

Israel systematically burns Palestinian homes in West Bank, assaults holy sites

By staff writer

TEHRAN — The return of the Tubasi family to their home in Jalud lasted less than a single day. Forced from their village south of Nablus two months ago by armed Israeli settlers, the family obtained a court order guaranteeing their safe return under military protection.

They arrived on Monday night to find their property vandalized. Hours later, a mob of more than 100 masked settlers descended on the property, set fire to two residential structures, and destroyed what remained. ►Page 5

Ansarallah's gains could reverberate beyond Saudi Arabia

TEHRAN – In a commentary published on its website, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said that victories by Yemen's Ansarallah forces against Saudi-backed forces have brought them within 80 miles of Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, which houses the United States' only permanent and largest military base on the African continent.

The article, written by Andrew Leber, a nonresident scholar in Carnegie's Middle East Program, and Lesley Anne Warner, a visiting scholar with the Endowment's Africa Program, argues that the fallout from Ansarallah's advance could extend beyond Saudi Arabia. ►Page 5

S. Korean ambassador highlights Iran's ecotourism potential

TEHRAN – South Korean Ambassador to Iran Kim Junpyo has highlighted the potential of Iran's ecotourism sector to support local economies and offer visitors authentic experiences of local culture and daily life.

What is taking shape in Iran's ecotourism sector today is not merely the provision of accommodation services, but the creation of experiences rooted in local communities and people's real lives, Kim said, according to a report published by the Iranian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and carried by IRNA on Wednesday.

The ambassador made the remarks during a meeting with Yavar Abiri, head of the Iranian Ecodge Association, at the Sangan Ecodge in Tehran, held during the National Tourism Week. ►Page 6

Iran submits Babak Khajehpasha's "Land of Angels" to 99th Academy Awards

TEHRAN – Babak Khajehpasha's "Land of Angels" has been officially selected as Iran's submission to the 99th Academy Awards in the best international feature film category.

This is the second time that a film by Khajehpasha will represent Iran at the Oscars. His directorial debut feature film "In the Arms of the Tree" was chosen as Iran's representative at the 2025 Academy Awards.

The film tells the story of the suffering of children in Gaza and portrays the human consequences of war through the experiences of a woman who struggles to survive while protecting a group of innocent children from the horrors of conflict, IRNA reported.

Written and directed by Khajehpasha and produced by Manouchehr Mohammadi, "Land of Angels" was jointly undertaken by the Tasvir-e Shahr Institute and the Soureh Cinema Center. ►Page 8



Trump speaks during a press conference with U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Dan Caine at the White House, April 6, 2026.

Trump's Surrender Fantasy: the Knot in Talks

As government spokesperson says Tehran has received Washington's response to its proposal; President Pezeshkian says Iran will not surrender to US bullying

Iran's security chief: 'Trump is caught in a quagmire where he can neither negotiate nor fight'

TEHRAN — Iran has received Washington's response to its latest initiative aimed at ending the seven-month-long conflict that began with unprovoked, joint US-Israeli strikes on February 28, as President Donald Trump remains stubbornly wedded to the delusion that military pressure and economic warfare can force the Islamic Republic into submission.

The US response was submitted to President Masoud Pezeshkian during a Cabinet session on Wednesday by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani confirmed.

Addressing the Cabinet, President Pezeshkian reaffirmed Tehran's principled position on resolving the crisis through diplomacy without compromising fundamental rights.

"We will make every effort to bring the

agreement to fruition and will firmly stand up for the rights of the Iranian people," Pezeshkian said, emphasizing: "The agreement must now be based on a win-win strategy."

The development follows Araghchi's return from the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where Iranian diplomats engaged in indirect exchanges with American representatives while holding intensive consultations on the sidelines with Qatari and Pakistani mediators. Mohajerani noted that Araghchi briefed the Cabinet on these diplomatic engagements, which detailed Iran's framework for reopening the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

Last week, Araghchi presented a comprehensive seven-point proposal to reopen

the waterway within seven days, contingent upon Washington lifting its naval blockade of Iranian ports, unfreezing national assets, and removing illegal sanctions on Iranian oil exports. While Trump hastily dismissed the initiative—claiming Iran was "losing so badly" and that Tehran's terms "would not be acceptable"—regional mediators have persisted in their efforts to forge a diplomatic resolution based on the reality on the ground.

Paralyzed by strategic deadlock

Tehran views Washington's mixed signals not as strength, but as profound strategic disorientation. Speaking on Tuesday during a meeting in Tehran with Shahin Mustafayev, Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister, Major General Mohsen Rezaei, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), characterized the US president as trapped in a state of absolute paralysis. ►Page 3

Iran seeks deeper ties with neighbors, puts Caucasus and Central Asia in focus

TEHRAN — Iran is stepping up efforts to expand political, economic and people-to-people engagement with neighboring and friendly countries, with recent high-level contacts with Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan highlighting Tehran's emphasis on closer ties with its northern neighbors and partners across the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has repeatedly identified relations with neighboring, friendly and like-minded countries as a priority of Tehran's foreign policy. The latest diplomatic activity with Baku and Tashkent has given fresh impetus to that approach, focusing particularly on trade, investment, transportation, energy, cultural exchanges and the implementation of existing agreements. ►Page 2

Iran warns regional states against hosting Israeli officials after Netanyahu's UAE visit

TEHRAN – Iran has warned regional countries about the consequences of the presence of destabilizing actors such as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on their soils, warning about Tel Aviv's efforts to sow regional tensions.

Iran's Foreign Ministry issued the remarks in a statement on Tuesday, reacting to reports of Netanyahu's presence in the UAE at the official invitation of Emirati ruler Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. ►Page 2

Iran, Russia offer solutions to accelerate economic cooperation

TEHRAN- Iranian Oil Minister announced that Iran and Russia have offered bilateral solutions to remove existing obstacles and accelerate the implementation of decisions and agreements of the Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation.

According to IRNA, citing the Oil Ministry, Mohsen Paknejad said regarding his video conference with Sergei Tsivilev, Russia's Minister of Energy: "A detailed meeting was held via video conference within the framework of the Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between Iran and Russia."

He continued: "In this meeting, the desired topics that had previously existed and been defined in the Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation were reviewed again." ►Page 4

Iranian students win medals for excellence at WorldSkills competition 2026

TEHRAN – A total of 22 Iranian students participated in the 48th WorldSkills Competition, showcasing their technical expertise and practical skills on the international stage and securing seven medals for excellence.

The WorldSkills Competition is the world's biggest international skills competition, bringing together young people, industry, education and government leaders from around the world to advance Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

This year's competition was held from September 22 to 27 in Shanghai, China, bringing together 1,400 of the world's best young skilled professionals from 70 countries and regions to compete across 64 skilled professions. ►Page 7



Iraqis celebrate the exit of US occupation forces after 23 years

Iraqis poured into the streets on Wednesday to celebrate the withdrawal of U.S. forces from their country after 23 years of occupation.

The U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003 sparked insurgency, civil war, and spread of terrorism in the country, the region and beyond.

Many Iraqis still struggle with the legacy of the U.S. invasion and the occupation that followed. The most conservative estimate of Iraqi civilians killed, derived from morgue entries and other records, is at least 200,000, according to Iraq Body Count, a UK-based independent organization that tracks civilian deaths. ►Page 5

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Perseverance until victory

Siasat-e-Rooz devoted its editorial to Trump's baseless statements regarding the Strait of Hormuz. The paper wrote that more than a year has passed since the start of the conflict, and that the American dream about Iran's destruction has turned into a nightmare for the United States. Trump's acknowledgment of the impact that closing the Strait of Hormuz would have on inflation and rising prices in the United States is a reality that cannot be denied and demonstrates the strategic importance of the strait both regionally and globally. Trump's recent remarks prove that there is no substitute for the Strait of Hormuz and that claims about alternative routes are merely a bluff. The creation of hypothetical new energy transit routes is seen as an attempt to manage markets, while in reality no rapid alternative plan exists. Closing the Strait of Hormuz and standing firm against enemies through the armed forces and the people is the only path that should be pursued.

Javan: Iran must defend its aviation rights

In an article, Javan discussed an aerial blockade against Iran. Iran cannot limit itself to diplomatic protests in response to the situation. Defending the country's aviation rights must proceed along several parallel tracks. First is the legal and diplomatic route. Iran can raise the issue of the sanctions' impact on civil aviation in specialized international forums. Second is regional diplomacy. Neighboring countries are among those most affected by disruptions to the region's air transportation network. Finding mechanisms to maintain air links, technical services, and passenger transportation could become a shared regional concern. Third, Iran should strengthen its domestic aviation infrastructure and operational capabilities in order to reduce its vulnerability. Iran can and should defend its rights, but such efforts will be more effective if pursued both through legal and diplomatic channels and through reducing technical, financial, and operational dependencies.

Hamshahri: Iran is turning northward

Disruptions in southern Iran's maritime routes have pushed Tehran toward expanding and activating northern transportation corridors, from ports on the Caspian Sea to land borders with the Caucasus and the International North-South Transport Corridor. At a time when the Strait of Hormuz and southern ports are facing security and logistical constraints, Iran is seeking to redirect part of its foreign trade through routes that previously played a complementary role. This shift has simultaneously increased Azerbaijan's importance for Tehran. Azerbaijan lies along the route connecting Iran to Russia and Northern

Iran seeks peace while defending its rights, security and interests: MoD spox

TEHRAN — Iran seeks peace and an end to conflict while remaining committed to defending its legitimate rights, national security and interests, the spokesperson for the Iranian Ministry of Defense has said, stressing that recognition of Iran's legitimate rights and conditions would open the way to ending the conflict.

Brigadier General Reza Talaee-Nik made the remarks on Wednesday at a ceremony in Tehran marking the beginning of the new academic year, where he also highlighted the role of national unity, faith and reliance on domestic capabilities in strengthening Iran's resilience in the face of external pressure.

"Today, more than a thousand types of domestically produced products and services are being manufactured in the country, some of which have export potential," he said, attributing these achievements to investment in human capital, knowledge, experience and national determination. According to the Defense Ministry spokesman, Iran's progress in developing indigenous technologies demonstrates that sanctions and external pressures have not prevented the country from pursuing scientific and technological advancement.

Peace and national security

Addressing recent regional developments and clashes, Talaee-Nik said the Islamic Republic has consistently advocated an end to war and the establishment of peace, while considering the

Europe, and shared transportation projects, border terminals, and the North-South Corridor have once again become central topics in bilateral discussions. Iran's trade map may gradually be changing, not through abandoning the south, but by adding a northern axis that was previously regarded primarily as a supplementary route.

