

Araghchi: Iran will stand firm against any aggression, even a 'Doomsday War'

TEHRAN— Iran has used an intensive diplomatic campaign on the sidelines of the 81st United Nations General Assembly to reiterate that it remains open to diplomacy, while insisting that any future negotiations with the United States must be based on reciprocal commitments, respect for Iran's rights and guarantees against a repetition of previous breaches of agreements.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who held a series of meetings with foreign counterparts, UN officials and other international figures in New York, placed the Strait of Hormuz, Iran-US diplomacy, regional security and the principles of the UN Charter at the center of his agenda. ▶ Page 2

Saudi warplanes bomb Yemeni marketplace, killing and wounding civilians

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Saudi fighter jets bombed a crowded civilian marketplace in southwestern Yemen on Sunday morning. According to preliminary reports, the attack killed at least seven people and wounded at least 43 others. Several children were among the casualties.

It happened at the Mawiyah junction in Taiz province, an area packed with shoppers and stalls. The massacre reflects a sharp escalation by Riyadh. ▶ Page 5

5 arrested near British air base used by US over alleged bomb plot

British authorities evacuated several homes on Sunday over fears of explosive ordnance near RAF Fairford, an air force base in southern England. American military personnel are stationed at the base, and the United States has used it in recent months to load B-52 and B-1 bombers before sending them to strike sites in Iran.

The local police said in a statement on Sunday that several men had been arrested "on suspicion of offenses under the Explosives Act" and that an army specialist explosive ordnance disposal team was "examining a number of vehicles."

The statement added that the police believed the incident was "contained" but that they had a cordon in place and had evacuated homes in the Whelford area of the county of Gloucestershire, which is near the base and west of London. ▶ Page 5



Another Catch in Hormuz

IRGC captures second US spy sub in Hormuz, exposing the limits of Washington's undersea warfare

The IRGC says its specialists have taken possession of the US underwater drone and are retrieving information

The IRGC Navy reiterates that the Strait of Hormuz is closed, warning it will respond to "dangerous movements and unauthorized passage"

The US-made REMUS 600 is an autonomous underwater vehicle capable of diving to 600 meters, equipped with modular sensors for seabed mapping, mine detection, imaging, and data collection

▶ Page 3

Iran fires on vessels traversing unauthorized routes in Strait of Hormuz

TEHRAN — Iranian naval forces have fired warning shots at several foreign vessels attempting to breach designated maritime transit lanes in the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.

According to the Fars News Agency, Iranian Armed Forces intercepted and engaged seven non-compliant vessels overnight after they ignored repeated radio warnings and attempted to navigate through unauthorized passages. The incident follows an engagement the previous night in which 12 other offending vessels were targeted under similar circumstances. ▶ Page 2

Iran urges UN to examine European role in US military operations against Iran

TEHRAN— Iran has called on the United Nations Security Council to examine the role played by European territory, military bases and infrastructure in supporting US military operations against the Islamic Republic, arguing that such assistance could raise questions of international responsibility for the states and officials involved.

In a letter addressed to UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the president of the Security Council, Iran's Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires to the United Nations, Gholamhossein Darzi, cited recent remarks by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte concerning the extensive use of European military facilities in support of US operations against Iran. ▶ Page 3

Iran will respond to any aggression with new weapons

TEHRAN — Iran has warned the United States against any intervention in the Strait of Hormuz, while stressing that its Armed Forces have developed new military technologies and capabilities to respond to any potential aggression.

Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi, spokesman for Iran's Armed Forces, issued the warning on Saturday night, saying that any U.S. attempt to interfere in the strategic waterway would face an Iranian response.

"If the United States intervenes in the Strait of Hormuz, it will get slapped," Shekarchi said, using a colloquial expression to underline the consequences Washington would face in the event of direct intervention.

He also said that the United States had "no way out other than leaving West Asia," arguing that the sooner American forces withdrew from the region, the lower the losses they would suffer. ▶ Page 2



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

The lesson America learned from the New York speech

Resalat highlighted the Iranian president's forceful speech at the United Nations. The main message of the developments and speeches in New York can be summarized in one key proposition: the era of unipolar order and cost-free bullying has come to an end. Iran does not welcome war, but it will not compromise when it comes to defending its dignity and independence. Iran has extended a hand of cooperation to the world and seeks an international order based on justice, equality among nations, and the rejection of double standards; a world in which nuclear weapons do not provide immunity to Israel's apartheid regime, while Iran's peaceful scientific and technological development is not met with sanctions and threats. If the United States wishes to escape this self-created quagmire, it has no choice but to recognize the new balance of power in West Asia and accept the legitimate rights of the Iranian nation.

Kayhan: Positive signals should not be sent to negotiations

In an interview with Foad Izadi, an expert on US affairs, Kayhan examined American hostile policies toward Iran and their impact on the region. There is a view in the United States that maritime and air blockades, along with its current policies, are effective tools. This is why, while the Iranian negotiating delegation was in New York, the United States initiated an air blockade before the delegation could return home. American assessments recognize the capability and resilience of Iran's military forces, believing they will not surrender. However, some US policymakers perceive certain Iranian political figures as having no option but negotiation. As long as this perception remains unchanged, the threat of war will persist, and American hostile policies will continue to escalate. Therefore, the best course of action for some Iranian officials is to avoid sending positive signals regarding negotiations, since the approach pursued by some political figures so far has produced the opposite of the intended results.

Ettelaat: Rejection of Iran's proposal or progress in negotiations?

Ettelaat discussed the decision by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his accompanying negotiating team to remain in New York until Wednesday. After the first meeting between Araghchi and Steve Witkoff, the US representative, Iranian technical experts joined the talks. During these negotiations, Iran proposed a plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz within seven days if the maritime blockade were lifted. The paper suggested that, should negotiations advance further,

meetings between Iranian and American officials could be held with mediation from Qatar or Oman. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen in which direction the New York discussions will move and which account of the negotiations more closely reflects reality, especially as the maritime blockade has been intensified by an air blockade and the economic consequences are rapidly becoming visible.

Arman-e-Melli: The efforts of mediators

Arman-e-Melli focused on efforts by mediators to revive negotiations between Iran and the United States. While many international media outlets and observers interpret recent developments as evidence of heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington, others believe that the positions and activities taking place on the sidelines of the UN gathering could mark the beginning of a renewed negotiating process and a way out of the current situation. The main mediators between Iran and the United States, namely Qatar and Pakistan, are seeking to use the opportunity provided by the UN General Assembly to help resolve the current dispute. In their view, the presence in New York of leaders and foreign ministers creates an opportunity for message exchanges and bilateral or multilateral consultations that could help steer the present deadlock toward negotiations. The outcome of Iran's proposed plan and the US response to it are issues whose implications may become clearer in the near future.

Shargh: Playing the oil card

In an explanation, Shargh addressed the uncertainty surrounding the prospects of war or negotiations. Oil prices have surpassed \$100 per barrel, at a time when the outlook for conflict in the Persian Gulf remains uncertain. Meanwhile, the world's two largest economies, the United States and China, are paying particularly close attention to oil prices. According to forecasts by some oil-tanker tracking institutions, Iranian crude oil exports to China, its largest and nearly sole oil customer, had declined significantly by late September. Nevertheless, during the recent meeting between Trump and Xi Jinping, virtually no discussion reportedly took place regarding the Iran conflict or oil prices. At the same time, Iran has put forward a new seven-point proposal aimed at reviving negotiations, while reports suggest that China has urged Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and return to talks. Despite all these developments, the future of negotiations, the possibility of continued conflict, and the direction of the oil market remain more uncertain than ever.

Iran fires on vessels traversing unauthorized routes in Strait of Hormuz



From page 1 ► Fars reported that Iranian forces acted strictly within their mandate to maintain maritime order and prevent violations of territorial waters and established traffic separation schemes. The identity and flag state of the targeted vessels were not immediately disclosed.

The Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint through which approximately one-fifth of the world's petroleum consumption passes, is subject to strict monitoring by the Iranian Armed Forces.

Tehran has repeatedly warned foreign and international maritime operators that full adherence to international maritime protocols, designated shipping corridors, and en-

vironmental regulations is non-negotiable. Iranian defense officials have consistently stressed that while Iran guarantees the security and free flow of trade in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, it will brook no compromise on its maritime sovereignty or deviations that pose navigation hazards.

Military officials have reiterated in recent months that foreign attempts to challenge standard navigation rules or undermine regional security protocols will be met with decisive responses. Iran maintains that the collective security of regional waterways remains the sole responsibility of littoral states, warning extra-regional forces against encouraging violations or heightening tensions in the waterway.

Araghchi: Iran will stand firm against any aggression, even a 'Doomsday War'

From page 1 ► His most consequential remarks came in an interview with NBC News' Meet the Press, where he said Iran remained prepared for diplomacy but was equally prepared to confront military pressure.

NBC had announced Araghchi's interview as an exclusive appearance on the September 27 edition of the program hosted by Kristen Welker.

'No opportunity for peace should be lost'

Araghchi said Iran's experience with negotiations over the past two years had severely damaged its confidence in Washington.

He recalled that the United States proposed negotiations in 2025, which Iran accepted, but Washington subsequently launched an attack while the talks were under way.

According to Araghchi, a similar sequence was repeated in February 2026: Washington proposed negotiations, Tehran agreed, and military action followed during the diplomatic process.

He said that after the subsequent war, the United States again proposed negotiations. Iran accepted and held three months of talks, but Washington violated the agreement it had signed only two weeks later.

Against this backdrop, Araghchi said Tehran had little reason to return to diplomacy with the same US administration.

Yet he stopped short of closing



the diplomatic door.

"There is always hope for diplomacy," he said, emphasizing that Iran remained committed to peace and stability and that no opportunity for peace should be wasted.

Tehran says the choice is now with Washington

Araghchi has repeatedly stressed that Iran will not retreat from the conditions it has presented.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, he said the conditions set by Iran's Supreme National Security Council had been formally conveyed to the US side through mediators.

"We are waiting for the final views to be conveyed by the mediators, and we will make a decision based on them," he said.

The foreign minister said US President Donald Trump had already reacted publicly to the proposal, but Tehran was awaiting a

definitive response through the mediating channels.

Iran's position, as articulated by Araghchi, is that acceptance of the proposed framework would activate a seven-day timetable, while rejection would leave the diplomatic process without the proposed path toward reopening the waterway.

'Prepared for diplomacy and war'

Araghchi has also made clear that Iran's diplomatic efforts should not be interpreted as a sign of military vulnerability.

"We stand firm in the face of any aggression against us, even when it comes to a doomsday war," he said in the NBC interview.

He added that Iran trusted its own capabilities and was prepared for both diplomacy and confrontation.

National interests, not US elections

Iran will respond to any aggression with new weapons



From page 1 ► Shekarchi described the Islamic Republic as a "global power" and said Iran would not allow the United States to return to its former position in a "new world order."

Iran's military doctrine and new technologies

The senior military spokesman said Iran's Armed Forces had sought to strengthen their combat capabilities and incorporate advanced technologies since the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, also known as the "imposed war."

He cited the beginning of Iran's indigenous missile production during the conflict with the former Ba'athist regime in Iraq as a tangible example of the country's efforts to

develop defense capabilities under wartime conditions.

According to Shekarchi, one of the most significant changes in Iran's military doctrine following the Islamic Revolution was the shift from conventional warfare toward asymmetric warfare.

He said conventional military methods could be vulnerable when confronting an adversary equipped with costly and technologically sophisticated heavy weapons.

"Asymmetric warfare means standing up to the enemy's expensive heavy weapons and achieving victory with lower costs and simpler but more effective and practical defense equipment," Shekarchi said.

'A surprise in store for the enemy'

Shekarchi said Iran's adversaries had miscalculated the country's resilience and defensive capabilities.

He argued that if the enemy had properly assessed Iran's capabilities, it would not have chosen to attack the country.

