in Iranian contemporary literature.

By bringing together the expertise of university professors and researchers, the Resistance Literature Think Tank aims to address gaps in existing academic resources and provide specialized materials for students and instructors.

The unveiling ceremony marked the publication of the first group of these university-oriented works, while research and preparation of resources on other identified subjects are continuing.

IAF to show 2026 comedy drama film "The Invite"

TEHRAN – The Iranian Artist Forum (IAF) in Tehran will screen the 2026 American comedy drama film "The Invite" directed by Olivia Wilde on Monday.

The film screening is set for 6 pm at the Nasseri Hall of the IAF and will be followed by a review session in the presence of the filmmaker and critic Esmail Miandoost.

It is an English-language remake of the 2020 Spanish film "The People Upstairs" by Cesc Gay. The film stars Seth Rogen, Wilde, Penélope Cruz, and Edward Norton.

The movie is about Joe (Emmy winner Seth Rogen) and Angela (Olivia Wilde), a middle-aged couple whose marriage is on thin ice.

Feeling stuck and increasingly disconnected, they invite their enigmatic upstairs neighbors over for dinner. What begins as an awkward evening of drinks and conversation soon drifts into increasingly unexpected territory, forcing everyone at the table to confront uncomfortable truths about love, attraction, and commitment and the night

spirals into unexpected places.

Also starring Academy Award winner Penélope Cruz and Golden Globe winner Edward Norton, "The Invite" balances biting comedy with surprising emotional insight, serving up a deliciously awkward examination of the delicate rules that keep relationships together- or pull them apart.

It has been praised for its razor-sharp humor, crackling chemistry, and perceptive take on modern relationships.

Ed Sheeran backlash marks Palestine's South Africa moment

The attempt to punish rapper Macklemore for speaking out against Israel's genocide in Gaza has become a public relations disaster for mega-star Ed Sheeran and billionaire Israel supporter Robert Kraft.

Sheeran's supporting acts withdrew from his tour and prominent artists and politicians have rallied around the rapper.

This confrontation is a cultural turning point – a shift that recalls the mainstreaming of the South African anti-apartheid campaign in the 1980s.

And the Israel lobby, confident of its power, didn't see it coming.

At Sheeran's MetLife Stadium concerts in New Jersey on 4 and 5 September, Macklemore called for a "free Palestine" and performed "Hind's Hall," his song honoring Palestine solidarity protesters.

Explicitly addressing Jewish audience members, Macklemore said, "My message is for peace, love; for all human beings to be treated with dignity, respect and equality."

The Israeli-American Council – a lobby group funded by Zionist mega-donors Miriam Adelson and her late husband Sheldon – nevertheless launched a petition demanding his removal.

The anti-Palestinian outfit StopAntisemitism attacked his performances, with pop singer Pink chiming in.

On 8 September, Anti-Defamation League chief Jonathan Greenblatt joined the smears.

The Israel lobbyist urged stadium owners to "demonstrate their values," insisting business-

es could decide who to platform – apparently without recognizing the irony that this is exactly the argument Palestinian rights campaigners make against burgeoning anti-BDS laws.

Sheeran caved in.

According to Macklemore's account, Sheeran told him that Kraft had barred him from Gillette Stadium near Boston and rallied other venue owners behind an ultimatum: drop Macklemore or lose access to their stadiums.

Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots football team, confirmed the ban at Gillette, alleging anti-Semitism.

Greenblatt celebrated: "Glad to see Macklemore off Ed Sheeran's tour," he wrote, accusing the artist of "demonizing Jews."

Kraft's intervention fits a long record of anti-Palestinian campaigning.

In 2019, he was recognized with the Genesis Prize, personally presented by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on the theme of "combating anti-Semitism, BDS, and other efforts to delegitimize Israel."

BDS is the Palestinian-led boycott, divestment and sanctions movement.

Accepting the award, Kraft said, "After my family, there is nothing I'm more passionate about than the State of Israel and my Jewish identity."

He donated his million-dollar prize to more than two dozen Zionist groups.

He also donated \$20 million to launch the Foundation to Com-

bat Antisemitism – rebranded as the Blue Square Alliance Against Hate – explicitly linking its mission to smearing and opposing campaigns for Palestinian rights.

In 2022, Kraft's company gave \$1 million to United Democracy Project, a super PAC of the powerful Washington lobby group AIPAC.

Kraft's family foundation donated \$35,000 to Friends of the Israel Defense Forces.

Kraft even runs a "command center" inside Gillette Stadium, a dystopian mass surveillance hub where Israel lobbyists claim to monitor one billion social media posts per day looking for what they deem "anti-Semitism."

"I am appalled by the conflict between Israel and Palestine," Sheeran posted on Instagram. "The suffering and pain caused on both sides is a human tragedy."

In a display of shameless cowardice, Sheeran blamed his concert promoter, claiming he had tried to negotiate with venues and invoked his responsibility to fans and tour workers.

Ireland's Classic Hits radio station has dropped Sheeran from its playlist, following an outpouring from its listeners.

Some Sheeran fans holding tickets for upcoming shows want refunds.

One fan pointed out that Sheeran's protestations that he doesn't like to get involved with politics are hypocritical given his public stances on Ukraine.

Sheeran did acquire some defenders – ones he might prefer not to have. They included his

fellow Britons, far-right anti-Muslim agitator Tommy Robinson and pro-Israel singer Boy George.

Veterans of South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle emphasize the role that international economic and cultural isolation played in forcing change there.

But in hindsight, it is easy to forget how hard the movement had to work to normalize the boycott.

In 1964, Dusty Springfield was among the rare international artists to refuse to play before segregated audiences, forced to abandon a tour rather than comply with the regime's racist policies.

Major acts including Queen, Elton John, Linda Ronstadt, Julio Iglesias, Ray Charles, Boney M, Black Sabbath, Rod Stewart, Tina Turner and Dionne Warwick violated boycott calls and played in South Africa's Sun City resort.

Queen even defended its 1984 Sun City performances by claiming to be "a non-political band" – an excuse that sounds familiar in light of Sheeran's response.

In 1985, Artists United Against Apartheid's Sun City campaign turned the tide, making it increasingly damaging to artists' reputations and careers.

It has taken a long time for Palestine to reach this South Africa moment – too long considering we are three years into Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza.

But it is cause for celebration that the billions spent by the Zionist lobby can no longer hold back the tide of global solidarity.