Khorasan: The nuclear issue remains the core dispute

In an article examining the main source of disagreements between Iran and the United States, Khorasan wrote that although both sides may have reasons to favor reaching a short-term agreement, the nuclear issue remains the principal obstacle. The Americans do not wish to return to an agreement that lacks nuclear provisions, while Iran is unwilling at this stage to engage in discussions about its nuclear program. As a result, the nuclear dispute could prevent negotiations from succeeding. Some analysts believe Iran may have an opportunity to implement what they describe as a second strategy: launching preemptive attacks and imposing a period of high-intensity conflict on Trump before the US midterm election. Such an approach would offer two advantages for Iran. First, it would seize the initiative from the enemy and prevent it from completing its intelligence and logistical preparations. Second, an escalation of the conflict would accelerate increases in energy prices and, combined with another perceived American setback and humiliation, could have severe and irreversible effects on the outcome of US elections.

Ettelaat: Washington between military pressure and negotiation

Ettelaat addressed the deployment of the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt to the region. Recent developments indicate that US policy toward Iran has reached a complicated juncture. On the one hand, Washington is maintaining its military presence, and the deployment of the Roosevelt is seen as part of that posture. The central disagreement, however, continues to revolve around the conditions for ending the conflict. Tehran wants the easing of military and economic pressure to be part of any return to negotiations, while Washington seeks a broader agreement and additional concessions from Iran. From this perspective, the deployment of the Roosevelt and the continuation of military pressure should be viewed alongside diplomatic efforts rather than as alternatives to them. The United States is preserving its leverage by maintaining military capabilities, while the continuation of talks suggests that the door to a negotiated agreement has not yet been completely closed.

protection of the country's rights, security and interests a fundamental responsibility.

"If the opposing side accepts Iran's legitimate rights and conditions, the path to ending the conflict is open," he said, adding that the Iranian nation would not allow its rights and interests to be disregarded.

His comments came as Iran continues to emphasize diplomacy and engagement alongside the protection of its national interests, with Tehran repeatedly stressing that sustainable regional stability requires respect for national sovereignty, security and legitimate rights.

Talaee-Nik said the strength Iran has developed today is rooted in faith, national unity, popular participation, and reliance on indigenous knowledge and capabilities.

He pointed to the role of the Iranian people, religious faith, and national leadership during the Sacred Defense (Iran-Iraq War) and other critical periods in the country's modern history, describing popular participation and reliance on domestic capabilities as among the factors that enabled Iran to withstand major challenges.

The spokesman said the development of indigenous capacities has become an important component of Iran's national resilience, particularly amid continued external pressure and sanctions. He stressed that the ultimate objective remains the advancement of the country and the creation of a strong, independent, and developed Iran.

Iran seeks deeper ties with neighbors, puts Caucasus and Central Asia in focus

From page 1 ►

Azerbaijan: Turning a shared border into a bridge

In Tehran on Tuesday, Pezeshkian told Azerbaijani Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev that the Republic of Azerbaijan occupies a special position in Iran's neighborhood policy, stressing the need to make full use of the opportunities provided by the two countries' shared geography and common ties.

Pezeshkian said the common border should be regarded as an opportunity for greater interaction rather than an obstacle to closer relations. He described the two countries as relatives and brothers and called for broader cooperation across scientific, cultural, economic, political and security fields.

The Iranian president also stressed the importance of transportation and communications networks in bringing the two countries and their peoples closer together, calling for the expansion and integration of land, air and rail connections.

The emphasis on connectivity is significant given Iran's geographical position as a link between the Persian Gulf, the Caucasus, Central Asia and wider Eurasian markets. Strengthening cross-border infrastructure and transit routes can provide a practical foundation for expanding trade and economic exchanges while reinforcing Iran's role in regional connectivity.

Mustafayev, meanwhile, briefed Pezeshkian on his talks with several Iranian ministers and reaffirmed Baku's determination to develop relations with Tehran. He stressed the need to follow up on existing agreements and understandings, particularly in transporta-



tion and communications, and to make greater use of available capacities.

The Azerbaijani delegation's visit comes amid continued high-level engagement between the two countries. On September 29, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev also spoke by phone with Pezeshkian, with the two leaders recalling their recent meeting in Bishkek and noting that an Azerbaijani government delegation was in Iran for talks on bilateral issues.

Uzbekistan: Expanding the northern and central Asian dimension

At the same time, Pezeshkian and Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev discussed ways to broaden bilateral relations during a telephone conversation on Tuesday.

Pezeshkian said Iran was determined to strengthen ties with Uzbekistan through joint efforts and called for greater use of the two countries' existing capacities. He also emphasized the importance of expanding bilateral cooperation and strengthening people-to-people contacts.

Mirziyoyev said relations between Tehran and Tashkent were steadily expanding, particularly

in economic, investment, cultural and humanitarian fields, and stressed the importance of continued diplomatic exchanges and consultations. The two presidents also exchanged views on regional issues and upcoming events.

The conversation underscores the broader geographical scope of Iran's neighborhood diplomacy. While Azerbaijan represents a key dimension of Iran's engagement with the South Caucasus, Uzbekistan provides an important avenue for strengthening ties with Central Asia, a region where Iran seeks to expand trade, transit and economic cooperation.

Connectivity as a Tool of Regional Engagement

For Tehran, the drive to strengthen relations with northern neighbors is not limited to political dialogue. Transportation corridors, border infrastructure and economic connectivity are increasingly viewed as practical instruments for turning geographical proximity into sustained cooperation.

Iran has also emphasized the implementation of bilateral agreements with Armenia, par-

ticularly those related to transit routes. During a meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York this month, Pezeshkian said developing cooperation with the region and neighboring countries remained a firm policy of Tehran.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has similarly said that greater priority has been given to neighboring countries under the Pezeshkian administration, with the stated objective of ensuring peace and security in Iran's immediate surroundings and creating opportunities for economic, political and cultural cooperation.

The approach reflects Tehran's longstanding geographic reality: Iran shares borders with the South Caucasus, Central Asia through regional transit networks, the Persian Gulf and South Asia, giving it access to several major trade corridors linking Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

Against this backdrop, closer engagement with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Uzbekistan and other neighboring and regional states forms part of Iran's broader effort to expand regional cooperation, diversify economic and diplomatic partnerships, and capitalize on its geographic position.

For Tehran, the emphasis is increasingly on converting proximity into connectivity and connectivity into sustained economic and political interaction — particularly across the Caucasus and Central Asia, where transport corridors and regional trade can serve as tangible foundations for closer relations.

Iran warns regional states against hosting Israeli officials after Netanyahu's UAE visit

From page 1 ► It strongly condemned the "child-killing and war-mongering prime minister of the Israeli regime's provocative presence" in the region and warned of the "extremely dangerous consequences."

The ministry noted that "regional security is a collective and indivisible matter," warning that facilitating the entry of destabilizing actors could lead to "greater division, insecurity, and instability in West Asia."

It called on regional governments to "refrain from facilitating the Israeli regime's destabilizing presence" and to prevent their territories from becoming "a platform for destabilizing actions against other countries in the region."

The statement reminded that the region was experiencing "one of the most fragile and sensitive periods in its history," citing the regime's "proven hostility and animosity towards Iran and other countries in the region" and its "repeated threats" against the Islamic Republic.

"All countries in the region must be vigilant about the consequences and repercussions of such a presence, which threatens regional peace and collective security," the ministry said.

The strong rebuke followed reports by Israeli media and statements from senior Israeli officials to Reuters confirming that Netanyahu paid a visit to Abu Dhabi on Sunday, holding closed-door consultations with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for most of the day before returning to Tel Aviv.

The trip was initially kept under wraps. Late on Monday, the United Arab Emirates officially confirmed that Netanyahu had met with Sheikh Mohamed over the weekend. Israeli broadcaster Channel 12 was the first to break news of the visit, prompting Israel's internal security agency, Shin Bet, to file an immediate complaint with the military censor over alleged breaches of operational secrecy.

According to Reuters, the weekend trip was not Netanyahu's first covert foray into Abu Dhabi; the Israeli premier had also traveled secretly to the Persian Gulf state on March 26 for closed-door discussions with the Emirati leadership.

Normalization as an instrument of destabilization

Ties between Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv were

formalized in 2020 through the controversial, US-brokered Abraham Accords. While marketed by Washington and Abu Dhabi as an engine for regional "peace and prosperity," the normalization drive has systematically functioned as a mechanism to fracture Islamic and regional unity, undermine the Palestinian liberation struggle, and embed the Zionist regime directly along the strategic waterways of the Persian Gulf.

Over the past four years, the UAE has evolved into Israel's primary operational, logistical, and commercial bridgehead in the immediate neighborhood. Rather than fostering regional coexistence, Abu Dhabi's entente with Tel Aviv has exacerbated regional fault lines.

Strategic and military integration between the two sides has deepened rapidly. In May, United States Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee stated that Israel had deployed Iron Dome air defense batteries and operational personnel directly to the UAE. The presence of Israeli military hardware and intelligence operatives on Emirati soil represents a direct violation of regional security arrangements and a blatant concession of Persian Gulf sovereign territory to an expansionist entity actively carrying out genocidal aggression against the Palestinian people in Gaza and escalating confrontations across the regional front.

Political observers have repeatedly warned that the UAE's willingness to outsource its defense architecture to Tel Aviv compromises the collective security of all littoral states. By permitting Israeli intelligence agencies and military hardware to establish footprints just kilometers away from Iranian shores, Abu Dhabi is transforming the Persian Gulf from a zone of peaceful commerce and sovereign cooperation into a theater of Zionist espionage and provocation.

A pattern of malign regional intervention

The welcoming of Netanyahu into the Emirati capital is seen by analysts as part of a wider, destructive pattern defining Abu Dhabi's regional foreign policy over the past decade.

Across West Asia and North Africa, the UAE has repeatedly operated as a destabilizing force, pursuing interventionist agendas that have fueled sectarian friction, funded mercenary proxy networks, and undermined sovereign central governments.

From its active participation in the devastating, years-long war of aggression against Yemen—which created one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes of the modern era—to its illegal occupation of strategic Yemeni islands such as Socotra and Mayyun, Abu Dhabi has sought to unilaterally dominate maritime chokepoints along the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait. Extensive reports have revealed that the UAE has facilitated Israeli intelligence installations on Socotra, leveraging occupied Yemeni territories to project joint Israeli-Emirati influence over vital international shipping corridors.