The general also emphasized information security as a key principle within the Armed Forces, saying that safeguarding military information was essential to preserving the element of surprise.

He said Iran possessed unique elements

of national power and pointed to the participation of the Iranian people both on the streets and on the battlefield as a fundamental factor in the country's ability to withstand attacks.

Referring to recent threats against Iran, Shekarchi said the Armed Forces would employ newly developed military technologies in responding to any future aggression.

"The powerful Iranian Armed Forces are many times stronger than they were at the outset of the second and third imposed wars," he said, describing the current condition of the Armed Forces as "very good."

He said Iran's missile and drone capabilities had become more advanced and powerful and warned that Tehran had capabilities that had not necessarily been publicly disclosed.

"This time we have a surprise in store for the enemy," Shekarchi said, adding that Iran would respond to any potential aggression with new military technologies.

Hormuz at the center of the dispute

Shekarchi also reiterated Iran's position on the Strait of Hormuz, saying that the strategic waterway was under Iranian management.

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

Army chief: Driving US and Israel out of West Asia prerequisite for lasting security

TEHRAN — Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian Army Major General Amir Hatami said on Sunday that lasting security in West Asia requires an end to the military and political presence of the United States and Israel, stressing that collective regional stability can only be built from within rather than dictated by extra-regional powers.

"Security in the region will not be achieved without eliminating the US presence and driving the US and the Zionist regime out of the region, and this is not far off," Major General Hatami stated during an address in the Iranian capital.

Addressing neighboring states and broader regional governments directly, the top commander underscored the counterproductive nature of relying on foreign militaries for defense and stability.

"I ask all neighbors and re-

gional nations, as an Iranian soldier, to pay close attention to this matter: you have seen that alignment and cooperation with the United States does not produce security. The genuine security of this region is generated from within the region and rests solely in the hands of regional countries themselves, and this reality will undoubtedly come to pass," Hatami noted.

Reaffirming the Islamic Republic's strategic stance against foreign coercion, the commander emphasized that the era of Western hegemony across strategic regional corridors has ended.

"Iran is not a place for their excessive ambitions and arrogance," General Hatami warned. "We have reiterated time and again that if this region is forced into instability, such insecurity will envelop everyone. It is unacceptable that we—who have

inhabited this region for centuries and are its rightful proprietors—should be deprived of its resources and strategic advantages, while foreign actors travel from across oceans to exploit everything for themselves. Such imperialist dreams will never materialize."

Turning specifically to vital maritime arteries and global shipping lanes, the army chief highlighted the country's sovereign resolve to safeguard its core economic lifelines against unilateral sanctions and maritime interdiction.

"If Iran cannot engage in trade, and if the Iranian people cannot lead a normal life, then no party will be permitted to trade or live in peace in this region," he stated. "The Strait of Hormuz is our choke point of dignity, sovereignty, and honor. We will never permit the nation's adversaries to reap the strategic dividends

Araghchi dismissed the significance of the US midterm elections for Iran's decision-making, saying Tehran was not concerned with the American electoral calendar and that its decisions would be determined by national interests.

He nevertheless acknowledged the broader economic consequences of the conflict, including disruptions affecting energy and maritime markets.

Regional diplomacy and the Strait of Hormuz

Alongside contacts with Washington through intermediaries, Araghchi conducted a broad round of meetings with regional and international counterparts.

In talks with Malaysian Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan, Araghchi urged developing countries to protect their common interests and resist 'US unilateralism and violations of international law.'

He attributed continued insecurity in the Strait of Hormuz to US military actions. The meeting also addressed greater coordination among Muslim countries, including through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, particularly over the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Araghchi also met Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan in New York. Iranian officials said the talks focused on bilateral, regional and international developments, while Ankara confirmed the meeting but initially provided few details.

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

Iran will respond to any aggression with new weapons

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of this pivotal logistical bottleneck while the Iranian nation remains arbitrarily deprived of its rights."

Reflecting on the joint US-Israeli war against Iran, which was launched on February 28, General Hatami said despite the scale of aggression, the adversary's calculations have failed completely.

"The aggressor enemy has sustained devastating and painful blows; nevertheless, our dedicated soldiers across all branches of the Iranian armed forces stand fully primed and ready to deliver even heavier retaliatory strikes if provoked," he declared.

The commander-in-chief observed that the rhetoric currently emerging from Western capitals reflects a collapsing international standing and an acute sense of battlefield paralysis.

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

TEHRAN — In another humiliating blow to the US automated naval warfare doctrine, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy has intercepted and captured a state-of-the-art American autonomous underwater vehicle in the Strait of Hormuz, further cementing Iran's control over the world's most vital energy chokepoint.

The Sunday operation marks the second time in less than a month that an advanced Pentagon spy submersible has fallen intact into the hands of Iranian naval and intelligence units. Crucially, the vessel was neither neutralized nor destroyed; it was methodically tracked, electronically commandeered, and seized as operational war booty—delivering an invaluable intelligence bonanza straight to Iranian military labs.

In an official statement, the IRGC Navy confirmed the captured asset as a REMUS 600, a premier autonomous unmanned submersible manufactured for sensitive expeditionary warfare. The platform is currently in the custody of IRGC technical specialists to decode its onboard encrypted mission computers and extract critical mission logs.

“IRGC Navy forces intercepted an advanced underwater drone belonging to the terrorist US military, which was conducting clandestine espionage operations in the Strait of Hormuz, through a synchronized, multi-layered operation combining tactical intelligence and advanced electronic warfare,” the IRGC said in a statement.

Underscoring Iran's uncompromising posture, the statement firmly warned: “The IRGC Navy declares that the Strait of Hormuz is closed to hostile entities, and we will take decisive, relentless action against any unauthorized passage or hostile regional movements.”

Developed by American defense contractors, the REMUS 600 is a modular, high-endurance autonomous system tailored for deep-water intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), seabed mapping, naval mine detection and classification, and clandestine environmental data collection.

Engineered to operate at depths reaching 600 meters (roughly 2,000 feet), the vessel relies on sophisticated inertial navigation systems (INS), Dop-



pler Velocity Logs (DVL), acoustic transponders, and GPS fixes upon surfacing. These systems allow the platform to execute complex, long-range missions fully autonomously, devoid of real-time tethering or manual operator intervention. Armed with cutting-edge side-scan imaging sonars, environmental sensors, and multi-channel data-logging architectures, the platform represents the backbone of US clandestine littoral reconnaissance.

The strategic windfall goes far beyond the captured physical hull. The recovery of intact mission hard drives, pre-programmed transit corridors, high-resolution acoustic seabed imaging, search patterns, and firmware configurations provides Iranian specialists with an unfiltered, forensic blueprint of how the US Navy conducts undersea reconnaissance within Iranian territorial and adjacent waters. The treasure trove of data will allow Iranian countermeasures to systematically anticipate and neutralize future hostile uncrewed deployments.

From Dive-LD to REMUS 600

Sunday's operation directly parallels the IRGC's historic seizure on September 8 of another flagship American autonomous system: the Dive-LD. Manufactured by California-based defense tech firm Anduril Industries and delivered to the US Navy's Unmanned Undersea Vehicle Group 1 in 2025, the 2.7-tonne, 5.8-meter Dive-LD was heralded by Washington as

the pinnacle of deep-sea endurance, capable of reaching depths of 6,000 meters.

That capture—achieved through an audacious electronic warfare strike that pierced the vehicle's encrypted command links and brought it safely ashore—unraveled the Pentagon's narrative of invisible undersea superiority. When US Central Command scrambled an MQ-9 Reaper drone in a desperate bid to locate the stranded asset, Iranian air defense batteries promptly blasted the multi-million-dollar surveillance aircraft out of the sky.

Washington's frantic attempts to downplay the September 8 capture by alleging mechanical failure or framing the platform as “attributable” were thoroughly ridiculed by regional observers.

The subsequent capture of the REMUS 600 confirms a definitive pattern: far from experiencing accidental drift, the US military's most secretive autonomous systems are being methodically hunted down and netted by Iranian forces.

The latest capture comes amid the US-Israeli war against Iran launched on February 28, underscoring Tehran's continued ability to counter advanced US surveillance systems.

Facing formidable Iranian Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2/AD) envelopes that preclude manned US capital ships from operating safely in the Persian Gulf without catastrophic risk, the Pentagon wagered its strategic deterrence

on an uncrewed, three-tiered hybrid architecture spanning aerial drones (UAVs), robotic surface vessels (USVs), and sub-surface craft (UUVs). With the consecutive, intact seizures of the Dive-LD and the REMUS 600, alongside the regular downing of high-altitude spy aircraft, Iran has systematically shredded all three layers of Washington's unmanned warfare concept.

An unbreakable maritime bastion

The capture of the REMUS 600 offers resounding proof that the Islamic Republic's electronic and asymmetric warfare capabilities have outpaced the Pentagon's technological hubris. By pulling the veil off Washington's most secretive undersea assets twice in four weeks, the IRGC Navy has sent an unmistakable signal across the Persian Gulf and beyond: the strategic waters of the Strait of Hormuz belong entirely to regional nations, and every covert imperialist footprint beneath the surface will be severed and seized.

As Washington grapples with the fallout of its failed regional adventurism and dwindling asymmetric options, Iran's indigenous defense apparatus continues to turn the enemy's prized hardware into its own intellectual property. The Strait of Hormuz is no longer a permissive playground for American covert aggression, but a fortified bastion where imperial arrogance sinks and Iranian technological mastery reigns supreme.



identifies, among other acts, the use of armed forces by one state against another and certain forms of support for military action.

Darzi called on the Security Council to examine the matter “with due attention and urgency,” stressing that the issue concerned the broader question of state responsibility and accountability for actions carried out with the assistance of third countries.

European role becomes a wider diplomatic issue

The Iranian complaint comes as the role of European military infrastructure in US operations against Iran has received increasing attention.

At the same time, European governments have not adopted a uniform position on the use of their territory. Italy, for example, rejected interpretations that it had participated directly in combat operations, saying that only logistical activities permitted under existing agreements had been authorized.

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



Pezeshkian: Iran, US have reached a framework for possible negotiations



TEHRAN— Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has said that differences surrounding the Strait of Hormuz can be resolved through dialogue and regional cooperation, stressing that Iran will not submit to pressure or threats while remaining committed to peaceful engagement with neighboring countries.

Speaking to Al Jazeera during his visit to New York for the United Nations General Assembly, Pezeshkian said Iran remained open to negotiations with the United States but added that Tehran's confidence in Washington had been seriously undermined by previous violations of agreements and military action following diplomatic engagements.

The president said indirect contacts between Iran and the United States were continuing through mediators, including Qatar and Pakistan, and that the two sides had reached an understanding on a framework for possible negotiations.

He called on Washington to make clear whether it was prepared to engage within that framework and stressed that meaningful negotiations required assurances that any agreement reached would be respected.

Addressing the Strait of Hormuz, Pezeshkian said Iran had not initiated restrictions on the strait and maintained that the waterway could remain open to commercial and free trade provided disputes were addressed through dialogue.

He nevertheless stressed that strait should not be used as a conduit for transporting weapons and military equipment for regional conflicts.

Pezeshkian's remarks came amid heightened international attention to the security of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has repeatedly maintained that the security of the waterway should primarily be addressed by the

countries of the region and that the presence or intervention of extra-regional powers can complicate rather than resolve regional security challenges.

The president rejected the idea that an external guarantor was necessary to ensure security in the Persian Gulf, arguing that the Arab and Muslim countries bordering the waterway could establish mechanisms for collective security themselves.

He described Iran's relations with Muslim countries as brotherly and said Tehran was prepared to help resolve disputes among regional states through dialogue, including differences between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

No surrender under sanctions

Turning to Iran's economic situation, Pezeshkian acknowledged the severe difficulties created by sanctions but said economic pressure would not force Tehran to surrender its national interests.