Beyond the Arabian Peninsula, Abu Dhabi's footprint has proven equally destructive in the Horn of Africa and North Africa. In Sudan, the UAE has drawn fierce international condemnation for arming and financing the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), whose campaign has pushed the country into devastating civil war and famine. In Libya, Emirati financial and military backing for renegade military factions severely derailed United Nations peace efforts for years.

By tying its regional ambitions to Tel Aviv's geopolitical objectives, the UAE is effectively functioning as a sub-imperial vector for Western and Zionist interests, attempting to displace the organic, sovereign mechanisms of indigenous regional diplomacy in favor of imported, militarized alliances.

The secretive summit in Abu Dhabi also underscores Netanyahu's desperate drive to manufacture diplomatic breakthroughs abroad to stave off mounting domestic collapse at home.

Facing intense internal turmoil and trailing sharply in domestic polls ahead of Knesset elections, the beleaguered Israeli prime minister is confronting fierce political challenges.

Facing persistent corruption trials and widespread public outrage over his regime's strategic failures in Gaza and the North, Netanyahu is exploiting ties with Abu Dhabi as a political lifeline. By rolling out the red carpet for a war criminal wanted for crimes against humanity, Abu Dhabi is not only shielding Netanyahu from international isolation but actively facilitating his political survival.

Trump's surrender fantasy: the knot in talks

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Addressing the Cabinet, President Pezeshkian reaffirmed Tehran's principled position on resolving the crisis through diplomacy without compromising fundamental rights.

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President Masoud Pezeshkian chairs a cabinet meeting in Tehran on Wednesday, September 30, 2026.

Paralyzed by strategic deadlock

Tehran views Washington's mixed signals not as strength, but as profound strategic disorientation. Speaking on Tuesday during a meeting in Tehran with Shahin Mustafayev, Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister, Major General Mohsen Rezaei, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), characterized the US president as trapped in a state of absolute paralysis.

"Trump is caught in a quagmire where he can neither negotiate nor fight," Rezaei stated. "Iran's conditions have been conveyed to the United States, but Trump is unable to make a decision, and the United States, out of desperation, has resorted to an air siege in the military war."

Denouncing the initial February 28 aggression as a blatant violation of international law, Rezaei noted that Iran "powerfully defended itself," citing the hundreds of precise drone and missile retaliatory strikes conducted by the Iranian Armed Forces against US and Israeli military installations across the region. Tehran has repeatedly cautioned Washington that it will never leave any act of aggression unanswered, demonstrating through seven months of sustained resistance that its deterrence remains fully intact.

This is not the first time Washington has squandered diplomatic off-ramps. Following the

collapse of the fragile April 8 ceasefire and the subsequent Islamabad memorandum of understanding (MoU) brokered on June 17, Tehran has demonstrated a readiness to engage in serious diplomacy if national sovereignty is respected. President Pezeshkian reiterated his commitment to seeing the Islamabad MoU come to fruition while safeguarding vital national interests, rejecting US bullying: "We will never bow our head or bend at the knee."

From military failure to psychological warfare

Having failed to break Iran's defensive capabilities, the US and Israel have shifted their tactics toward internal disruption. Addressing mayors of major metropolitan centers and provincial capitals on Tuesday, President Pezeshkian pointed out that Washington and Tel Aviv have pivoted toward hybrid subversion after suffering strategic setbacks on the battlefield.

"After failing to force the Iranian people to surrender through military war, enemies have focused their entire plan on creating and intensifying internal divisions," Pezeshkian cautioned.

Despite this dual track of subversion and rhetoric, the White House continues to escalate coercive measures. On Tuesday, the US Treasury Department unveiled fresh sanctions under its so-called "Operation Economic Outcast," blacklisting ten individuals and entities across Iran,

Hong Kong, and Pakistan over alleged roles in Iran's defense procurement.

Trump's search for an off-ramp

However, the coercive campaign has boomeranged disastrously onto the US domestic arena. With US legislative elections just five weeks away, polls indicate that Trump's war against Iran has been overwhelmingly unpopular from its inception. The disruption of Persian Gulf transit corridors and the subsequent spike in global crude prices have placed immense strain on American households, threatening Republican control of both chambers of Congress.

In a stark illustration of the domestic fallout, California Governor Gavin Newsom suspended the state's seasonal summer-blend gasoline requirement, directing regulatory bodies to immediately permit the distribution of cheaper winter-blend fuel. In just seven months, Trump's war has drained over \$120 billion in extra fuel expenses from American consumers—imposing an estimated \$428 burden on every California household and eroding US economic stability.

With domestic outrage mounting, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) directly addressed the American public on Tuesday in an unprecedented 26-page open letter, calling on voters to reject the architects of the conflict.

"Remove from power the evil, deceitful, and violent politicians who are responsible for America's current state," the IRGC stated, adding: "Make sure your politicians understand that the world has changed."

While Donald Trump is desperately seeking an off-ramp before voters head to the polls, analysts emphasize that any genuine breakthrough will remain elusive until Washington completely discards the Israeli-instigated illusion that Iran can be coerced into capitulation. Until the White House frees itself from Tel Aviv's maximalist adventurism and faces strategic realities, its policies will remain locked in the very quagmire of its own making.

Maritime power as pillar of Iran's shipping security and economic resilience



TEHRAN — Senior Iranian military commanders have underscored the strategic importance of the country's maritime capabilities, describing naval power as essential to safeguarding national interests, protecting shipping routes and communications, maintaining regional security, and strengthening Iran's economic resilience.

In separate messages marking World Maritime Day, observed annually on September 24, Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, commander of the Iranian Army Navy, and Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, deputy chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination, highlighted the interconnected security and economic dimensions of Iran's maritime capacity.

Their remarks came as global maritime trade continues to serve as a critical channel for the movement of goods, energy and raw materials, while Iran, with its extensive coastline along the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman, regards maritime security and transportation as integral to its national interests.

Maritime power and shipping security

Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said Iran's naval power plays a key role in safeguarding national interests, ensuring regional security and protecting maritime communications and shipping routes.

In his World Maritime Day message, Irani described the sea as a vital conduit connecting nations and facilitating global trade, stressing that Iran's naval power is not intended to threaten other countries or create insecurity, but to contribute to maritime stability and security while deterring 'adventurism in the region.'

According to the Iranian Navy commander, the country's maritime capabilities, backed by indigenous knowledge, experience and defense capacities, have enabled the Islamic Republic to maintain an effective presence in surrounding waters and link deterrence with the preservation of peace and security.

Irani said the Iranian Navy, operating alongside other branches of the armed forces and relying on domestic capabilities, bears a critical responsibility for protecting the country's maritime interests and ensuring the security of shipping lanes and maritime communication routes.

His remarks also highlighted Tehran's broader position that maritime security should be approached through responsible regional arrangements and the protection of commercial navigation, rather than through measures that undermine stability.

The sea as a pillar of economic resilience

Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, meanwhile, emphasized the economic importance of Iran's maritime sector, describing the sea as a pillar

of national power and a key driver of trade, the economy, energy security and the continuity of supply chains.

In his message marking World Maritime Day, Sayyari said developments and conflicts in the region over the past year had demonstrated the importance of Iran's maritime capabilities.

Sayyari called for a forward-looking approach to the development of Iran's maritime sector, stressing the importance of improving maritime safety and security, modernizing and expanding fleets and infrastructure, protecting the marine environment and training specialized human resources.

Such measures, he said, could strengthen Iran's position within regional and global maritime transportation networks and contribute to the development of the blue economy.

The emphasis on modernization and specialized human resources also reflects a broader effort to strengthen indigenous capabilities across Iran's maritime industries. In the security sphere, Navy commander Shahram Irani similarly attributed the country's naval capacity to domestic knowledge, experience, and technological capabilities.

Together, the two commanders' messages present maritime power from complementary perspectives: naval capabilities as a means of protecting national interests and shipping security, and the wider maritime economy as a foundation for trade, energy security and economic resilience.

Maritime security and regional stability

Iran's strategic location gives its maritime sector a significance extending beyond its own borders. The country sits alongside some of the world's most important energy and commercial waterways, making security in surrounding waters closely connected to regional stability and international trade.

Against this backdrop, Tehran has continued to emphasize that maritime security is inseparable from respect for national sovereignty, protection of legitimate economic interests and the uninterrupted movement of commercial shipping.

The Iranian military commanders' messages therefore place the country's maritime strategy within a broader framework that combines security, deterrence, economic resilience and regional stability.

For Iran, strengthening maritime capabilities is not solely a matter of military preparedness. It also involves maintaining shipping and supply chains, developing ports and fleets, protecting energy transportation, cultivating specialized expertise and ensuring that the country can continue to participate effectively in regional and global trade.

The UNGA riddle: America's dilemma over Iran

By Mohammad Hassan Nikbin

TEHRAN — According to the US pattern of behavior, Washington often considers international entities and gatherings as appropriate tools for initiating political or military campaigns against its adversaries.

A clear instance of such treatment against Iran refers to June 12, 2025, when the IAEA's Board of Governors, under US pressure, issued a resolution against Iran — a resolution accusing Iran of not following NPT regulations after almost 20 years of commitment.

By then, and simultaneously, the US and Israel had reemphasized their intimidations and threats against Iran's nuclear facilities, such as Pickaxe Mountain, and had architected the assumption that a new strike was imminent.

But it did not happen. Perhaps this was because of Iran's tireless efforts to pursue diplomacy and remain on that track, despite some

frustration within society that diplomacy no longer works.

At the very annual gathering in which a resolution against Iran's nuclear activities was passed, members, through a secret voting process, appointed Iran as a member of the General Council of the IAEA. The council is a body that plays a determining role in governing the agency. This means that members voted against Iran under US pressure, but when they felt safe from the consequences of their votes, they voted in favor of Iran. This was a total political loss for the US and a significant diplomatic achievement for Iran.

The same process happened again at the UNGA. Americans, from the media to their think tanks and presidents, sought to put Iran in a difficult dilemma: either accept a deal according to US demands or face a new round of strikes.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

LATEST NEWS

■ Rezaei warns UAE against hosting Netanyahu

Iran's Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei has warned the UAE against hosting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, saying such a move would have no positive consequences. In an Arabic-language post on X, Rezaei said hosting US military bases had failed to bring security to the UAE and urged Abu Dhabi to learn from the recent war, stop initiating conflicts and refrain from making 'baseless claims about Iranian islands.'

■ Iran's maritime transport continues despite sanctions: minister

Iranian Roads and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadegh has described maritime transport as an important manifestation of the country's economic and diplomatic strength. In a message marking World Maritime Day, she said Iran's coastlines and maritime trade were vital to national strength and economic activity. Sadegh stressed that the continued movement of goods demonstrates the resilience of Iran's vital economic routes despite sanctions, while calling for regional cooperation to maintain security in the Persian Gulf.

■ Iran can sustain missile operations for years: IRGC adviser

Brigadier General Ali Balali, an adviser to the commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force, says

Iran can sustain missile operations at the current pace for years if necessary. He said domestically developed missile and drone technologies have overcome sanctions-related constraints. Balali added that Iran's current capabilities allow its Armed Forces to respond powerfully to attacks and said comprehensive plans for the use of military capabilities are implemented under the supervision of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei.

■ Iranian, Russian deputy FMs discuss bilateral and regional issues

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Saeed Khatibzadeh and his Russian counterpart Sergei Ryabkov discussed bilateral relations and regional and international developments during talks in Moscow on Wednesday. The two diplomats exchanged views on mutual interests and Tehran-Moscow cooperation in international forums, including developments in West Asia. According to Russia's Foreign Ministry, the talks were held in a friendly and constructive atmosphere aimed at strengthening ties under the Iran-Russia Comprehensive Strategic Treaty.

■ Araghchi calls for stronger economic ties with China

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi has called for expanding economic and trade relations with China during a meeting with Iran's consul general in Guangzhou. Saeed Hariri briefed the min-

ister on the consulate's latest initiatives and priorities. The two sides also reviewed the current state of bilateral relations and discussed ways to deepen cooperation, with particular emphasis on economic and commercial ties.

■ Iranian minister dismisses US claims over Iran's economy

Iranian Industry, Mine and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak has dismissed US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's claims that Iran's economy would not withstand Washington's pressure, describing the remarks as lacking rational logic. Atabak recalled similar predictions made by Bessent during last year's US-backed Israeli war against Iran, saying the US official had forecast an economic collapse within an even shorter timeframe. He argued that such statements were politically biased and therefore lacked credibility.

■ Iran's Vienna embassy condemns use of 'fabricated lies' to justify wars

Iran's Embassy in Vienna has criticized the use of false claims to justify military interventions, saying such practices have imposed a heavy cost on the world. In a post marking the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq after 23 years, the embassy recalled Washington's 2003 claim that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. It noted that the claim, presented at the UN Security Council by then-US Secretary of State Colin Powell, was later proven false.

Iran, Russia offer solutions to accelerate economic cooperation



From Page 1 ▶ Referring to a review of the achievements and decisions previously made in this committee, the Minister of Oil announced: “The two sides offered solutions for the existing obstacles so that we can achieve better results in the shortest possible time.”

The Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between Iran and Russia is one of the main mechanisms for following up and developing cooperation between the two countries in various economic fields, and a significant portion of issues related to energy, investment, trade, and the implementation of joint projects between the two countries is pursued within the framework of this commission.

The 19th Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between Iran and Russia was held in February 2025 at the International Conference Center of the National Iranian Oil Company (Koushk), and a wide range of issues were ex-

amined, including the completion of the International North-South Transport Corridor, gas transfer from Russia to Iran, and the development of cooperation in the fields of space industries, nuclear energy, commercial and economic affairs, finance and banking, customs, industry and mining, agriculture, health, culture and tourism, science and technology. The results of these negotiations were compiled in the form of the committee's document and signed by the ministers of the two countries.

The Iranian Minister of Oil and the Russian Minister of Energy had previously met in Tehran in Tir of this year and assessed the implementation process of the understandings reached at the 19th meeting of the Iran-Russia Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation and the implementation of the 146 agreed-upon clauses between the two countries, and examined the existing obstacles to the implementation of these understandings.

Roadmap for developing Iran-Azerbaijan oil, gas cooperation reviewed



TEHRAN- The Minister of Oil announced a review of existing capacities for developing cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Azerbaijan in the energy sector and the follow-up of agreed areas within the framework of joint working groups.

According to SHANA, Mohsen Paknejad said, after his third meeting with Shahin Mustafayev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, regarding the topics of this meeting: “Based on the long-standing relations between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan and the formation of constructive cooperation in recent years, suitable ground has been provided for the development of this cooperation, especially in economic areas.”

Stating that this meeting focused more on energy cooperation between the two countries, he added: “Given the very suitable capacities in the Republic of Azerbaijan, energy trade and other areas of cooperation were discussed and views were exchanged in detail.”

The Minister of Oil stressed: “It was decided that these matters be pursued in the form of working groups introduced by both sides in order to achieve results.”

The meeting between the Minister of Oil and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan was held today, while previously, during the months of Mehr and Bahman 1403, they had met in Tehran, and both sides had emphasized reviewing the development of cooperation in the energy sector within the framework of a joint working group.

Iran-Azerbaijan energy relations have a history of several years. The geographical location of the two countries on the shores of the Caspian Sea, their proximity to regional energy markets, and Iran's access to an extensive transmission network have provided grounds for the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the energy sector.

Chinese embassy in Tehran hosts reception marking 77th National Day

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN — The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Iran held a reception on the evening of September 29 at the embassy to commemorate the 77th anniversary of the National Day of the People's Republic of China.

The event was attended by Iranian officials and diplomats from foreign embassies, reflecting the broad diplomatic engagement surrounding the occasion.

China and Iran have maintained diplomatic relations for decades and share a comprehensive strategic partnership. In recent years, the two sides have expanded cooperation in trade, energy, infrastructure, and regional connectivity. The reception underscored the importance both governments attach to high-level exchanges and people-to-people ties.

Held ahead of China's National Day on October 1, the ceremony served as a platform to reaffirm the longstanding friendship between China and Iran and to highlight the importance of continued bilateral cooperation. It also provided an opportunity for members of the diplomatic corps in Tehran to exchange views in a formal yet cordial setting.

H.E. Ambassador Cong Peiwu, China's Ambassador to Iran, delivered a speech at the ceremony. The full text of his remarks follows:

Your Excellency Dr. Madanizadeh, Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, Your Excellency Gen. Shaafi, Deputy Chief of General Staff,

Distinguished Ambassadors and Representatives of International Organizations,

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

Good evening! It is a great pleasure to gather here with you all to celebrate the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. On behalf of the Chinese Embassy in Iran and the Consulate General of China in Bandar Abbas, I would like to extend festive greetings to our Chinese compatriots in Iran and express sincere gratitude to friends from all countries that have long cared for and supported China's development.

Students from the Department of Chinese Language at the University of Tehran have just delivered a wonderful performance; it is gratifying to witness the steady progress they have made

in their Chinese studies. The poem they recited was “Qinyuanchun: Changsha,” composed by Chairman Mao Zedong in 1925. At that time, the Chinese revolution was surging forward, yet no one could be certain where China's future lay—whereas today, we have a very clear answer.

This year marks the 105th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. The Party has consistently remained committed to seeking happiness for the Chinese people and rejuvenation for the Chinese nation; it has united and led the people through a magnificent journey of struggle, pioneered a development path suited to China's na-



tional conditions, and established a New China in which the people are the masters of the country. Over the past seven decades and more, China has grown into the world's second-largest economy, achieved the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, secured a historic victory in the fight against poverty, and continuously made new breakthroughs in economic development and scientific and technological innovation.

Under the wise leadership of President Xi Jinping, today, China has made a strong start on its “15th Five-Year Plan” and is comprehensively advancing the great cause of building a strong nation and achieving national rejuvenation through Chinese-style modernization. In the first half of 2026, China's GDP grew by 4.7% year-on-year, the total value of imports and exports of goods rose by 16.9% year-on-year, and the per capita income of residents nationwide saw a nominal year-on-year increase of 5.2%; the employment situation remained generally stable. Amid a complex and ever-changing external environment, China's economy has not only demonstrated resilience but also advanced further toward high-quality development, with its industrial structure continuously optimized and upgraded. In the first half of the year, AI-related sectors—such as integrated circuit manufacturing and intelligent vehicle equipment manufacturing—maintained rapid growth exceeding 30%, while the retail penetration rate of new energy vehicles surpassed 60% for three consecutive months.

China remains steadfastly committed to the cause of human development and progress. Amidst accelerating changes of a magnitude unseen in a century and at a critical historical juncture for the world, President Xi



Jinping has proposed building a community with a shared future for mankind. Furthermore, he has successively put forward the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative, and the Global Governance Initiative, offering Chinese solutions to promote shared human values and address challenges facing humanity. In recent years, China has pursued high-standard opening-up and actively advanced the joint building of the Belt and Road Initiative. It has maintained a contribution rate of around 30% to global economic growth, making significant contributions to global poverty reduction, industrial upgrading,

connectivity, and green transition.

Not long ago, President Xi Jinping attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit and the BRICS leaders' meeting, where he delivered important speeches and put forward a series of significant proposals. He emphasized advancing an equal and orderly multipolar world and achieving fairer and more equitable global governance. Guided by the positions and proposals articulated by President Xi, China will continue to uphold fairness and justice and maintain a responsible stance. Working alongside all progressive forces worldwide, China will add more positive energy to the global peace and development.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

The situation in the Middle East remains complex and grave. China has consistently maintained that the Middle East belongs to the people of the region, that regional security should be upheld jointly by the countries of the region, and that regional issues should be resolved through dialogue and consultation. President Xi Jinping has put forward four proposals for maintaining and promoting peace and stability in the Middle East, as well as four initiatives for fostering shared security in the region. These proposals and initiatives align with the fundamental interests of the people of the Middle East, reflect China's consistent stance and active efforts—characterized by pragmatism, impartiality, and a commitment to promoting peace and ending conflict—and offer a viable path to resolving the region's security dilemmas. China will continue to firmly support regional countries in safeguarding their sovereignty, security, territorial integrity, and national dignity. We stand ready to work with countries across the region—guided by a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security—to build a new security architecture for the Middle East and make unremitting efforts toward enduring peace and stability in the region.

This year marks the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Iran. China maintains continuity and stability in its policy towards Iran. The bilateral relationship has withstood the test of a changing international landscape and maintained steady, healthy growth—a success driven by the firm political will of both nations and the dedicated efforts of friendly individuals from all walks of life. China's diplomatic missions in Iran stand ready to work with all sectors of Iranian society to carry forward and further develop this friendship, writing a new chapter in China-Iran relations.

In closing, I wish my great motherland magnificent landscapes and enduring peace and prosperity, and I wish all our distinguished guests good health and every success.