He said Iran would overcome the challenges posed by sanctions and would seek or establish alternative economic and commercial routes whenever existing channels were obstructed.

The president also pointed to Iran's relations with China and Russia, saying the two countries had provided political support to Tehran and that Iran maintained economic ties with both.

Iran's position on Yemen

Pezeshkian rejected the characterization of Iran as a party to the fighting in Yemen alongside the Houthi movement, saying Tehran's position was based on sympathy for people facing injustice rather than direct participation in the conflict.

He said Iran was ready to contribute to efforts to resolve differences between Saudi Arabia and Yemen through dialogue.

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

Army: Iran will deliver a more crushing response to any renewed US aggression

TEHRAN – The spokesman for Iran's Army has warned enemies against any further miscalculations, stating that the country's Armed Forces are fully prepared to deliver a “more crushing” response in the event of renewed aggression.

Brigadier General Mohammad Akraminia stressed the readiness of the Armed Forces to counter any potential threat, stating that Iran's defense readiness and capabilities are stronger than ever before.

“In the event of renewed enemy aggression, Iran's Armed Forces, with greater readiness and capabilities compared to the past, will give a more crushing, extensive, and decisive response,” Brigadier General Akraminia said.

He was referring to repeated US threats to renew strikes on Iran. The US and Israel launched a war on Iran on February 28 following their aggression in June last year.

The Army spokesman further said Washington has an exceedingly dark record in the minds of the Iranian nation.

“The Americans do not enjoy a good reputation among Iranian public opinion,” Akraminia stated. “From the August 19, 1953 coup to supporting the Pahlavi regime, backing Saddam during the war, shooting down the Iranian passenger aircraft, and these recent acts of aggression—including the 12-day war and the 39-day war—a very black and dark background has been created among the Iranian nation re-

garding the United States.”

He emphasized that if any aggression takes place, the Iranian people—who are present in the streets, squares, and nightly rallies—will support the Armed Forces with even greater motivation. “

Turning to the security situation in the region, the Army spokesman reiterated that the expulsion of US military forces is the fundamental prerequisite for establishing genuine peace and stability in West Asia.

“Given the regional situation, I believe the expulsion of the US from the region will definitely make this region secure, and regional countries must help ensure the US is expelled from this area so that we can establish a security order based on the partnership of regional countries, which will be a native security order,” General Akraminia said.

He noted that history and experience prove Washington does not wish well for the Muslim nations of the region, adding that the behavioral patterns of the US in the current war clearly demonstrate this reality.

“The priority of the United States is not regional security,” General Akraminia said. “And even if it were, it definitely prioritizes its own security and the security of the Zionist regime over anything else; fundamentally, it lacks the capability to support and defend the security of regional countries.”

Iran urges UN to examine European role in US military operations against Iran

Darzi said Rutte's remarks demonstrated the significant role of European territory and infrastructure in facilitating US military operations and warranted urgent consideration by the Security Council.

Rutte cites thousands of sorties from European bases

Rutte said during a September 23 public discussion on NATO's future that approximately 5,000 aircraft had taken off from European bases in support of the US-led Operation Epic Fury since February 28, 2026.

According to Rutte, the figure covered activity only through mid-April, meaning the total number of sorties was likely considerably higher afterward. In an official NATO transcript, Rutte described European NATO territory as a major platform for US power projection and said the operation would arguably have been impossible without the use of European bases.

The NATO chief had previously also referred to between 4,000 and 5,000 sorties from European bases in support of Operation Epic Fury, while citing the use of facilities in several European countries.

Darzi argued that the statements were particularly significant given Rutte's position as NATO secretary general and the scale of the military support described.

From Iran's perspective, he said, the use of European territory and infrastructure in support of military operations against Iran could give rise to questions concerning the international responsibility of the states concerned, as well as the potential individual responsibility of officials involved in planning, prepar-

ing, facilitating or carrying out acts that Iran considers aggression and war crimes.

Tehran invokes UN Charter

Darzi reiterated Iran's position that the US and Israeli military actions against Iran constitute violations of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity and contravene Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of states.

The Iranian envoy also described the US blockade of Iranian territory as unlawful and accused US military operations of targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure.

According to figures cited by Iranian authorities, more than 3,600 people, including at least 254 children and 251 women, have been killed and many others wounded.

The figures and Tehran's characterization of the military campaign are part of Iran's official account of the conflict and have not been independently established in the letter itself.

Iran questions European responsibility

Darzi said some European countries had facilitated military operations by making their territory, airspace, military installations and other logistical and operational capabilities available.

He argued that such conduct could conflict with obligations arising from the UN Charter and could also warrant examination under the legal concept of participation in, or assistance to, an act of aggression.

He referred to UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, which defines aggression and

South Pars phase 11's 12th well ready for production

TEHRAN- The acting director of the South Pars Phase 11 development project announced that the twelfth well of this phase has been prepared to enter the production cycle ahead of the winter season.

According to IRNA, citing the Ministry of Oil, Keyvan Tarighati said in this regard: The last well at the SPD11B location in the first development phase has entered the trial flow and production capacity monitoring stage.



He added: Drilling, completion, and perforation operations of the twelfth well of South Pars Phase 11 were successfully completed, and after unloading the well column with nitrogen, its trial flow has begun.

Noting that at this stage the well's production capacity is continuously monitored to assess its operating conditions and production capacity, he added: After the trial flow and acidizing operations are completed, the twelfth well of Phase 11 is expected to reach its nominal production capacity in the coming days.

Referring to the importance of developing new wells in this phase, the acting director of the South Pars Phase 11 development project said: The entry of new wells into the production cycle is an important step toward completing Phase 11's production capacity and maximizing exploitation of the resources of the shared South Pars field.

South Pars Phase 11 is the newest development project of the shared South Pars field, whose development has been assigned to Petropars under the new model of oil contracts.

Mohsen Paknejad, Minister of Oil, recently announced, referring to measures taken to increase the country's gas production and supply over the past two years: The development operations of South Pars Phase 11 have accelerated.

As reported in early September, South Pars Phase 11 has witnessed a significant production surge and simultaneous developmental progress during the 14th government. Production at Location B, which stood at around 400 million cubic feet per day during the 12th and 13th governments, has now exceeded 915 million cubic feet per day in the 14th government. According to the schedule, with the connection of the 12th well in the coming weeks, it will reach maximum production of 1 billion cubic feet per day.

At Location A, the 4,000-ton jacket has been installed offshore, and the construction progress of the topside, which was about 4% at the start of the 14th government, has now reached nearly 50%.

According to IRNA, quoting the Oil Ministry, South Pars Phase 11 is considered one of the country's key gas development projects due to its location in the border section of the shared South Pars field.

The development of this phase was pursued in previous years with the presence of companies such as Total and CNPC, but the withdrawal of these companies following sanctions affected the project's progress. Subsequently, the phase's development continued relying on the capabilities of Iranian companies, with the Petropars Group, a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company, taking over the project's execution.

During the 12th and 13th governments, Location B produced approximately 400 million cubic feet per day using the Phase 12D jacket and a platform transferred from Location 12C. In the 14th government, with continued drilling, well completions, and their gradual connection to existing facilities, production at this location has reached over 915 million cubic feet per day. According to the project schedule, with the connection of the 12th well in the coming weeks, production will reach 1 billion cubic feet per day—the maximum production capacity of Location B.

Simultaneously, the development of Location A has also followed a remarkable trajectory. At the start of the 14th government, the jacket for this location had about 35% progress and had not yet reached the uprighting stage, while topside construction was in its

early phases with about 4% progress. Now, the jacket, weighing approximately 4,000 tons, has been installed at its offshore site, and topside construction progress during the 14th government has risen from about 4% to nearly 50%. Over 700 meters of piling have been completed for the jacket installation.

The advancement of this section of the project was carried out under conditions where Phase 11 faced sanctions-related restrictions, regional threats, and security challenges. During the 40-day "Third Imposed War" [referring to recent conflicts], the contractor's site for the 11A topside construction was struck by several rockets, but construction operations did not halt, and the project's execution continued.

On the topside front, in addition to physical construction progress, a significant portion of the project's procurement items—especially long-lead equipment—has been finalized. These equipment pieces are currently being manufactured, tested, and transported to the contractor's site to prepare the topside for final stages.

According to the execution plan, topside progress will reach approximately 80% at the time of load-out, and after transportation, installation, and offshore commissioning, Location A will enter the production phase.

Initial production at this location will begin with 4 to 6 wells, and drilling of subsequent wells will continue in phases. The project estimates that on average, one new production well will come online every four months, with drilling continuing for about three years until the platform's nominal capacity is fully achieved.

South Pars Phase 11 is part of the Petropars Group's track record in developing South Pars. Petropars has been involved in a significant portion of this field's development projects both onshore and offshore, with over half of the development plans for the South Pars gas field's phases in coastal and offshore sections carried out by this group.

What has been achieved in Phase 11 during the 14th government can be summarized in three main indicators: increasing production at Location B from about 400 million cubic feet per day during the 12th and 13th governments to over 915 million cubic feet per day in the 14th government, moving toward maximum production of 1 billion cubic feet with the connection of the 12th well; installing the 4,000-ton jacket at Location A; and advancing topside construction progress during the 14th government from about 4% to nearly 50%. This trajectory, alongside continued drilling and well completions, will increase Phase 11's production capacity in the coming years.

The South Pars gas field is a supergiant natural gas accumulation located in the Persian Gulf, shared between Iran and Qatar. It is the world's single largest gas accumulation with over 2,000 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of recoverable resources. The field is being developed in 24 phases, and it is the foundation of Iran's energy supply, providing approximately 70-80% of the country's domestic gas needs.

Phase 11 is the last undeveloped phase of this shared field and is strategically important due to its location on the maritime border. Initially, a \$4.8 billion contract was signed in 2017 with a consortium led by France's Total and China's CNPC, but both companies withdrew following the re-imposition of US sanctions, leaving Iran's domestic company, Petropars, to execute the project.

The development of Phase 11 has seen significant progress recently.

New opportunities for Iran-India trade: from medicine, agriculture to transit

TEHRAN- The capacities of the private sector, Chabahar Port, the North-South Corridor, and the joint membership of Iran and India in BRICS have created new opportunities for developing trade, investment, and expanded economic cooperation between the two countries.

According to a report by Mehr News Agency, Iran-India economic relations in recent years, despite possessing significant capacities, have faced a sharp decline in bilateral trade volume—a trend driven mainly by sanctions, banking restrictions, transportation difficulties, and changes in the two countries' energy relations. Nevertheless, existing capacities in goods trade, medicine, agriculture, joint investment, and transit corridors can still pave the way for Tehran and New Delhi's economic relations to return to a path of development.

In this context, India's new ambassador to Iran, Shri Vishwesh Negi, at the start of his mission, visited the Tehran Chamber and met with its chairman. The two sides emphasized strengthening private-sector ties, expanding trade, and using BRICS capacities.

According to official Indian statistics, the two countries' trade volume in the 2025-2026 fiscal year reached about \$1.63 billion. Of this, about \$1.25 billion was India's exports to Iran, and about \$370 million was India's imports from Iran.

This figure is significantly far from the peak period in bilateral trade relations. Iran-India trade volume in the 2018-2019 fiscal year had reached about \$17 billion, when Iranian oil exports to India held a substantial share of exchanges between the two countries.

After the tightening of U.S. sanctions and the halt of most Iranian oil purchases by Indian refineries, the structure of trade between the two countries changed, and exchange volume declined noticeably. As a result, trade between the two countries fell from about \$17 billion in the 2018-2019 fiscal year to about \$1.6 billion in the past fiscal year.

This decline shows that today's issue in Iran-India economic relations is not merely increasing exports or imports of a specific product, but rather reviving a network of trade and investment cooperation that has been weakened in recent years by interna-

TEHRAN- Iran's customs clearance times have fallen sharply, with the average dropping from 143 hours to 73 hours—roughly a 50 percent reduction—bringing the country within about one hour of its three-day clearance target. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance is pursuing that goal as part of a broader foreign trade facilitation program.