Thank you all!

Iran's Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, Seyyed Ali

Madanizadeh, also addressed the gathering. His speech focused on the significance of economic and financial cooperation between the two countries. The full text of his remarks appears below:

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

His Excellency Mr. Cong Peiwu, Honorable Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Islamic Republic of Iran

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am sincerely pleased to be present at the ceremony commemorating the seventy-seventh anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and I extend my heartfelt congratulations on this great occasion to the people and government of the People's Republic of China.

I begin my remarks by commemorating and honoring the names of the proud martyrs of the war of aggression against the Iranian people.

China's National Day is more than an official symbol; it is an opportunity to honor the collective will of a nation that, over the course of decades, through perseverance and civilizational and historical awareness, has created new foundations for progress and prosperity. China's progress in sustained economic transformation, technological leaps, and its movement toward building a shared future for humanity are manifestations of collective determination, continuous effort, and wise governance.

Distinguished Guests,

Relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the People's Republic of China have ancient, historical-civilizational roots as well as contemporary ties. This year, we commemorate the fifty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Iran and China and the tenth anniversary of the declaration of a comprehensive strategic partnership in bilateral relations. The achievements of the past remind us that bonds between nations can be passed from one generation to another and, within a framework of mutual respect, can endure and deepen.

China has adopted an effective and fair economic approach toward the “countries of the Global South” through balanced operational initiatives and multilateral economic institutions. The five initiatives introduced by His Excellency Xi Jinping, the esteemed President of China—namely, the “Belt and Road Initiative,” the “Global Development Initiative,” the “Global Security Initiative,” the “Global Civilization Initiative,” and the “Global Governance Initiative”—have introduced fair frameworks, from both economic and political perspectives, for global cooperation.

Fortunately, the People's Republic of China is a global leader in the fields of industrial investment, new technologies, mining, clean energy, and the digital economy, and the Islamic Republic of Iran recognizes and appreciates Beijing's leadership in these emerging areas of the economy.

We believe that, given China's capacities in emerging sectors, the necessary foundations are in place for the two countries to participate in industrial projects, develop new business models for commercial resilience under conditions of global tension, pursue logistical cooperation, and undertake investment aimed at advancing the understandings reached by the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation between the two countries.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Ansarallah's gains could reverberate beyond Saudi Arabia

Horn of Africa braces for a new security calculus

From page 1 ► Testifying before Congress last year, General Michael Langley, then the commander of U.S. Africa Command, warned that Ansarallah already possessed the capacity to strike the base facilities, should they decide to escalate attacks against the United States or its interests.

The article adds military interventions by both the Biden and Trump administrations against Ansarallah forces ended in “strategic defeats”.

The following is a slightly edited version of the article:

Earlier this month, Ansarallah, an armed political movement that has controlled much of Yemen's territory for more than a decade, took control over Yemen's Red Sea coastline. Their rapid capture of the Port of Mokha marked the group's first major military advance in nearly five years. It also further threatened global oil trade at a time when the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz (by Iran in response to the U.S.-Israeli war of aggression) has spiked energy prices worldwide.

Ansarallah initially stayed out of direct involvement in the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran. Still, their advance into Mokha reflects a steady escalation between Saudi Arabia and Ansarallah since mid-July, after the collapse of an initial U.S.-Iranian memorandum of understanding. On September 19, Ansarallah bombed a fuel depot at the main airport in Riyadh, sending a plume of black smoke over the Saudi capital.

This development reflects both the dynamics of a no-longer-frozen domestic Yemeni conflict and continued fallout from the U.S.-Iranian military and diplomatic stalemate in the Persian Gulf. It has also raised the possibility of additional U.S. intervention in the region against Ansarallah, though President Donald Trump has thus far declined to use force against the group.

Ansarallah's advance gives them control of the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, a crucial chokepoint at the southern end of the Red Sea. It also raises the possibility of opening a second front in the current Persian Gulf conflict—one that could target Saudi oil facilities and threaten an additional



Red Sea chokepoint for global energy trade and other goods shipments. Past attacks on Red Sea traffic have already curtailed shipping through the strait while raising insurance and security costs on the remaining vessels.

Previous air campaigns by Saudi Arabia (with the support of other countries) sought to dislodge Ansarallah. However, these efforts contributed to a humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen and entrenched the Saudi-backed Yemeni forces in a fraught stalemate with Ansarallah. Later military interventions by both the Biden and Trump administrations against Ansarallah forces likewise ended in strategic defeats.

The latest advance also calls Saudi Arabia's bluff that it could contain Ansarallah on its own, through a combination of quiet diplomacy and the unification of fragmented forces.

In the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, Ansarallah now controls the island of Perim (also known as Mayyun), which allows them to harass and disrupt maritime traffic. The advance also brings Ansarallah within 80 miles of Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, which houses Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa and is the United States' only permanent military facility on the continent.

Since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas conflict and the resulting impact on maritime insecurity in the Red Sea, Djibouti has reportedly not allowed the United States to use its base for offensive operations against Ansarallah. The country has continued to play a balancing act between its criticism of Israel's approach in Gaza and its utility as a relatively

secure, geostrategic country that houses several foreign military bases.

When testifying before Congress last year, General Michael Langley, then the commander of U.S. Africa Command, warned that Ansarallah already possessed the capacity to strike the base facilities, should they decide to escalate attacks against the United States or U.S. interests.

How does this affect Saudi Arabia's energy shipping?

Ansarallah's control of Red Sea shipping corridors (at least the southern end) compounds a disastrous period for Saudi energy shipments. Around the same time as the Bab al-Mandeb takeover, the kingdom's crucial East-West Pipeline was severely damaged. That energy corridor, combined with Red Sea ports in Jeddah and Yanbu, had allowed Saudi Arabia to offset a significant portion of the U.S.-Iran war's direct economic costs.

The one-two punch of pipeline attacks and Red Sea seizures, however, risks forcing Saudi Arabia into relying more on fraught “dark crossings” of the Strait of Hormuz—or face a dramatic drop in oil revenues. Tellingly, the kingdom has already begun canceling key oil shipments to Europe.

Ansarallah's gains further complicate efforts by the Arab Persian Gulf states to establish a common position for negotiating with Iran on reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

There's also a Somaliland dimension to this that doesn't get much attention outside specialist circles.

Following Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on Oct. 7, 2023, and continuing during the U.S. and Israeli

war with Iran this year, Ansarallah has targeted Saudi commercial vessels in the Red Sea—including more recently near the 18-mile-wide Bab al-Mandeb that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. The Bab al-Mandeb is a maritime chokepoint through which roughly 12 percent of sea-borne-traded oil travels, and the uptick in threats has forced many vessels to reroute around South Africa's Cape of Good Hope. This has increased the strategic value of Somaliland, that declared independence from Somalia in 1991, and has added to the view in some Washington-based foreign policy circles that the United States should recognize Somaliland's independence.

The Mogadishu-based federal government has never recognized Somaliland, treating it as an autonomous region. Tensions between Somaliland's capital, Hargeisa, and Mogadishu escalated in 2024, when Ethiopia signed a memorandum of understanding with Somaliland, granting landlocked Ethiopia a fifty-year lease on approximately 20 kilometers of Somaliland's coastline for a naval base and commercial port access, with the prospect that the former would extend formal diplomatic recognition to the latter in return. The memorandum provoked fierce opposition from Mogadishu, which accused Addis Ababa of violating its territorial integrity. In December 2024, Turkey brokered the Ankara Declaration between Ethiopia and Somalia, which committed both parties to respect each other's territorial integrity and work toward “mutually advantageous” commercial arrangements for Ethiopian port access.

In defense policy circles, increased U.S. military engagement in Somaliland could be perceived as a hedge for the U.S. military presence in Djibouti, where President Ismail Omar Guelleh has been in power for almost three decades and is approaching his eighties. In addition, with the establishment of China's first overseas military installation in Djibouti in 2017, Djibouti is the only place on the planet that has a permanent military presence from both the United States and China.

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

Israel systematically burns Palestinian homes in West Bank, assaults holy sites

Settler attacks have reached the highest rate in more than two decades

From page 1 ► When Palestinian villagers assembled to defend the family, incoming Israeli troops fired tear gas, shielded the arsonists, and forced the Tubasis to evacuate their land again at gunpoint.

The incident encapsulates a systematic campaign designed to cleanse native Palestinians from the occupied West Bank.

Supported by the U.S., Israel is utilizing coordinated settler terror, military raids, and infrastructure strangulation to annex Palestinian territory and advance its broader regional war against the Resistance Front.

A coordinated campaign of arson and village raids

The arson attack in Jalud formed part of a synchronized wave of violence across northern and central West Bank communities. In al-Mughayyir, northeast of Ramallah, settler gangs operating alongside invading army units attacked civilian properties.

Assailants burned a home belonging to a Palestinian detainee and torched six vehicles, leaving three completely destroyed, while Israeli soldiers raided nearby residences and arrested a local youth.

In Qaryut, settlers smashed through the door of a home and physically battered an elderly Palestinian woman, leaving her with head and hand injuries.

Elsewhere, settlers targeted agricultural life, stealing olive harvests in Beita right before the picking season and launching violent raids in Halhul, Jinba, Ras Karkar, and Deir Abu Mash'al.

During a military raid on Qabatiya, south of Jenin, Israeli soldiers shot a Palestinian man in the abdomen and thigh. Troops then cornered the wounded victim, preventing medical crews from reaching him while he bled on the ground.

This violence is deliberate and coordinated. United Nations monitoring indicates that settler attacks have reached an average of nearly seven incidents per day in 2026, marking the highest rate in more than two decades.

Over 275 distinct Palestinian communities have suffered direct attacks this year. Armed settler militias, operating as unofficial military auxiliaries, routinely destroy water infrastructure, burn livestock shelters, uproot ancient olive groves, and sever power lines.

The structural goal is clear: by rendering rural existence unlivable through constant terror, the regime forces communities to abandon their lands without needing formal eviction orders.

Storming sacred sanctuaries

Alongside physical assaults on rural villages, the regime has intensified its ideological assault on Islamic holy sites, leveraging state power to enforce control during Jewish religious holidays.

In occupied Hebron, extremist National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir led hundreds of illegal occupiers into the Ibrahimi Mosque.

Israeli military authorities completely closed



the sanctuary to Muslim worshippers, banning daily prayers and suppressing the Islamic call to prayer.