According to Hassan Alidousti, acting deputy for planning and international affairs at Iran Customs, key factors include a larger share of low-risk goods on the "green path," expanded use of risk profiles, smartization, and reformed customs procedures. Risk management allows goods to be classified by risk level, with controls matched to each consign-

ment.

Board of directors of Iranian committee of ICC elected

TEHRAN- The election of the Board of Directors of the Iranian Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) was held concurrently with the meeting of the Council of this committee at the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA).

The Council meeting of the Iranian Committee of ICC was chaired by Samad Hassanzadeh, President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, and with the attendance of Abolfazl Roghani Golpayegani, Secretary Gener-



tional restrictions.

With oil's share in bilateral trade declining, agricultural, food, and pharmaceutical goods have gained greater importance.

Basmati rice is one of India's most important export items to Iran and in recent years has accounted for a significant portion of India's exports to the Iranian market. Official Indian statistics show that India's basmati rice exports to Iran in the first 10 months of the 2025-2026 fiscal year reached more than 790,000 tons—a figure showing an increase compared with the same period last year.

Alongside rice, tea, sugar, fresh fruits, medicine, and pharmaceutical products are also among India's important exports to Iran. In return, products such as pistachios, dates, apples, and kiwis are among Iran's exports to India.

This structure shows that even under banking and trade restrictions, the two countries still have complementary markets in some areas of basic and consumer goods.

The pharmaceutical and medical equipment sector is also one of the areas that can help develop economic relations between the two countries. India is one of the world's major pharmaceutical production hubs, and Iran, due to its domestic pharmaceutical industry and need for raw materials and some specialized products, is considered a significant market for Indian companies.

In this regard, cooperation between the two countries in health care and regulation of medical products has received attention in recent years, and capacities have been created for developing pharmaceutical and industrial cooperation.

The presence of Indian compa-

The ministry is also advancing coordinated border management and seamless transport. Officials note that more than 20 agencies are involved in border and trade processes, and not all delays originate with customs. Coordinated border management seeks better inter-agency cooperation and less duplication, while seamless transport aims to move goods from entry points to destinations with fewer unnecessary stops.

Essential goods are receiving priority. Grains, livestock inputs, edible oil, medicine, and medical equipment are on the green path and clear faster. About 4.5–4.6 million tons of essential goods are currently being cleared at customs, ports, and entry points, with livestock inputs, edible oil, and oilseeds making

al of the Iran Chamber, Ahmad Pour-Fallah, the Chairman of Iran-Italy Joint Chamber of Commerce, and 23 of the 24 members of this Council.

At the beginning of the meeting, Samad Hassanzadeh, President of the Iran Chamber, while appreciating the efforts and successes of the Iranian Committee of ICC and its Secretary General, referred to the economic conditions prevailing in the country and the role of private-sector economic actors in ensuring market security.

Hassanzadeh emphasized the

nies at Iranian specialized exhibitions can also provide the ground for direct company-to-company communication, identifying market needs, and moving from mere goods trade toward industrial cooperation and joint production.

Chabahar: most important Iran-India economic project

Among the economic projects of the two countries, Chabahar Port holds a different position. The port's importance for India is not limited to trade with Iran; New Delhi sees it as part of its strategy for connectivity to Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Eurasian markets.

In 2024, India signed a 10-year contract with Iran for equipping and operating the Shahid Beheshti Terminal at Chabahar and committed to investing in the terminal's development. Of course, India's relationship with Chabahar Port has seen many ups and downs in recent years, but Chabahar is important in connection with the International North-South Transport Corridor—a corridor that can make India's connection route to Iran, the Caucasus, Russia, and Central Asia shorter and more diverse.

Accordingly, the continuation of sanctions and changing conditions related to Chabahar sanctions exemptions are among the challenges facing India's economic presence at this port. New Delhi has announced in recent months that it is in contact with various parties regarding Chabahar's status.

BRICS: A new path for expanding cooperation

The simultaneous membership of Iran and India in BRICS has also created a new capacity for developing economic relations between the two countries. India holds the BRICS presidency in

2026, and the group's economic programs have focused on increasing trade among members, strengthening supply chains, developing cooperation among small and medium-sized enterprises, and drafting an economic cooperation framework through 2030.

For Iran, presence in BRICS, in addition to political and multilateral capacities, was a platform for expanding ties with the group's large member markets. India is also seeking to strengthen trade and investment among member countries and create new mechanisms for economic cooperation.

Meanwhile, one of the main challenges in Iran-India economic relations is the gap between government agreements and actual cooperation between companies. Under current conditions, increasing direct communication between chambers of commerce, holding B2B meetings, sending trade delegations, having companies participate in specialized exhibitions, and holding training courses can help identify real market opportunities.

In this regard, proposals have been made to draft a timetable for trade talks between the two countries' private sectors, hold specialized courses, exchange trade delegations, and create a direct communication channel to follow up on agreements.

If continued, these measures can lead cooperation from the level of negotiations and memoranda of understanding toward trade contracts and specific projects.

One of the most important problems in Iran-India trade is also the restriction on money transfers and access to the international banking network. U.S. sanctions have caused many Indian companies to face greater risks in payments, insurance, and transportation when trading with Iran. As a result, part of trade is conducted through intermediary routes, which increases the cost and time of exchanges.

Transportation disruptions in the region have also intensified this problem. In recent months, part of Indian shipments, including rice, tea, and medicine, have faced delays at Indian ports, and regional developments have affected maritime transportation.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

up much of the volume; Imam Khomeini Port holds a significant share.

Clearance time also depends on permits, transport, and foreign currency allocation. The minister has stressed coordination with the Central Bank and relevant agencies. By continuing risk management, smartization, coordinated border management, and seamless transport, Iran aims to complete the three-day clearance process and ease goods entry and clearance. Customs officials say the reforms are already reducing dwell time at entry points, and further gains are expected as more consignments qualify for the green path and digital procedures replace manual steps.

effective role of this committee in developing the international relations of economic actors and chambers of commerce and in enhancing these interactions, and referred to the planning ahead for the Iranian Committee of ICC.

Then, Mohammad Khazaei, while appreciating the effective and comprehensive support of the President and Board of Directors of the Iranian Committee during the past three-year term, considered these supports among the important factors in achieving the recent accomplishments of the Iranian Committee

of ICC.

Khazaei also presented a report on the most important measures and activities of the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year, the negotiations and interactions conducted with ICC presidents and affiliated bodies, and the agreements reached.

Later in the meeting, given the completion of the three-year term of the Board of Directors of the Iranian Committee of ICC, the Council meeting entered the process of electing the new Board of Directors.

Hezbollah marks second anniversary of Sayyed Nasrallah’s martyrdom with vows of continued resistance

Sheikh Qassem vows Hezbollah will not surrender weapons at massive Beirut commemoration

By staff writer

TEHRAN — The southern suburbs of Beirut transformed into a sprawling sea of black and yellow on Sunday. Tens of thousands of mourners converged on the shrine of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah to mark two years since his assassination in an Israeli airstrike.

Crowds filled the streets surrounding the site in Bir al-Abed near the old airport road. Their chants of loyalty rose above the din of a city still bearing the physical scars of the U.S.-backed Israeli bombing campaign.

Many attendees carried portraits of Sayyed Nasrallah and his successor, Sayyed Hashem Safieddine, who was martyred in an Israeli strike mere days after his mentor.

Gathering in a neighborhood that Israeli warplanes systematically reduced to rubble was a deliberate statement of defiance. Mourners traveled from southern villages still under the threat of occupation.

Faithful to the pledge

Addressing the massive gathering in a televised broadcast, Hezbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Sheikh Qassem delivered an uncompromising defense of the resistance. His speech served as both a tribute to the fallen commanders and a blunt indictment of Lebanon’s political establishment.

Sheikh Qassem spoke directly to the martyred leaders. He told Sayyed Nasrallah that while his physical body had departed, his teachings remain the driving force of the movement.

“You are the resistance and the resistance is you, and you have become its symbol for the free people of the world,” Sheikh Qassem declared. He praised Sayyed Safieddine as an indispensable pillar of the



jihadist journey who never tired in his service to the cause.

The organizing theme of the memorial was “Inna Ala al-Ahd” (We remain faithful to the pledge). Sheikh Qassem defined this phrase as absolute operational continuity.

When leaders are martyred, new commanders immediately step forward to maintain the exact same trajectory, the Resistance leader explained. The pledge guarantees the continuation of the courageous, divine resistance against foreign aggression until every inch of occupied land is fully liberated.

The battlefield ledger

Sheikh Qassem then pivoted to the military realities on the ground, systematically dismantling the arguments of domestic opponents who question the utility of Hezbollah’s arms.

He turned the scrutiny back on the government. “Some, especially among our opponents, ask: what has the Resistance done?” he noted. “But it seems they forgot to ask: what has the state done?”

Hezbollah halted the Israeli aggression project, the Hezbollah leader explained.

Sheikh Qassem stated that the Israeli military deployed up to 90,000 soldiers and officers,

backed by unlimited American capabilities, yet utterly failed to break the resistance. Israeli forces were physically prevented from establishing permanent occupation zones or settlements in Lebanon, he explained.

Fighters delivered legendary performances across the southern front. Sheikh Qassem listed the battlegrounds where Hezbollah forces entrenched themselves and bled the advancing brigades.

They held their ground in Bint Jbeil, Khiam, Aita al-Shaab, Naqoura, and al-Bayyada. At the Ali al-Taher ridge, resistance units maintained their defensive posture under heavy bombardment for three consecutive months, Sheikh Qassem stated.

He honored the 3,400 martyrs and 14,600 wounded from Operation People of Might. Sheikh Qassem directed special recognition to the survivors of the pager terror attacks, calling them living martyrs who transformed their wounds into active resistance.

Domestic betrayal and the disarmament illusion

The sharpest political warnings targeted Lebanon’s governing authority. Sheikh Qassem accused the state of acting as “an accessory” to the Israe-

li-American project by offering unforced concessions.

He argued that the current framework agreement handed Israel all of Lebanon’s negotiating leverage in a single session. Pointing to seven rounds of direct negotiations that yielded results “below zero,” he demanded an immediate freeze on direct talks.

The secretary-general ridiculed the persistent demands for Hezbollah to surrender its weapons. “You stayed two years trying to strip the weapons and you could not, so why do you ask the Lebanese Army?” he asked.

Asking the national army to serve as a disarmament tool for political factions is a delusion, the Resistance leader said.

Sheikh Qassem affirmed that Hezbollah will never forfeit a single inch of Lebanon’s 10,452 square kilometers.

Turning to the collapse of the Lebanese state, he asked where the government was regarding the ruined economy, hyperinflation, electricity blackouts, and stolen depositor funds.

Sheikh Qassem announced that Hezbollah, utilizing its own resources and donor funding, will shortly unveil a comprehensive housing and reconstruction project for displaced citizens, stepping in where the state has completely vanished.

Concluding his address, Sheikh Qassem reaffirmed that Palestine remains the absolute compass for the resistance.

He saluted the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Leader of the Islamic Revolution for their steadfast backing.

Pointing to Israel’s isolation at the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, he noted that the regime has become an exposed, global pariah.

Saudi warplanes bomb Yemeni marketplace, killing and wounding civilians

From page 1 ► Military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree confirmed in a statement hours after the attack that a formation of Saudi F-15s left Khamis Mushait air base at 11:00 a.m.

By 11:29, they dropped their payloads on the Economic Corporation Market, the statement read. The jets cleared Taiz airspace eight minutes later, flying north to Al-Jawf province to execute four more bombing runs on the Khabb and Al-Sha’af districts.