Speaking inside the mosque during a televised interview, Ben-Gvir openly celebrated the intrusion while hundreds of armed occupiers cheered behind him.

The site has been subjected to forced division since 1994, when an Israeli terrorist murdered 29 Palestinian worshippers inside the sanctuary.

Simultaneously, in occupied East Jerusalem, nearly one thousand settlers under heavy military guard stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound on Tuesday morning.

Over four thousand settlers forced their way into the site across a three-day period during Sukkot, performing prohibited Talmudic rituals, singing, and dancing in the eastern quarter of the compound.

Israeli forces locked down surrounding Palestinian neighborhoods, forcing local merchants to close their shops and confining Palestinian residents to their homes.

The systematic desecration of Islamic sanctuaries drew immediate condemnation from the Palestinian Resistance.

Senior Hamas official Abdul Rahman Shadid issued an urgent call for general mobilization, urging Palestinians across the West Bank, occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem), and the broader Islamic world to march to the Ibrahimi and Al-Aqsa mosques.

Shadid stated that turning Hebron into an open-air military barracks and besieging its population will never break the steadfastness of the Palestinian people.

He emphasized that these growing violations are fueling widespread public anger, reiterating that the Resistance remains fully committed to defending holy sites and confronting Israeli aggression across every operational front.

Checkpoint strangulation and the fatal cost of closures

The physical violence directed at Palestinian communities is reinforced by a suffocating network of physical barriers engineered to fragment the West Bank into disconnected cantons.

According to the Colonization and Wall Resistance Commission, Israeli forces maintain 942 active checkpoints, iron gates, military roadblocks, and earth mounds across the West Bank.

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

Israel-bound flight makes emergency landing in Saudi Arabia after ‘pilot clash’

An Israel-bound flight made an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday after sending a hijacking alert, reportedly plummeting 17,000 feet in two minutes.

Israeli officials later ruled out a hijacking, saying the alert was triggered by an altercation between the pilots, with initial indications suggested one of them may have attempted to crash the plane, Middle East Eye reported.

However, later Israeli media accounts cited witnesses as saying a stabbing occurred during the incident. Images released from the flight appeared to show one of the pilots tied up.

The company that owns Tabuk airport in Saudi Arabia, where the plane was diverted, said in a statement that both the captain and first officer on the Flydubai plane sustained injuries and were taken to the hospital.

A senior Israeli official told Channel 12 that a “severe disaster was prevented”.

The Flydubai flight was travelling from Dubai to Ben Gurion Airport with 180 Israeli passengers on board.

It began a steep descent about an hour before its scheduled arrival, dropping from 34,000 feet to 16,000 feet in less than two minutes.

The plane eventually landed safely in Tabuk, in north-western Saudi Arabia.

Passengers described scenes of chaos as the plane began its steep descent.

Some told Israeli media that passengers broke into the cockpit and intervened to stop the descent.

Other reports said one of the pilots may have attempted to crash the plane.

Iraqis celebrate the exit of US occupation forces after 23 years

From page 1 ► In the United States, a war the U.S. government portrayed as necessary to destroy weapons of mass destruction and to prevent attacks on U.S. soil is now widely viewed as misguided. The weapons of mass destruction did not exist and Iraq was found to have no connection to the attacks of 9/11.

More than 4,400 U.S. military personnel were killed in Iraq, according to defense ministry figures.

The U.S. invaded Iraq despite insistence by international organizations, including the IAEA, that Iran did not hid WMDs.

After the withdrawal of the U.S. military from the rest of Iraq in January, about 1,500 service members remained in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region in the north.

This was not the first U.S. military withdrawal from the country. U.S. forces pulled out in 2011, declaring their mission over amid mounting Iraqi political opposition to the presence of U.S. troops.

The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement Wednesday the last of its forces had now vacated Erbil Air Base, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The U.S. military withdrew from

most of Iraq earlier this year but retained about 1,500 personnel in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, including the capital Erbil.

At a ceremony in Baghdad Wednesday at what had been the joint military command center across from the American embassy, Iraqi leaders and U.S. military commanders marked the end of the U.S.-led mission in Iraq.

The ceremony was closed to the press but was to be later broadcast by state TV.

“A new phase has begun, characterized by Iraq's sovereignty, the strength of its institutions, the readiness of its forces, the unity of its decision-making, and balanced partnerships with its friends,” Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi said in a statement.

Iraq's prime minister declared a two-day holiday to mark the end of the U.S. military presence, dubbing Wednesday “sovereignty day”.

“We are very proud to reach this day. It is due to the sacrifices of the Iraqi armed forces,” Sabah al-Numan, spokesman for the chief of the Iraqi armed forces, told NPR.

He said Iraq was exploring bilateral military agreements with



the United States.

“We are moving from working under the umbrella of the coalition to an equal relationship with them,” he said. “We thank all efforts that the coalition did and all the country and we will continue this relationship and that way. But at the end they have to go,” he said.

Sheikh Kadhim al-Fartousi, spokesman for the Kitaib Sayid al-Shuhada resistance group, told NPR in a recent interview that although the departure of U.S. forces was a victory, it was not enough.

“The exit of the occupier does not mean only that soldiers and equipment go,” he said. Fartousi said U.S. control over Iraq's economy and its interference in Iraqi

internal affairs was also a form of occupation. Since 2003, Iraq's oil revenue has been deposited into accounts at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York, giving the U.S. significant leverage over Iraq's currency.

Iraq has also opened talks with Turkey on closing its military bases inside Iraq, including the Bashiqa-Zilkan camp near Mosul. Both countries announced last week that Turkey would begin a gradual withdrawal from the base.

The Iraqi military has said Turkey maintains five major bases and almost 100 smaller outposts in Iraq. Turkey for years battled Turkish Kurdish fighters based in northern Iraq before agreeing this year to a peace deal.

Iran falls to Russia in friendly

TEHRAN – The Russian national football squad enjoyed a 2-0 win over Iran in their friendly football match played on Tuesday night in Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan.

Both goals were scored by Russian striker Alexander Golovin, who also plays for AS Monaco. He opened the score netting a ball in the 21st minute and some fifteen minutes later he scored again on a penalty kick.

Reached by journalists after the match, Golovin seemed less concerned with the win and more with an injury he sustained.

"I hurt my ankle five minutes before they took me out, during an attack. It still hurts," he told journalists.

Russia and Iran previously played against each other four times before – all in exhibition matches. In their previous encounter in Russia's Volgograd in October 2025, the hosts defeated the Iranian team 2-1. The other three matches ended in two draws and one Iranian win.

The Russian Football Union (RFU) announced earlier in the month that the national squad is also set play two more friendly matches in early October against Namibia and Nigeria.

The world's governing football body, FIFA, announced on February 28, 2022, that the Russian national team and all professional clubs representing the country were barred from participating in FIFA tournaments. In turn, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) made a similar decision regarding the Russian national football team's participation in UEFA tournaments.

Hajsafi becomes Iran football most-capped player

TEHRAN – Iranian national team defender Ehsan Hajsafi has become the country's most-capped footballer in history after making his 150th international appearance in a friendly match against Russia.

Team Melli suffered a 2–0 defeat to Russia at Kazan Arena on Tuesday night, but the match marked a historic milestone for Hajsafi.

The veteran defender came on as a substitute in the 27th minute, earning his 150th cap for Iran.

Now, Hajsafi surpassed former captain Javad Nekounam, who previously held the national record with 149 appearances.

Hajsafi's milestone officially makes him Iran's all-time appearance record holder, adding another landmark to his long international career.

Iranian boxer Esmaeili gains bronze: 2026 Nagoya

TEHRAN – Iranian boxer Amir Esmaeili has secured a bronze medal at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya after reaching the semifinals of the men's +90kg division.

Esmaeili faced Uzbekistan's Jakhongir Zokirov in the semifinal at Nishio City General Gymnasium on Tuesday. The bout was stopped in the second round after Esmaeili suffered an injury, allowing Zokirov to advance to the final. Under the competition rules, Esmaeili's semifinal appearance guarantees him a bronze medal.

The medal adds to Iran's long history in Asian Games boxing. Iran first competed in the sport at the Asian Games in 1958, when its nine boxers won six medals. Across the history of the Asian Games, Iranian boxing has collected five gold, 11 silver and 26 bronze medals.

Esmaeili's achievement also comes at a time of renewed development in Iranian boxing. While boxing has traditionally received less international attention in Iran than sports such as wrestling and weightlifting, the country has been expanding its presence on the international stage. One notable recent development has been the rapid emergence of women's boxing, with Iranian women making their international debut in 2025 and preparing to compete at the Asian Games for the first time in 2026.

Esmaeili's bronze therefore represents both an individual achievement and another sign of the continuing development of Iranian boxing.

Greco-Roman wrestler Mirzazadeh takes gold in Nagoya

TEHRAN – Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Amin Mirzazadeh won a gold medal in the 2026 Asian Games on Wednesday.

He defeated Uzbekistan's Rafael Tsitsushvili 3-1 in the final bout of the men's 130kg.

Mirzazadeh defeated Kyrgyzstan's Murat Zarlykbekovich Botoev 7-0, and China's Meng Lingzhe 1-0 on his way to final.

Kim Min-seok from South Korea and Meng Lingzhe won bronze medals.

The men's Greco-Roman at the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya was held at the Inae Sports Center.

This Greco-Roman wrestling competition consists of a single-elimination tournament, with a repechage used to determine the winner of two bronze medals. The two finalists face off for gold and silver medals. Each wrestler who loses to one of the two finalists moves into the repechage, culminating in a pair of bronze medal matches featuring the semifinal losers each facing the remaining repechage opponent from their half of the bracket.

Iran set to face Guinea-Bissau in friendly

TEHRAN – Iran's national football team will face Guinea-Bissau in their third friendly of the current international window, looking to end their preparations on a positive note after suffering defeats against Uzbekistan and Russia.

Team Melli began the window with a 3–1 loss to Uzbekistan in their first friendly. Amir Ghalenoei's side then traveled to Kazan to take on Russia, where they were beaten 2–0 by the hosts.

The back-to-back defeats have provided the coaching staff with an opportunity to assess the squad and identify areas that need improvement ahead of the team's upcoming competitive fixtures. The match against Guinea-Bissau is expected to give Ghalenoei another chance to evaluate his players and test different combinations before the end of the preparation period.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

S. Korean ambassador highlights Iran's ecotourism potential

From Page 1 ▶ Kim said tourism was changing globally, with travelers increasingly seeking opportunities to interact with local people, explore indigenous cultures and experience the lifestyles of destination communities rather than simply visit tourist attractions.

Reflecting on his approximately two and a half years in Iran, the ambassador said the country had considerable tourism potential because of its history, culture and civilization. He added that Iran could introduce its distinctive cultural characteristics to international visitors.

"Iran has considerable potential for tourism rooted in culture and local life," he said, referring to the diverse cultures and lifestyles he had encountered during his stay.

Drawing on South Korea's experience in developing cultural tourism, the ambassador said tourism experiences with stronger local and authentic characteristics had greater potential for international promotion.



He noted that preserving traditional architecture, historic houses, clothing, cuisine and handicrafts in some parts of South Korea had become an integral part of the visitor experience.

Abiri said the meeting aimed to introduce Iran's ecotourism potential to South Korean travelers and create opportunities to

expand tourism cooperation between the two countries.

He said ecotourism lodges offer visitors more than accommodation, allowing them to discover local culture, cuisine, handicrafts, nature and the lifestyles of communities in different regions.

Given Iran's climatic and cultural diversity, the country could host tourists throughout the year, Abiri said, adding that ecotourism lodges could help attract international visitors by offering distinctive local experiences at affordable prices.

Participants also stressed the importance of strengthening links between Iranian ecotourism operators and specialized tourism organizations in South Korea, as well as exchanging experience in rural tourism, traditional accommodation and community development.

20 historical bazaars undergoing revitalization across Iran

TEHRAN – Around 20 historical bazaars across Iran are currently being revitalized in cooperation with municipalities and local shopkeepers, a former head of the Urban Regeneration Company of Iran has said.

Abdolreza Golpayegani told ISNA that efforts to revive historical urban areas also include the restoration of historical houses in several cities, including Kerman, Sari, Hamedan, Isfahan and Khorramabad.

He said cultural and heritage considerations are of particular importance in the regeneration of historical districts.

"We have taken supportive measures to improve service infrastructure, upgrade streets and create suitable conditions for construction and strengthening buildings," Golpayegani said, adding that the broader objective is to improve the urban environment and create conditions conducive to the restoration and revival of historical houses.

Regarding the historical bazaars, he said the ongoing projects include paving, organizing roofs and improving the façades of around 20 bazaars in cooperation with municipalities and shopkeepers.

"When a historical bazaar is restored and brought into suitable condition, it naturally creates the basis for revitalizing construction and restoring houses in the surrounding area," he said.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)



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or in a sealed envelope delivered to the Security Office of Owzan Company.

First Announcement



NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0340016

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir. Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity
1	CASING 5 IN., 18 PPF, GRADE L-80, "VAM", "NEW VAM" THREAD, R-3 API 5CT/IS AS PER API 5CT/ISO 11960, SIZW(OD), WIGHT(PPF), AS SPECIFIED, MARKING; COLD DIE STAMPED IN ACORDANCE NOTE: LEVEL OF INSPECTION:1 (L.O.I: 1), "QCP/MPS DOCUMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO REVIEW " "ITP DOCUMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR TECHNICAL EVALUATION	1,000 L.E

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of **21,412.56 EURO** or **36,874,722,690 RIAL**, in favor of NISOC.

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS CFR, BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI, IRAN
PAYMENT TERM IS C.A.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex,
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 34 123589 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

PUBLIC RELATIONS

www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://iets.mporg.ir>

First Announcement



NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 01-31-0480004

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir. Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity
26	PART FOR "AIR PACK" RECIPROCATING AIR COMPRESSOR TYPE: HA-550-LT SERIAL NOS.T-1995-00449-1 TO 00449/3 AIR PACK REFERENCE: 7356-COM REF. AIR PACK NEDERLAND B.V 2 STAGE CYLINDER SET	327 NO

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TERMS IS C.O.D.,SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL

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Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 341 24644 Fax No.: 061 34457437

PUBLIC RELATIONS

www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://iets.mporg.ir> www.setadiran.ir

Rasul Medal announces shortlist of nominees for second edition

TEHRAN - The initial list of nominees for the second edition of the Rasul (PBUH) Medal, which is presented alongside the Mustafa (PBUH) Prize to young scientists from the Islamic world under the age of 40, has been finalized.

The shortlist comprises four nominees in engineering sciences, four in mathematics, four in computer science, eight in biological and medical sciences, two in chemistry, and two in physics. The award ceremony for the final winners is scheduled to be held in December.

The initial list considered for the Rasul (PBUH) Medal included more than 100,000 candidates across seven scientific fields. The biological and medical sciences category accounted for 55,878 candidates, followed by 4,675 in physics, 7,897 in chemistry, 1,965 in mathematics, 5,589 in computer science, and 26,377 in engineering sciences. In addition, 14 candidates in the field of nanotechnology met the required criteria to be included in the initial list.

Following a review of the outcomes of previous meetings, the judging panel selected the nominees for the shortlist. Accordingly, four nominees were selected in engineering sciences, four in basic sciences, four in mathematics, four in computer science, and eight in biological and medical sciences.

Under the regulations governing the medal, the Rasul (PBUH) Medal secretariat issued a call last December for scientists under the age of 40 residing in Islamic countries. Scientific institutions and prominent scientists had until January 20, 2026, to submit nominations for the medal.

Symbol of scientific excellence

In order to appreciate prominent scientists and provide the



ground for scientific cooperation and development worldwide, the Mustafa Prize was established in 2012 as a symbol of scientific excellence at the international level.

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

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

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

“Therefore, it is in this context and from this perspective that we use the term ‘scientists of the Islamic world.’ We aim to identify and introduce talented scientists who are not widely known—not necessarily unknown in absolute

terms, but relatively unknown to our own community—and bring their achievements to greater public attention, enabling these scientists to gain greater visibility on the global scientific map,” he said.

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

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

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

He went on to say that the foundation has adopted various mechanisms and initiatives to achieve this objective, many of which are known by their Latin acronyms in connection with the Islamic world.

These include the Science and Technology Exchange Program (STEP). The STEP initiative comprises several components, in-

cluding STEPOL, which focuses on science, technology and innovation policymaking.

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

Another initiative is the Faculty Mobility in Islamic Countries (FAMIC) program, which aims to facilitate the mobility and exchange of university faculty members among Islamic countries, with the Mustafa Prize Foundation serving as a facilitator. For example, this year, following an open call and despite the circumstances and developments that arose, two of the 42 applicants were selected to attend a program at a university in Pakistan.

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

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

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



market development.

Over the past years, the role of Nano headquarters has not been limited to macro-policy-making, but has included fostering coordination among universities, research institutes, industries, knowledge-based companies, and supporting institutions.

Establishing a strategic technological laboratory network, developing standards for the evaluation of Nano products, supporting start-up companies, and designing industrial programs are among the factors that help transfer nanotechnology from laboratories to the country’s industries.

Despite the 12-day war in June 2025 and the recent 40-day war, 230 products received nanoscale certificates in the past Iranian calendar year (March 2025-March 2026), surpassing the targeted number.

Last year, the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy and

the headquarters for nanotechnology planned to obtain nanoscale certificates for 190 products (one product per working day). Still, the figure increased by 40, reaching 230. Currently, the total number of nanotechnology products with a nanoscale certificate has increased to 1965, IRNA reported.

The highest number of products that received nanoscale certificates was recorded respectively in the provinces of Tehran, Fars, and Mazandaran, with 64, 48, and 24 products, respectively.

The provinces of Zanjan (32 products), Qom (17), Markazi (16), Qazvin (11), and Isfahan (7) are placed next.

Out of 230 products, Industrial supplies had the largest share with 72 products. Energy, oil, and related industries accounted for 41, Chemicals for 36, and Pharmaceutical and Health for 26 products.

Iranian students win medals for excellence at WorldSkills competition 2026

TEHRAN – A total of 22 Iranian students participated in the 48th WorldSkills Competition, showcasing their technical expertise and practical skills on the international stage and securing seven medals for excellence.

The WorldSkills Competition is the world’s biggest international skills competition, bringing together young people, industry, education and government leaders from around the world to advance Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

This year’s competition was held from September 22 to 27 in Shanghai, China, bringing together 1,400 of the world’s best young skilled professionals from 70 countries and regions to compete across 64 skilled professions.

Mehran Rasolzadeh ranked fourth in Mobile Applications Development. Hasan Safari and Amir-Hossein Zibaei placed fourth in Cyber Security. Mohammad-Saleh Borhani Gilvaei ranked 8th in Cloud Computing. Mohammad-Amin Arab-Aminabadi and Amir-Reza Beik-Mohammadlou ranked 12th in IT Network Systems Administration and Graphic Design Technology, respectively. Taha Shameli and Sajad Safari-Ghiasabad are placed 15th in Web Technologies and Mechanical Engineering CAD, respectively, IRNA reported.

The WorldSkills Competition is held every two years. It is a true opportunity for young professionals from all over the world to participate in an international competition, measure, and showcase their skills.

WorldSkills Competitors are selected from thousands of local, regional, and national competitions. Their dedication, resilience, and mastery set the standard that training systems, educators, and industries around the world measure themselves against.

The 49th WorldSkills Competition will be held in Aichi, Japan, in 2028.

Recent achievements

Thirteen Iranian students aged under 12 showcased their scientific, technical capabilities, and creativity, ranking second and third in different leagues of the RobotChallenge 2026 which was held in Beijing, China.

Each year RobotChallenge, one of the world’s largest artificial intelligence robotic championships, brings together people from all over the world who compete with self-made, autonomous robots in various competitions.

Kicked off on August 8, the event brought together participants from some 48 countries, including China, Russia, Romania, Iran, Japan, Germany, and South Korea, IRNA reported.

Iranian students ranked second in Technical Report league, third in Robot Rugby-senior, and Innovation.

The achievement demonstrates the capabilities and proficiency of Iranian students in constructing and operating robots, design process, problem-solving, and the effective-

ness of technical presentations.

At the Rayan 2025 international artificial intelligence and programming competition, known as the World Finals, Iranian students showcased strong performance in both the AI and programming sections. In the programming section, Ali Safari was placed first. China secured second and third place, followed by India, Vietnam, Armenia, Serbia, and Pakistan, respectively, ISNA reported.

In the AI section, Iranian teams, namely no Trust issues here, Pileh, AI Guardians of Trust, AIUoK, red-serotonin, Persistence, and GGWP were placed first to seventh.

The final round of the Rayan international artificial intelligence and programming contest was held on Friday at Sharif University of Technology in Tehran, with participants from 25 countries.