The Saudi-backed mercenaries told a different story. They said the strikes targeted a military camp, vehicles, supply lines and weapons depots that Ansarallah had allegedly set up near the junction.

Saudi-backed sources told Reuters a camp had recently appeared near the market. None of those claims could be independently verified.

The strike hit a populated commercial area. Whether a military camp sat nearby or not, civilians bore the cost.

This was no isolated incident. Saudi aircraft hammered Yemeni civilian infrastruc-

ture relentlessly over the weekend.

Gen. Saree recorded 27 airstrikes within 24 hours. F-15 and Typhoon jets targeted bridges, roads, and civilian areas across Taiz, Marib, Saada, Amran, Ibb, and Hajjah.

Since the latest escalation began, Saudi forces have launched over 1,059 air and missile strikes.

Washington enables all of it. The United States supplies the intelligence, the logistics, and the targeting data guiding Saudi munitions into Yemeni markets.

Over 100 American military advisers operate inside the kingdom, staffing a joint command designed to counter Sanaa.

Yemen refuses to absorb the blows quietly. Retaliation is already reaching deep into Saudi territory.

Last week, Yemeni air defenses shot down a Saudi “Karayel” armed reconnaissance drone over Hajjah province, according to a statement by Yemen’s Armed Forces. Soon after, Yemeni missile and drone units launched coordinated strikes against a sensitive military target in Riyadh and Saudi Ar-

amco facilities in Yanbu.

Those long-range weapons bypassed multiple layers of American-supplied air defenses before striking their marks.

The psychological toll inside Saudi Arabia is mounting.

Across Riyadh, private schools abruptly suspended in-person classes from September 27 through October 1. Administrators shifted students to remote learning without offering an official explanation.

Saudi civil defense authorities have been issuing near-daily air raid alerts. Interceptors are firing into the skies over the capital and southern border areas like Abha and Jazan.

Sanaa is bringing the war to its origin. Every bomb dropped on a Taiz market guarantees a reciprocal strike on Saudi military and economic infrastructure.

“The blood that was unjustly and wrongfully shed at the Mawiyah market in Taiz Governorate will have grave consequences for the Saudi perpetrator,” Gen. Saree promised.

Dale’s article:

Ten years ago this month, in my old job as Washington correspondent for the Toronto Star, I started what I believed would be a quick little side project: fact-checking underdog presidential candidate Donald Trump, who was telling a remarkable number of lies but was rarely being corrected. Like a lot of people, I thought Trump would lose the 2016 election.

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

2017, to January 20, 2021. This amounted to an average of approximately 21 claims per day over his four-year term.

The Associated Press also fact-checked claims made at Trump’s first cabinet meeting in January 2026, including his assertion that \$18 trillion in investment was flowing into the United States, which it found unsupported and substantially exaggerated.

The following is the text of

What the new Moroccan–Israeli relationship means

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – No previous U.S. president has served Israel in a way that Donald Trump has done for Netanyahu’s terror regime.

He unilaterally withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal. He recognized occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem) as Israel’s eternal capital and moved the U.S. embassy there. He recognized the Zionist sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights. He also pressured the Arab states aligned with Washington to join the so-called “deal of the century.”

When signs began to indicate that he was close to losing the election after his first term, Trump activated the “Abraham Accords.” He hoped to secure consensus, approval, and support from the Zionist lobby AIPAC. At the time, AIPAC was divided between Republicans and Democrats.

Perhaps history is repeating itself in a different form. Trump’s popularity has declined as a result of his illegal war with Iran at Netanyahu’s request. None of the stated objectives was achieved. At the same time, the Zionist regime is facing unprecedented isolation because of its ongoing war crimes in Palestine and Lebanon.

Hebrew media reported that a meeting was held on September 16, 2026. The meeting brought together Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita and Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar in the presence of the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

It resulted in an agreement to raise diplomatic representation between Morocco and the Zionist regime to the level of opening embassies and exchanging ambassadors.

This step surprised the Moroccan public because of its timing. It came while the nation was preoccupied with a parliamentary election campaign. It has triggered a major wave of public discontent among Moroccans. They are known for their support for the Palestinian people and their rejection of all forms of normalization.

Moroccan–Israeli relations

Numerous informed sources indicate that Moroccan–Israeli relations date back to the 1960s, despite the absence of formal diplomatic relations. There were secret and unofficial contacts between the two sides.

In the 1990s, Morocco formally normalized relations with the regime and established diplomatic ties with it. However, these relations were suspended following the outbreak of the Second Palestinian Intifada on September 28, 2000. In December 2020, Morocco and Israel announced the resumption of diplomatic relations under the “Abraham Accords.” Liaison offices were reopened, including the Israeli liaison office in Rabat in 2021. Official contacts between the two sides also expanded.

Normalization was also elevated to unprecedented levels in several areas. These included economics and investment, security and military cooperation, technology, water management, and agriculture. Cooperation also expanded in tourism and aviation, with an increase in direct flights and tourism.

Trump’s formal recognition, on December 10, 2020, of Morocco’s sovereignty over Western Sahara helped pave the way.

These normalization advocates also claim that the restoration of relations would benefit Morocco on the Western Sahara issue. They argue that the regime’s announcement in July 2023, recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sa-



hara, would help Morocco make use of the powerful Zionist lobby in the U.S. to advance the recognition.

In the absence of a separate detailed statement from Morocco’s Foreign Ministry on the agreement reached in New York, a joint statement issued by the U.S., Morocco, and Israel confirmed that the two sides had agreed to elevate their diplomatic missions to full embassies and exchange ambassadors. The statement also outlined plans to finalize agreements on investment protection and the avoidance of double taxation, while expanding cooperation in trade, finance, technology, tourism, water, agriculture, energy, and other fields.

Morocco seeks to strengthen and modernize its weapons arsenal. It also seeks to enhance its capabilities in military manufacturing and cybersecurity. Other areas of cooperation include the exchange of security expertise and technology with the regime.

Opponents of normalization argue that this cooperation concerns one of Morocco’s most sensitive areas. They say it raises questions about the use of surveillance and security technologies. They also argue that it opens the door to greater security penetration.

African dimensions

The African dimension is becoming increasingly important in Moroccan–Israeli relations, reflecting Morocco’s growing continental presence and expanding Israeli–African ties.

Since rejoining the African Union (AU) in 2017, Morocco has strengthened its economic and diplomatic relations across Africa, viewing the continent as a key arena for investment, trade, and cooperation. Morocco withdrew from the Organization of African Unity in 1984 over the participation of a Polisario Front delegation, which Morocco considers a separatist party.

Israel nearly secured AU observer status in 2021, but the decision was postponed to avoid divisions within the organization. Its bid was suspended again in 2023. The Gaza genocide and ongoing Israeli war crimes in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, and the illegal war on Iran have further strained its relations with several African states.

The regime hopes to leverage Morocco’s African networks to access markets and develop trilateral Moroccan–Israeli–African cooperation in areas such as agriculture, water, healthcare, security, investment, and technology transfer.

However, political differences, particularly over Palestine and Western Sahara, may limit such cooperation. Its scope is therefore likely to vary across African countries according to their political, economic, and security interests.

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

5 arrested near British air base used by US over alleged bomb plot

From page 1 ► The United States Air Force did not immediately respond to a request for comment about what had happened near the base, which is home to both the 501st Combat Support Wing Headquarters and the 420th Air Base Squadron.

But in a statement to the BBC, it said: “The 501st Combat Support Wing and our fellow UK-based Wings remain vigilant and will take appropriate actions to ensure the safety and security of our U.S. service

members, civilians, contractors, and their families.”

The base “serves as the preferred bomber forward operating location in Europe for USAF Global Strike Command,” according to the Air Force.

The British Ministry of Defense said in a statement that Prime Minister Andy Burnham was “being kept updated” and confirmed that authorities had detained “several suspects.”

Asian Games officials were unfair to Mohitizadeh, says official

TEHRAN - Mahboubeh Ghayour, technical supervisor of Iran's women's athletics team, said that 2026 Asian Games' officials acted unfairly toward Iranian athlete Fatemeh Mohitizadeh following her disqualification from the Nagoya Asian Games.

Mohitizadeh suffered a dramatic setback at the Asian Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya after being disqualified from the women's heptathlon following a protest over her footwear during the long jump event on Friday.

Mohitizadeh had emerged as one of the leading contenders after the opening day, finishing with 3,486 points and holding a lead of almost 100 points over the athlete in second place. However, her campaign came to an abrupt end after she was reportedly found to have worn her sprint spikes for the long jump.

The Iranian athlete was disqualified under TR7.1 [TR5.2] [S1] World Athletics rule, relating to non-compliance with footwear regulations.

"Our athlete had reached the fifth event, the long jump but was disqualified from the Games. In the call room, where the competition official was present, she checked and confirmed her shoes with the official. Based on the international regulations and after being examined by the official in charge, Mohitizadeh was allowed to enter the competition. She then immediately competed in the javelin throw, but we were informed that she had been disqualified," Ghayour said in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

"The Iranian coaching staff protested the decision, but the appeal was not taken to the jury of appeal. The reason given was that Mohitizadeh's competitors were Japanese and they claimed that she had competed in speed shoes."

"In my opinion, an injustice was done to her because Iran's protest should have been taken to the jury of appeal. But, as I said, because the Japanese were the hosts, this process was prevented from going ahead. Mohitizadeh is one of our best athletes and, from our perspective, she is a champion and a gold medalist."

Asked whether the Iranian coaches might have been negligent, Gheyour rejected the suggestion.

"No, that is not the case. It is better to use the word 'unfair,'" she said. "According to international regulations, whenever an athlete is about to compete, all of their equipment is checked in the call room. The shoes and spikes must be appropriate for the event, and only then is the athlete allowed to enter the competition."

"Look, the official in charge checked her equipment and said there was no problem. But when Mohitizadeh competed and finished first in the long jump, she faced an objection from the Japanese side. The main responsibility lies with the official who allowed her to enter the competition."

Gheyour said Mohitizadeh had specifically sought confirmation before competing.

"Fatemeh Mohiti-Zadeh had insisted on asking whether she was allowed to compete in those shoes, and the official clearly told her that she could and that there was no problem," Gheyour said. "But in the end, we saw our athlete disqualified through what we consider an unfair decision."

"For example, when you establish regulations and appoint someone to enforce those regulations, that person must carry out their duties carefully. An athlete is not expected to know every single regulation and rule. It is the responsibility of the official in charge to monitor these issues. But we saw that this responsibility was not properly carried out."

She also questioned the timing of the decision.

"Even when the javelin competition was taking place after the long jump, she was not disqualified. It was only after her competition had been completed that an objection was

raised over her shoes," Gheyour said.

"Such treatment of our athlete was far from fair. But, as I said, from our perspective, Fatemeh Mohitizadeh is a gold medalist."

Iran volleyball beat Kyrgyzstan in 2026 Asian Games

TEHRAN - Iran volleyball team defeated Kyrgyzstan in straight sets (25-11, 25-16, 25-20) in their opening match of the 2026 Asian Games on Sunday.

Amin Esmailnezhad topped Iran's score with 20 points, while Onolbek Kanybek earned 11 points for Kyrgyzstan.

Team Melli will meet Thailand and Indonesia in Pool B in the following days, respectively.

The men's tournament in volleyball at the 20th edition of the Games is organized by the Asian Volleyball Confederation, in conjunction with the OCA.

The event is being held in Okazaki and Komaki, Aichi Prefecture, Japan from Sept. 27 to Oct. 3.

Sardar Azmoun linked with Tractor

TEHRAN - Iran international striker Sardar Azmoun could return to Iranian football after finishing his career abroad, with Tractor reportedly interested in securing his services.

Tractor CEO Hojat Karimi has revealed that the Tabriz-based club would welcome Azmoun if the striker decides to return to Iran. Karimi said the 32-year-old currently plays for Shabab in Dubai and remains one of the club's leading players.

"Azmoun is currently playing in Dubai for Shabab and is also their best player," Karimi said. "If he comes to Iran, we will definitely bring him to Tractor. He likes Mr. Zenouzi, and we like him as well."

Azmoun has built an extensive career in European football, representing clubs including Rostov, Rubin Kazan, Zenit St Petersburg, Bayer Leverkusen and AS Roma. His performances at club level have made him one of the most recognizable Iranian forwards of his generation.

The striker has also been a key figure for the Iran national team and is approaching the milestone of 100 international appearances.

While Karimi's comments do not indicate an immediate transfer, they underline Tractor's interest in bringing Azmoun back to Iranian football once his overseas career comes to an end. A potential return to Tabriz would also reunite the forward with a club that has publicly expressed its admiration for him.

Ex-Iran boxing federation chief Nategh Nouri dies

TEHRAN - Ahmad Nategh Nouri, former president of Iran's Boxing Federation has passed away at the age of 89 after years of battling illness.

Nategh Nouri, who led Iran's Boxing Federation for 28 years, died following a long illness. He was 89.

Born in Nur, Mazandaran, Nategh Nouri also served seven terms as a member of Iran's Islamic Consultative Assembly (Parliament).

Following the Islamic Revolution, Nategh Nouri revived the sport of boxing, which had been suspended for several years, and went on to head the federation for 28 years, from 1989 to 2017.

During his tenure at the helm of the Boxing Federation, legendary American Muslim boxer Muhammad Ali traveled to Iran.

Tehran Times extends its condolences to Nategh Nouri's family and the nation's sporting community.

Where the road became a destination: Iran's historical caravanserais

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN - For centuries, crossing Iran was as much a test of endurance as it was a journey of discovery. Merchants moved goods between distant markets, pilgrims traveled toward sacred places, and ordinary travelers followed routes across deserts, mountains and plains. Between these long stretches of road stood caravanserais, places where a journey could pause, animals could be rested, goods could be protected and strangers could share food, stories and news.

Today, many of these historical roadside inns offer a different kind of journey. They are destinations in their own right, allowing visitors to step into the infrastructure of travel that shaped Iran long before motorways, railways and airports.

The importance of these buildings was formally recognized in 2023, when UNESCO inscribed The Persian Caravanserai on the World Heritage List. The serial property comprises 54 caravanserais selected from the country's much larger network of centuries-old examples.

Together, they represent far more than individual buildings: they form a testimony of the roads, trade, pilgrimage, architecture and human encounters that connected different parts of the Iranian soil and the wider region.

For travelers today, this network offers an unusual way of experiencing the ancient country. Rather than visiting heritage only in the form of palaces, mosques or ancient cities, visitors can follow the roads between them and discover the places where earlier generations stopped along the way.

Glances of an architecture that was shaped by the road

Though, there are many differences and similarities between those caravanserais countrywide, there is no single architectural formula for an Iranian caravanserai.

Their designs evolved according to geography, climate, available building materials, security requirements and the character of the routes on which they stood. The UN cultural body describes the 54 selected caravanserais as demonstrating a wide range of architectural styles and adaptations to different climatic conditions across thousands of kilometers.

Yet many share a recognizable shape and design. A traveler approaching a caravanserai would often first encounter a substantial entrance, sometimes marked by a monumental portal. Beyond it was a central courtyard around which rooms and service spaces were arranged. The courtyard provided an organized space for people, animals and goods, while the surrounding rooms offered shelter.

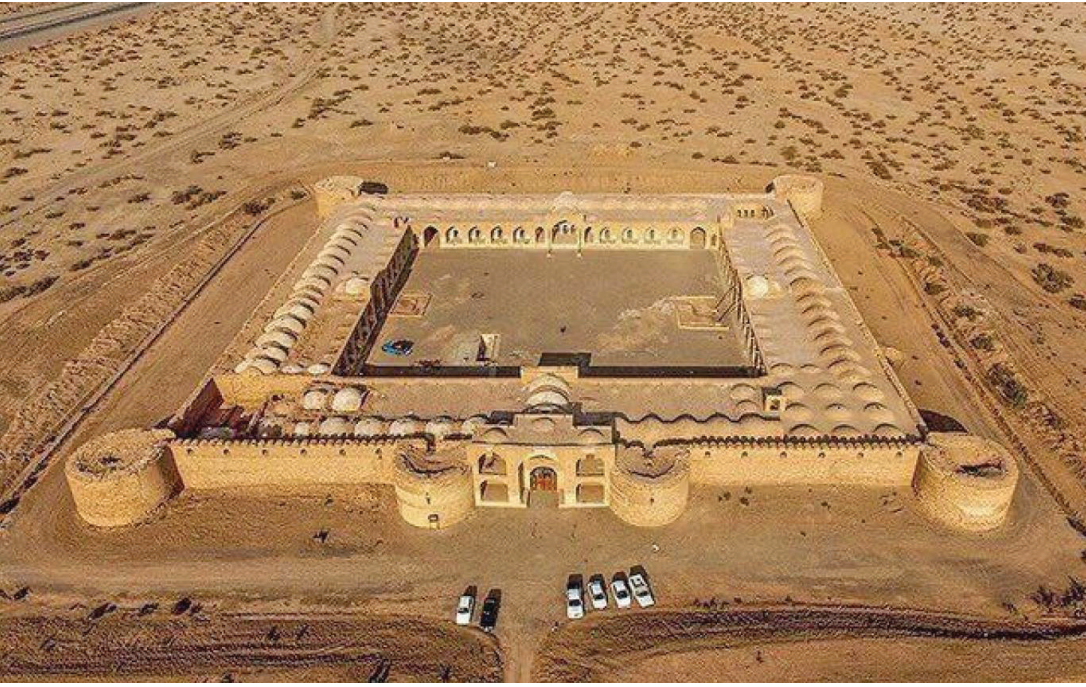
The design was practical but rarely devoid of architectural ambition. Brickwork, vaults, domes, arches, geometric patterns and carefully proportioned courtyards could transform what was essentially roadside infrastructure into an impressive architectural ensemble.

In desert areas, thick walls and enclosed courtyards helped moderate the harsh climate. Elsewhere, local materials and construction traditions produced different forms. The result is a remarkable architectural map of Iran: buildings responding to the same basic human need while reflecting very different landscapes.

UNESCO's documentation notes that the location and setting of each caravanserai were decisive in shaping its design, particularly in relation to climate, water availability and defensive requirements.

This is one reason that visiting a caravanserai can be more revealing than looking at photographs of one. Sometimes, the relationship between building and landscape becomes part of the experience.

A caravanserai in a desert does



An aerial view of the centuries-old Deir-e Gachin Caravanserai, located in the center of Kavir National Park, some 35 kilometers southwest of Varamin in Qom province. Due to its historical significance and unique features, it is sometimes called the "Mother of Iranian Caravanserais."

not tell the same story as one near a mountain pass or a historic urban center. The surrounding terrain, the distance from other settlements and the availability of water help explain why the building was constructed where it stands.

More than roadside inns

The word "caravanserai" can easily create an image of merchants stopping overnight with their camels. That picture is not wrong, but it is incomplete.

These places were part of a much larger social and economic system. They provided shelter, food and water for caravans, pilgrims and other travelers. They also facilitated the movement of goods and information between regions.

A caravanserai could therefore function as a small temporary community.

Merchants from different regions might meet there. Pilgrims could rest beside traders. People speaking different languages and following different religious traditions could spend a night under the same roof. News traveled with the caravans, as did commercial information, cultural practices and technical knowledge.

UNESCO considers this interaction central to the property's significance. It says caravanserais served as meeting places for people from different ethnicities, languages and religions and contributed over centuries to the exchange of human values, ideas and knowledge.

Seen from this perspective, the caravanserai was not simply a building beside a road. It was part of the road itself.

The road carried people and commodities, while the caravanserai provided the physical infrastructure that made long-distance movement possible.

Iran's caravanserai tradition is closely associated with the country's position between major cultural and commercial regions. Routes crossing the Iranian plateau linked Mesopotamia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Persian Gulf and the Indian subcontinent, while pilgrimage routes connected important religious centers.

The World Heritage property reflects a tradition that developed over a very long period. UNESCO traces the evolution represented by the selected caravanserais from the Achaemenid period through the Qajar period, with examples reflecting different historical stages and architectural traditions.

The buildings therefore should not be viewed as belonging to one dynasty or one architectural period.

The network reflects successive generations of travelers and builders. Iranian caravanserais were constructed, modified and used over centuries as routes changed and economic and political circumstances evolved.

The UNESCO nomination documentation identifies historical continuity from the Sasanian and early Islamic periods through the Buyid, Ziyarid, Seljuk, Ilkhanid, Timurid, Safavid and Qajar eras, while also considering the continuation of historic routes and the evolution of architectural forms.

That continuity gives the caravanserais an unusual place in Iran's heritage landscape. A palace can reveal how a territory was defended; a mosque can reflect religious and artistic traditions. A caravanserai, by contrast, reveals something about movement, how people travelled, where they stopped and how distant communities remained connected.

From ancient shelter to modern travel experience

For modern visitors, the appeal of a caravanserai lies partly in its ability to change the rhythm of travel.

Iran's major tourist attractions are often concentrated in well-known cities: Isfahan, Shiraz, Yazd, Kashan and Tehran.

But, caravanserais encourage a different itinerary. They invite travelers to leave the main urban centers and follow historical roads into smaller towns, villages, agricultural areas, deserts and mountain landscapes.

A visit can begin with the architecture. The entrance may frame the courtyard like a stage. Arched rooms reveal the practical organization of the building. Brick vaults and domes demonstrate how builders created large covered spaces without modern construction technology.

But the landscape outside can be equally important.

Standing inside a caravanserai in a remote setting, a visitor can begin to understand the scale of earlier journeys. A road that now takes hours by car could once have required days of travel. The presence of a caravanserai was therefore not incidental. It marked a point at which travelers could find water, shelter and a degree of security.

Perhaps the most evocative space in many caravanserais is the courtyard.

Today it may appear quiet, with visitors photographing arches and brick walls. Historically, however, it would have been a place of constant activity.

Animals were brought in after a day's journey. Goods were unloaded. Travelers looked for rooms. Food was prepared. Conversations continued between people who might never have met anywhere else.

Rooms around the courtyard could accommodate travelers, while spaces for animals, storage and other services supported the practical needs of caravans. The arrangement allowed the building to function as a compact and controlled environment along a diffi-

cult route.

So, such a combination of hospitality, logistics and security was fundamental to the success of long-distance travel before modern transport.

A new chapter for old roads

The UNESCO inscription also creates an opportunity to rethink how Iran's caravanserais are presented to international visitors.

They can be experienced as architectural monuments, but they can also serve as gateways to wider cultural landscapes. A caravanserai visit can be combined with local food, handicrafts, rural tourism, desert excursions, archaeological sites or visits to historic towns.

Some have already undergone restoration and adaptive reuse. UNESCO has highlighted the need for sustainable approaches that allow modern commercial and hospitality functions while protecting their historical and architectural values.

This balance will be important.

A caravanserai that becomes a hotel, restaurant or cultural center can acquire a new economic life. But excessive alteration could weaken precisely the qualities that make the building valuable. Conservation therefore has to remain at the center of any tourism strategy.

The challenge is not simply to make old buildings usable. It is to allow them to remain legible as historic places.

UNESCO's management framework recognizes this issue. The World Heritage Centre notes that the component sites have individual restoration plans and that local communities are involved in the management of caravanserais located in or near settlements.

For a traveler, perhaps the most rewarding way to experience Iran's caravanserais is not to regard them as isolated stops.

They make more sense when encountered as part of a journey.

A route through Iran can become a journey through layers of history: ancient roads, old bazaars, water systems, villages and cities, with caravanserais marking the points where travelers once rested. The buildings provide physical evidence of a world in which distance shaped everyday life and hospitality was an essential part of travel.