Supported by the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy, the event kicked off on November 25, attracting hundreds of contestants from the U.S., Russia, China, India, Italy, Chile, Australia, Armenia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Taiwan, Romania, Singapore, Poland, Slovakia, Vietnam, Serbia, Argentina, Colombia, Kazakhstan, and Ethiopia, as well as the host, Iran.

The solo programming section was held with 60 Iranian and foreign participants who worked individually to solve nine complicated algorithmic problems within a duration of three to four hours.

The scientific competition aimed to promote knowledge, foster international networking, and establish scientific authority in AI and programming.

Enhancing algorithmic thinking, problem-solving skills, teamwork, developing innovative ideas, starting new businesses, and expanding AI engineering and programming were among the other objectives of the contest.

Iranian students secured three gold medals and a special award in the International Science and Invention Fair (ISIF) 2025, ranking them among the top innovators worldwide.

Organized by the Indonesian Young Scientist Association (IYSA), the competition was held in Bali from November 12 to 15.

Iranian students competed in various fields, including biotechnology, educational technology, artificial intelligence, mathematics, engineering, chemistry, and nanotechnology.

Raman Nafarieh won a gold medal and a special award in biotechnology. The team, comprising Radin Abbasi and Sam Rashidi, clinched a gold medal in engineering. Moreover, Matin Hayati won a gold medal in educational technology and artificial intelligence.

The ISIF 2025 brought together a total of 800 teams from 24 countries, including China, the U.S., Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan, Canada, Turkey, Luxembourg, Indonesia, and Vietnam.

Iran shakes with 379 earthquakes in a month

TEHRAN – A total of 379 earthquakes have been recorded across the country in a month from August 23 to September 22, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 348 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, 26 earthquakes with a magnitude between 3 and 4, and five earthquakes with a magnitude greater than 4 on the Richter scale have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

Of the total quakes, two had a magnitude of 4.3 on the Richter scale; the first occurred on September 7 in Kordestan province, and the other one hit Khorasan Razavi province on September 9 in.

Among the provinces of the country, Khorasan Razavi experienced the highest number of earthquakes with 59, followed by Semnan with 35, and Kerman with 31 earthquakes.

During the same period, 11 earthquakes were recorded in Tehran; the biggest had a magnitude of 3.6 on the Richter scale.

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

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

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

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



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OCTOBER 1, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The worst and gravest of sins is that which its perpetrator takes lightly.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:54 Evening: 18:06 Dawn: 4:36 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:00 (tomorrow)

Peter Shaffer's "Black Comedy" on stage at Homa Theater



TEHRAN – The one-act farce "Black Comedy" written by Peter Shaffer is being staged at Homa Theater in Tehran.

Hossein Omidi has directed the 90-minute play and performs in it along with Faraz Sarabi, Soudeh Sadaei, Mojdeh Mohammadi, Amirhossein Taheri, Mojtaba Rajabi Memar, Minoo Azarmgin, and Salar Barzegar.

In the play, struggling sculptor Brindsley Miller and his fiancé, Carol, are having a party with the aim of impressing Carol's bombastic father, Colonel Melkett, and millionaire Georg Bamberger. They hope the two men might purchase some of Brindsley's sculptures.

Without permission, they have borrowed the furniture of their fussy neighbor, Harold, to make their own flat more presentable. Just before the guests arrive, the main fuse blows, plunging the flat into darkness. What follows is a frantic romp with unexpected visitors, mistaken identities, and surprises lurking in every dark corner.

Only the audience can see the action that ensues in the dark. The results are chaotic, disastrous and downright hysterical.

Inspired by a lamp gag the writer saw in Chinese theatre, a power cut in a south London flat is staged with blazing brightness representing total darkness and vice versa. When a match is struck, the lights dim; a light switch flicked on triggers instant blackout. This conceit requires the cast alternately to find their way unsighted around the stage and then lope and grope around as if they can't see each other while we can.

Sir Peter Shaffer (1926 – 2016) was an English playwright, screenwriter, and novelist. His best-known works are the plays "Equus" (1973) and "Amadeus" (1979), both of which earned him the Tony Award for Best Play. They were later adapted for the screen by Shaffer himself in 1977 and 1984, respectively.

He was nominated for an Academy Award for both screenplays, winning for "Amadeus," which also earned him a Golden Globe Award. Shaffer also earned nominations for two BAFTA Awards and a Laurence Olivier Award.

"Black Comedy" will be staged until October 22 at Homa Theater, located at Ziba Dead-End, Nofel Loshato St., Hafez St.

Cartoon of Day



Netanyahu The Butcher

Cartoonist: Walker Bin Zaman from Bangladesh

Iran submits Babak Khajehpasha's "Land of Angels" to 99th Academy Awards

TEHRAN – Babak Khajehpasha's "Land of Angels" has been officially selected as Iran's submission to the 99th Academy Awards in the best international feature film category.

This is the second time that a film by Khajehpasha will represent Iran at the Oscars. His directorial debut feature film "In the Arms of the Tree" was chosen as Iran's representative at the 2025 Academy Awards.

The film tells the story of the suffering of children in Gaza and portrays the human consequences of war through the experiences of a woman who struggles to survive while protecting a group of innocent children from the horrors of conflict, IRNA reported.

Written and directed by Khajehpasha and produced by Manouchehr Mohammadi, "Land of Angels" was jointly undertaken by the Tasvir-e Shahr Institute and the Soureh Cinema Center.

The film features Arab actors and centers on the lives, dreams and struggles of children against the backdrop of the war in Palestine. Rather than presenting the conflict solely through political or military events, the film approaches it from the perspective of civilians, particularly children whose lives have been profoundly affected by the violence.

The production was filmed in Tehran over a period of one and a half years. The film's international screenings began with its participation in the Kazan festival,



following its successful national festival run in Iran.

"Land of Angels" received the Grand Prix for Best Feature Film at the 22nd Altyn Minbar Kazan International Film Festival.

Prior to its appearance in Ka-

zan, "Land of Angels" was the most decorated film at Iran's 44th Fajr International Film Festival, where it received five Crystal Simorgh awards and eight honorary diplomas.

Among its Fajr honors, Khajeh-

pasha received the jury's special prize for directing, while Syrian actress Sulaf Fawakherji was honored for her performance. The film also received awards for set design, visual effects and other categories.

The Oscars shortlists will be revealed on December 15, with 15 international films selected to be voted on by Academy members in all branches who commit to watch all 15 films. Oscar nominations will be revealed on January 21, 2027.

An international feature film is defined as a feature-length motion picture (over 40 minutes) produced outside the U.S. with a predominantly (more than 50%) non-English dialogue track and can include animated and documentary features.

This year's entries include titles like Romania's "Fjord," which won the Palme d'Or at Cannes; Chile's "The Meltdown," which screened in Un Certain Regard; Germany's "Everytime," which won Cannes' Un Certain Regard prize; France's "Minotaur," which won the Cannes Grand Prix; Spain's "La Bola Negra" and Poland's "Fatherland."

Meanwhile, a new Academy rule allows any film that wins the top prize at one of the six biggest festivals — Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Sundance, Busan and Toronto — to be entered in the international feature race even without a national committee's backing.

The 99th Oscars will take place on March 14, 2027.

Kamel Daoud's "Houris" published in Persian



TEHRAN – The Persian translation of the book "Houris," also known as "Virgins," written by Kamel Daoud has been released in the bookstores across Iran.

Sanaz Fallahfard has translated the book from French into Persian and Tadaee Publication has brought it out in 397 pages, ISNA reported.

"Houris" focuses on the victims of what Algerians call the "black decade," when tens of thousands of people were killed as the army fought an Islamist insurgency. The conflict erupted in 1991 after Islamists won a first round of legislative elections, prompting the military-backed government to cancel the second round of voting.

Aube is a young Algerian woman who must remember the war of independence, which she did not live through, and forget the civil war of the 1990s, which she herself endured. Her tragedy is marked on her body: a scar on her neck and destroyed vocal cords. Mute, she dreams of regaining her voice. She can only tell her story to the daughter she carries within her. But does she have the right to keep this child? Can one give life when it has been almost torn from you? In a country that has passed laws to punish anyone who speaks of the civil war, Aube decides to return to her native village, where it all began, and where perhaps the dead will answer her.

Kamel Daoud, 56, is a French-Algerian writer and journalist. He is best known for his

2013 novel "The Meursault Investigation" and his 2024 novel "Houris," which won the Prix Goncourt that year.

The author said earlier this year that he has been sentenced to three years in prison in Algeria for "Houris," a recipient of France's most prestigious literary award. The writer, who lives in France, said that he was also fined 5 million Algerian dinars (\$38,000).

Daoud said he was convicted under what is known as the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation, a text adopted by referendum in 2005 that offered widespread pardons to both armed Islamists and security forces.

"The text punishes any public mention of the civil war," Daoud said. "Ten years of war, nearly 200,000 dead according to estimates, thousands of terrorists granted amnesty ... and only one guilty party: a writer."

In addition to the legal action brought by the court in the Algerian city of Oran, Daoud is the target of two international arrest warrants issued by Algeria in May 2025 and is also under threat of being stripped of his Algerian nationality.

Dropped, not silenced: Macklemore's "Free Palestine Tour"



sion followed severe weather warnings across Boston and New England throughout the weekend and consultation with local officials.

The venue shared the same statement. All tickets will be refunded through their point of purchase.

Macklemore, meanwhile, has turned his removal into momentum. In an Instagram post announcing the "Free Palestine Tour," he said something had shifted over the past three years.

He pointed to "a collective awakening around Palestinian liberation" and to the power of billionaires who try to censor that call.

"It's 2026. Being apolitical during a genocide doesn't work anymore," the rapper wrote. "When the billionaire class can decide which voices are allowed on stage and which ones are too dangerous to hear, everyone should be paying attention."

With a wry nod to his cancelled dates, he noted that his "schedule freed up a bit." He said he had

spent the past week reaching out to artists who have used their stages to stand with Palestinians "regardless of the consequences."

The tour will open with shows in Dublin, Paris and London. US dates and the artist line-up will be announced soon. All proceeds will go to organizations supporting the Palestinian people and movement.

Fans can sign up for updates and first access to tickets at macklemore.com. Presale opened September 28 and general sales opened September 30.

As Macklemore put it, artists' platforms "mean very little if we're only willing to use them when it's safe."

At the heart of this series of concerts are the people whose lives continue to be shaped by the ongoing genocide: Palestinian families, children, healthcare workers, students, artists, communities, and all those whose lives and futures have been profoundly affected.