The modern visitor, of course, arrives by car, bus or other contemporary transport. Roads are faster, navigation is digital and a night's accommodation can be booked from thousands of kilometers away.

Yet inside a centuries-old caravanserai, the basic idea remains familiar.

A traveler arrives after a journey. A door opens. There is shelter, a place to rest and a courtyard around which the building gathers its life.

Such a continuity is perhaps the greatest attraction of Iran's caravanserais.

Iran expects Iraqi students to return as flight disruptions ease

TEHRAN – Iran’s Minister of Science, Research and Technology, Hossein Simaei-Sarraf, has said the disruptions to flights between Iran and Iraq would be resolved soon, paving the way for Iraqi students to return to Iranian universities.

More than 50,000 Iraqi students are currently studying at universities across Iran, he said on the sidelines of a meeting with Iraqi Ambassador to Iran, Yasser Abdul Zahra al-Hajjaj.

Simaei-Sarraf added that efforts were being made to create a negative atmosphere around academic ties between Iran and Iraq, adding that some parties seek to portray Iran as an unsafe destination for Iraqi students.

“The Iranian people are hospitable,” he said, stressing that such efforts should not undermine the longstanding academic and people-to-people ties between the two countries.

The disruption to air travel followed a September 8 warning by the U.S. Treasury Department that airports providing services to 27 Iranian airlines could face secondary sanctions. Iraqi authorities subsequently ordered aviation officials at airports in Baghdad, Najaf, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk to suspend flights



operated by Iranian carriers.

The suspension has stranded thousands of passengers, including religious pilgrims, students and people traveling to Iraq for medical treatment.

The Iranian minister said thousands of Iraqi students would continue their studies at Iranian universities during the new academic year. He also referred to

the allocation of 200 scholarships for Iraqi students as part of efforts to further strengthen academic exchanges between the two countries.

Iran has attracted students from 101 countries despite existing challenges, Saeed Habiba, head of the Organization of Student Affairs, said in October 2025.

He said the scientific capabil-

ities of Iranian universities and their positive record in international cooperation constitute a valuable opportunity that should be leveraged to turn the presence of international students into a national discourse and a basis for strategic planning.

According to Habiba, foreign students studying in Iran mainly come from Afghanistan, India, Iraq, and Pakistan.

DOE steps up efforts to restore Persian yellow deer population

TEHRAN – The Department of Environment (DOE) is carrying out research, conservation, and breeding programs aimed at restoring the population of Persian yellow deer in designated natural habitats and wildlife breeding centers across the country.

Conservation efforts to recover the threatened species are being pursued through two complementary approaches: in-situ conservation in its natural habitats and ex-situ conservation in managed settings, IRNA quoted Mohammad Nosrati, an official with the DOE, as saying.

To conserve the animal in its natural habitat, the feasibility study for the reintroduction of Persian fallow deer in chosen habitats in Fars and Yazd provinces is placed on the agenda to be conducted.

As part of the plan to reinforce the number of Persian yellow deer and enhance its restoration, DOE has allocated funding for monitoring and assessing the population of the species introduced into Ilam, Khuzestan, Fars and Yazd provinces. The effort aims to study the population dynamics, identify threats, evaluate habitat desirability, and assess the conservation status of the species, he added.

Referring to the conservation measures being conducted outside the natural habitat, Nosrati said the DOE is organizing fallow deer breeding centers at different sites such as Azadi, Arsanjan, Miankotal, Dasht-e Naz, Rashkan, Bagh-e Shadi, Mahour Dasht-Yafteh, Karun Agro-Industry, and Fandoqlu, where population management, the translocation of Persian deer to natural habitats, and the assessment of the species’ genetic purity are put on the agenda.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, the Iranian yellow deer is categorized as an endangered species.

Almost half a century ago, it was thought that the yellow deer species was extinct in the world. However, about 50 years ago, four yellow deer were observed in Dez and Karkheh forests, the primary habitats of the Persian yellow deer. They were released in different regions of Iran for better reproduction.

Thanks to the effective implementation of the conservation program, the number of Persian yellow deer has risen from 5 in the Iranian year 1398 (2019 – 2020), to 19 this year.

Genetic map for endangered species being developed

The DOE is developing a genetic map of endangered wildlife species to increase their chance of survival, create a breeding plan, manage their population, and address the risks facing them in their natural habitats.

Effective conservation of endangered species is almost unattainable without a precise understanding of population genetics. To this end, genetic and molecular studies of key wildlife species in the country have been put on the agenda, ensuring that management decisions are based on accurate scientific



data, IRNA quoted the head of the National Museum of Natural History and Genetic Resources, Leila Ezzeddinlou, as saying.

Preserving genetic diversity within and between populations, preventing declines in effective population size, avoiding inbreeding and genetic erosion, conserving genes adapted to diverse environmental conditions, and providing genetic resources for species restoration, propagation, and introduction or reintroduction programs are among primary objectives of these studies, she added.

Referring to three research agreements signed between the DOE, the College of Agricultural and Natural Resources of the University of Tehran, and Gorgan University, the official said that as part of the cooperation, a project is underway to investigate the genomic diversity and phylogeny of Levant viper and Latifi’s viper populations, employing conservation and therapeutic approaches based on genomic markers.

Moreover, the development of genetic profiles and maps for the Asiatic cheetahs, black bear, and Persian yellow deer, as keystone and threatened species, has kicked off.

The other part of the agreements focuses on the assessment of genetic variation, inbreeding, and kinship relationships within the Persian zebra population, which is being conducted in collaboration with Yazd’s provincial DOE department. The initiative plays a key role in managing small populations and preventing the loss of genetic biodiversity, she highlighted.

From accelerated extinction to successful revival of species

Despite worrisome facts about the speed at which species are disappearing, there has been good news of endangered species making a comeback, highlighting the role of conservation efforts in preventing extinction and helping vulnerable wildlife recover.

According to the latest report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, about 154 vertebrate animal species, and around 25 percent of plant species in the country are at risk of extinction, with 117 species being classified as critically endangered in the national list. Persian zebra, Asiatic cheetah, black bear, great bustard, and yellow deer are among animals that are in danger of extinction.

Among extinct animals, the Hyrcanian tiger and Persian lion are the two feline species that have disappeared forever in the country. Fortunately, Persian zebra and Persian yellow deer are examples of successful conservation efforts where scientific measures and local community participation have resulted in the species’ recovery, doe.ir quoted Hamid Zohrabi, an official with the DOE, as saying.

Referring to successful recovery stories of species in Iran, Zohrabi noted that for years, it was thought that the yellow deer species was extinct in the world. However, about 65 years ago, some yellow deer were observed in Dez and Karkheh forests, the primary habitats of the Persian yellow deer.

Their conservation program commenced immediately by breeding them in captivity and transferring them to natural habitats for better reproduction, Zohrabi noted.

The birth of the first Persian yellow deer in the current Iranian year, which started on March 21, in Karkheh National Park, southwestern Khuzestan province, has raised hopes for the revival of this unique animal species.

The Persian zebra is a subspecies of onager, which is critically in danger of extinction. With the birth of a foal in Yazd province, the current population of Persian zebra is estimated to be more than 50, indicating improved habitat conditions and effective conservation management of the endangered animal.

The conservation efforts include a field program that encompasses strengthening natural infrastructure and promoting environmental sustainability, such as monitoring water resources.

According to DOE, the total number of Asiatic cheetahs in the country’s protected areas amounts to 27, with five other cheetahs living in breeding sites, and six in captivity.

In September 2025, the DOE resumed the implementation of the national project to protect Asiatic cheetahs after a six-year hiatus.

Expounding on the DOE’s achievements and measures, the official said that for each endangered species, a specific action plan has been developed, and a specialized committee, in collaboration with universities and scientific organizations, is working to protect and restore species based on scientific data and studies.

There are over 337 protected areas under the supervision of the DOE; the country has 13 biosphere reserves and 226 wetlands nationwide, out of which 26 are inscribed on the Ramsar List as wetlands of international importance.

The country has so far prepared plans for the preservation of 25 endangered species, such as the Persian cheetah, zebra, Asiatic black bear, yellow deer, lesser white-fronted geese, white-headed duck, Persian salamander, blind cave fish, and luristanica Sorbus (a rare plant species that is native to Iran). The DOE is preparing thirteen more plans.

Over 5,000 prisoners of unintentional crimes released in six months

TEHRAN – A total of 5,059 prisoners convicted of unintentional crimes were released across Iran during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year which started on March 21, with their combined debts amounting to 370 trillion rials (around \$160 million).

Of those released, 261 were women, and 4,798 were men, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Some 1,034 prisoners were freed without any payment after their cases were settled through reconciliation, mediation and waivers by private complainants.

Since 1990, more than 198,000 prisoners convicted of unintentional crimes have been released and reunited with their families, the figures show.

During the previous Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, around 9,000 prisoners serving sentences for unintentional crimes were released.

Currently, 20,349 people, including 950 women and 19,399 men, are imprisoned for unintentional crimes, with their total debts estimated at 2.6 trillion rials, Mehr reported.

The provinces with the highest numbers of prisoners convicted of unintentional crimes are Tehran with 2,968, Fars with 1,898, Khorasan Razavi with 1,845, Isfahan with 1,582 and East Azarbaijan with 1,060.

During the Iranian calendar year 1403



(March 2024–March 2025), benefactors helped secure the release of 11,380 prisoners convicted of unintentional crimes across the country. In the same period, 2,441 prisoners were pardoned, ISNA reported.

The number of prisoners released in that year increased by 22 percent compared with 1402 (March 2023–March 2024). Of those released, 682 were women, and 10,698 were men, most of whom had been imprisoned because they were unable to pay financial debts.

Prisoners convicted of unintentional crimes can be released through several forms of assistance, including temporary leave, financial loans, and debt repayment. Reconciliation and waivers by complainants also play a significant role in resolving such cases.

‘Science-based approach essential to address environmental hazards’

TEHRAN – Environmental health plays a key role in preventing hazards and safeguarding public health; addressing environmental health challenges requires scientific, evidence-based decision-making, enhanced intersectoral collaborations, and benefiting from the country’s scientific capabilities, Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi has stated.

Today, environmental health constitutes a fundamental component of the health-care system and a critical investment for the country’s future, the health ministry website quoted Zafarqandi as saying.

The official made the remarks on the occasion of the World Environmental Health Day, which is observed on September 26 every year.

Maintaining the safety of water and food, managing waste and air quality, improving hygiene in public spaces, addressing climate change-related hazards, and monitoring workplace health risks and environmental pollution all play a decisive role in shaping and developing healthy, safe, and sustainable communities, Zafarqandi added.

Air pollution, water stress, sand and dust storms, climate change, urban and medical waste management, contamination of water and soil resources, and the consequences of rapid urbanization are among the challenges faced by the country, he noted.

The health ministry, with the help of environmental health experts, is trying to develop monitoring and surveillance systems, improve water and food safety, strengthen specialized laboratories, utilize modern technologies, increase preparedness to address environmental hazards, and implement preventive programs, Zafarqandi said.

The official went on to say that expanding public education and improving health literacy are among other main policies of the health ministry, as protecting environmental health is almost impossible without informed participation of the public, and cooperation of other executive bodies like municipalities, industries, scientific centers, media, and non-governmental organizations.

For sure, a healthier and more sustainable future relies on boosting the synergy among science, social responsibility, and public participation in the conservation of the environment and environmental health, the official further noted.

World Environmental Day aims to raise awareness about environmental health issues and promote actions to improve and protect the environment for the wellbeing of all living creatures.



This year’s theme, ‘Standing with Science to Protect Communities’, directly aligns with the World Health Organization’s science-based decision-making narrative and highlights the role of environmental health professionals as applied public health scientists translating research into policy, regulation and community protection.

The key messages of the day include: Environmental health practice is evidence-based public health action; Science protects communities from environmental risks; Environmental health professionals are the bridge between science and implementation.

National document on health, climate change strategy being developed

The Health Ministry is developing a national document on health and climate change to mitigate the impacts of climate change on public health and to develop a climate-resilient health system.

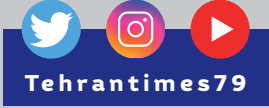
So far, a draft of the document has been provided and revised by experts and professors from medical universities in an expert working group on reducing environmental threats to health, IRNA reported.

The document aims to strengthen inter-sectoral cooperation to protect public health, prevent and reduce adverse impacts of climate change, and promote health system resilience in the face of natural hazards.

Climate resilience of health systems is the touchstone of their ability to anticipate, prevent, respond to, cope with, and recover from adverse conditions and climate-related tensions.

The document comprises five goals, 24 strategies, and 106 action plans, establishing a framework for coordinated planning and implementation by various agencies to address health-related consequences of climate change.

The document will be submitted to the supreme council for health and food security to be approved.



SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Patience is two in kind: one against what you dislike, and the other before what you like and seems beautiful.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:55 Evening: 18:11 Dawn: 4:34 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:57 (tomorrow)

Kiarostami's "Where Is the Friend's House?" goes on screen at Athens open-air cinemas

TEHRAN- Abbas Kiarostami's acclaimed film "Where Is the Friend's House?" continued its theatrical rerelease in Greece with screenings at two open-air cinemas in Athens on September 26 and 27.

The 1987 film, produced by the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon), was screened at the Amiko open-air cinema on Saturday, September 26. It was then shown at the Aniksis open-air cinema on Sunday, September 27. Both screenings were held in Persian with Greek subtitles.

The rerelease of "Where Is the Friend's House?" in Greece began on August 27, and the two Athens screenings were part of its ongoing theatrical run in the country.

The film tells the story of Ahmad, a young schoolboy in a rural village who mistakenly takes home his classmate's notebook. Concerned that his friend may be punished for not having his homework, Ahmad sets out for a neighboring village to return the notebook.

Through the seemingly simple journey of a child, Kiarostami explores themes of friendship, responsibility, and compassion, while offering an understated portrayal of rural life and childhood.

The film has won several awards since its release, including the Bronze Leopard at the Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland and the Critics' Prize at the Sao Paulo International Film Festival, and the Pasinetti Award at the Venice Film Festival.

"Where Is the Friend's House?" is one of Kiarostami's landmark works and the first installment of his Koker trilogy, which also includes "And Life Goes On" (1992) and "Through the Olive Trees" (1994).

The film has been screened at numerous international film festivals and cinema-theques over the decades and continues to



feature in retrospectives and programs dedicated to world cinema.

Kiarostami was a film director, screenwriter, poet, photographer, and film producer. An active filmmaker from 1970, he was involved in the production of over 40 films, including shorts and documentaries. He attained critical acclaim for directing "Close-Up" (1990), "The Wind Will Carry Us" (1999), and "Taste of Cherry" (1997). In later works, "Certified Copy" (2010) and "Like Someone in Love" (2012), he filmed for the first time outside Iran: in Italy and Japan, respectively.

He was part of a generation of filmmakers in the Iranian New Wave, a Persian cinema movement that started in the late 1960s and emphasized the use of poetic dialogue and allegorical storytelling dealing with philosophical issues. He is known for his use of Persian poetry in the dialogue, titles, and themes of his films. His films also contain a notable degree of ambiguity, an unusual mixture of simplicity and complexity, and often a mix of fictional and documentary elements. The concepts of change and continuity, in addition to the themes of life and death, play a major role in Kiarostami's works.

Kiarostami, the winner of the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 1997 for his "Taste of Cherry", died of cancer on July 5, 2016 at the age of 76.

Cartoon of Day



The free press

The Big Squeeze

Cartoonist: Dennis Goris from the US

Iran, Russia culture ministers meet in St. Petersburg, promise new era in cultural relations

TEHRAN – In a meeting in Saint Petersburg, the culture ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation discussed expansion of cultural ties.

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi, who has traveled to Saint Petersburg to participate in Iran's Cultural Week and the 12th International Forum of United Cultures, met his Russian counterpart Olga Lyubimova on Saturday, ILNA reported.

Referring to the hosting of the Russian Cultural Week in Iran last year and the military aggression by the US and the Zionist regime against Iran during the final days of the event, Salehi stated: "The next imposed war resulted in the martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, along with a group of compatriots, including schoolchildren from Minab and girls from a gymnasium in Lamerd, as well as the destruction of hundreds of historical sites, residential areas, and other facilities such as hospitals."

He continued by expressing gratitude for the sympathy and solidarity shown by the government and people of Russia toward Iran, specifically citing the messages of condolence sent by the Russian President regarding the martyrdom of the Leader and Martyr Larijani, as well as Moscow's diplomatic support for Tehran in international forums. He described these instances as evidence of the high level of relations between the two countries.

"Despite the difficulties arising from the two recent imposed wars, Iranian culture and art have not ceased and continue steadily. He mentioned that various Iranian festivals marking the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution were successfully held, and other cultural and artistic events are ongoing in different cities across the country," Salehi noted.

He added that the upcoming Iran's Cultural Week in Russia, featuring more than 160 Iranian artists, serves as a testament to the will of both nations to develop cultural relations.

Stating that both Iran and Russia possess a "rainbow" of diverse ethnicities living together in solidarity—adding beauty and charm to both nations—he



remarked, "It seems that art is an excellent arena to showcase the rainbow of Iranian and Russian ethnicities. We can enhance cultural relations in fields such as music, performing arts, fashion, and other sectors."

For her part, the Russian Minister of Culture stated that they look forward to the opening of Iran's Cultural Week on the historic stage of the Bolshoi Theater in the Russian capital.

"Within the framework of Iran's Cultural Week, the Museum of Theatrical and Musical Arts will also host an exhibition of works by Iranian artists," Lyubimova added.

Referring to the hosting of Cultural Week in two other Russian cities, she noted, "People in major cities like Kazan and Astrakhan are waiting with great anticipation to become acquainted with Iranian culture and are looking forward to the upcoming cultural and artistic events."

The Russian Minister of Culture further emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation with Iran in the field of joint film production. Citing the establishment of the Diamond Butterfly Film Award, she praised the participation of Iranian artists in the inaugural edition of this film festival and called for the continuation of such collaborations.

At the conclusion of bilateral negotiations and the meeting of the Joint Cultural Committee of the two countries in Saint Petersburg on Saturday, the cul-

ture ministers of Iran and Russia signed a memorandum of understanding for joint film production.

On the sidelines of the ceremony, speaking to journalists, Salehi said: "This memorandum of understanding was drafted and signed today within the framework of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty, which was signed by the Presidents of Iran and Russia in January 2025."

"From this point forward, the process of joint cinematic productions between Iran and Russia, the investments made, and the rules for their execution and exhibition will be governed by the framework of this MoU," he added.

"The signing of this memorandum creates a significant foundation for joint cinematic cooperation and can provide excellent opportunities for the development of the cinema of both countries," the minister noted.

Lyubimova also told journalists: "This agreement allows filmmakers from both countries to engage in the joint creation of works, exhibit them on the international stage, and cooperate with one another under more constructive and favorable conditions."

During his trip to Russia, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance also visited Saint Petersburg State University of Culture and Arts and met its rector, Alexander Turgaev.

At the meeting, Turgaev spoke

about the university's history, dating back to 1918, and its role in educating many prominent figures in Russian culture and the arts. He said the university was interested in establishing a Persian-language program.

He described Iran's culture, art, and civilization as exceptionally rich. "As a child, I became acquainted with Iranian cinema through the film "The Mazandaran Tiger" (by Samuel Khachikian), and I have a deep interest in Iran's culture and civilization," he said.

Noting that the university teaches six foreign languages, Turgaev reiterated his interest in establishing a Persian-language program.

Welcoming the proposal, Salehi instructed the cultural adviser at Iran's embassy in Russia to follow up on establishing a Persian-language program at Saint Petersburg State University of Culture and Arts in coordination with the Russian side.

On Friday, during the second day of his trip to Russia, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance spoke at the 12th International Forum of United Cultures in Saint Petersburg before ministers and influential figures from more than 70 countries and answered questions from journalists.

Iran's Cultural Week includes a performance by an orchestra of Iranian artists and a visual arts exhibition as well as specialized sessions and film screenings.

Tehran literary event explores books on Lebanon, resistance

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN- The fourth edition of the "Ta Ketab" literary event, focusing on Lebanon and the culture of resistance, was held at Tehran's Art Bureau on Saturday, bringing together authors to share the stories behind the creation and publication of their books.

The event, which coincided with the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, featured presentations of seven books dealing with Lebanon, resistance, social and political developments, and personal experiences connected to the region.

The program was held at the Sooreh Hall of the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, where the participating authors introduced their works and discussed the experiences and circumstances that shaped their writing.

The fourth edition of the event featured "Twelve Zero Three" by Mohammad Sadeq Alizadeh, "In Hezbollah Detention" by Mohammad Hossein Azimi, "Arabica" by Vahid Yaminpour, "Five Journeys" by Hossein Sharafkhanlou, "Blessed Difficulty" by Faezeh Ghaffar Haddadi, "The Last Hello" by Elaheh Akherati and "Against the Ghosts" by Mohsen Hassanzadeh.

The selection brought together works that approach the subject of resistance from different literary and narrative perspectives, while placing particular emphasis on Lebanon and the experiences surrounding the resistance movement.

"Ta Ketab" is designed as an author-centered literary program, seeking to go beyond

the conventional introduction of a published work. During the event, writers recount the process through which their books took shape, from the initial idea and research to writing and eventual publication.

The format allows audiences to become familiar not only with the books themselves, but also with the authors' experiences, the subjects they explored and the circumstances that influenced their approach to each work.

The event's focus on Lebanon comes at a time when the country has remained an important subject in Iranian literature and cultural production related to resistance. Over the past decades, Iranian writers and cultural institutions have produced works examining different aspects of Lebanon, Hezbollah and the broader regional developments that have shaped the concept of resistance.

The anniversary of the martyrdom of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah provided the setting for the fourth edition of "Ta Ketab," connecting the literary program with a broader cultural remembrance of the Hezbollah leader and the events surrounding his life and death.

The program was organized by the Art Bureau of the Islamic Revolution, one of Iran's major cultural institutions active in literature, arts and cultural production related to the Islamic Revolution and resistance.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah became secretary-general of Hezbollah in 1992, following the assassination of his predecessor, Sayyed Abbas al-Musawi. He led the movement for more than three decades, during a period

that included the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 and the 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel. Under his leadership, Hezbollah developed into a major political and military force in Lebanon and assumed a broader role in regional affairs.

Nasrallah was also widely known for his televised speeches, through which he addressed supporters and commented on major developments in Lebanon and the wider region. Born and raised in Beirut, he came from a family with roots in Bazouriyeh in southern Lebanon. While his public life was closely followed across the region, his personal and family life largely remained outside the spotlight.

He was tragically killed at the age of 64 during a series of intense Israeli airstrikes in southern Beirut on September 27, 2024.

The attack that claimed Nasrallah's life was carried out by Israeli fighter jets targeting Hezbollah's main headquarters, resulting in the martyrdom of several senior Hezbollah commanders and prominent Iranian Revolutionary Guards Lieutenant General Abbas Nilforoushan, who was present at the scene.

Under Nasrallah's leadership, whose name means "victory through God," Hezbollah evolved from a grassroots armed movement into the largest political party in Lebanon's recent history. Renowned for his captivating speeches, Nasrallah garnered attention throughout the West Asia and beyond, establishing himself as a significant figure within the Axis of Resistance, which includes Hezbollah, the Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the Houthi movement in Yemen, and various Iraqi paramilitary factions.