

Op-ed



Will Trump roll the dice again? Dostoevsky has the answer

By Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN — Many around the world are trying to decode and analyze the character of the current President of the United States — from politicians and analysts to journalists, traders, and market players. After all, the U.S. president wields vast powers, while the mechanisms in the American system for overseeing and constraining those powers are, more often than not, theoretical possibilities on paper rather than practical realities.

One of the biggest questions observers in America and around the world are grappling with today is this: Will Trump once again turn up the flames of war with Iran and launch an attack, or not? First of all, it must be said that the war that began on February 28 has never actually ended. It has had its ebbs and flows — at times more intense, at times quieter — but it has not ended.

Back to the question. Arguably, one of the most logical ways to find an answer would be to look at Trump's own positions. Yet he takes a new stance and makes a new claim every day, and is deeply contradictory on this front. Matters have reached the point where, in a recent campaign speech in Oklahoma, he claimed that Iran was even producing narcotics inside its nuclear facilities. The sheer degree to which Trump treats his audience as fools is at times astonishing.

When conventional, logical approaches fail to solve a puzzle, everyone tries to resort to inventive methods of their own. Here, I want to turn to Dostoevsky for help. The great virtue of writers is that you can count on their help even after their death. ► Page 3

Iran's robotics claim team championship at WFC 2026

TEHRAN — Iranian young innovators secured the team championship in the Prototype Challenge league at the World Future Championship (WFC) 2026 after sweeping the top spots in the competition, taking first, second, and third place.

The championship was held from October 2 to 4 at the Cyberjaya campus of Multimedia University (MMU) in Malaysia, bringing together robotics teams from different countries to compete in various categories.

More than 1,000 young innovators, educators, and international delegates from different countries, including Japan, South Korea, Iran, China, Saudi Arabia, and Malaysia, participated in WFC 2026 and the 'CIPTRIX Global Competition 2.0 & Global Gateway'. ► Page 7

Heritage is identity: Iranian archaeologist exposes scale of war destruction to historic sites

TEHRAN — An Iranian archaeologist, Sonia Shidrang, highlighted in a global webinar hosted by the International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM), a scientific committee under ICOMOS, that the 40-day war with the United States and the Israeli regime left 149 historical sites across 20 provinces damaged, and that Iran's cultural heritage now demands a response grounded in international law, rigorous documentation, and a concrete protection plan.

The ICAHM Webinars 2026 took place on Sep. 30, chaired by Matt Whincop, ICAHM Secretary General, and focused on the theme "From Vulnerability to Resilience: Protecting Cultural Heritage from Natural and Anthropogenic Disasters."

The program featured two speakers addressing heritage protection from complementary angles. Professor Hatice Pamir from the Department of Archaeology of Mustafa Kemal University, Turkey, presented "Earthquakes and the Archaeological Heritage of Antioch on the Banks of the Orontes River: Lessons Learnt from Fieldwork," focusing on seismic threats to archaeological sites. ► Page 6

Trump's Strait May Be Open, But Hormuz Is Not

US claims of normal traffic collide with dark transits, million-dollar tanker rates, and \$9.99 diesel fuel signs



By Seyed Mohammad Torabi

TEHRAN — The US president insists the Strait of Hormuz is open. Tanker captains, charter markets, insurers, and motorists in the US tell a different story.

That gap — between what the White House announces and what actually moves through the world's most critical energy chokepoint — is now the central front in the information war accompanying the seven-month conflict that began on February 28.

Trump has personally repeated the claim several times in recent weeks. At a White House energy briefing last month, he said the strait was "fully open, totally open" thanks to US naval power. Days later, in a campaign-style speech in Oklahoma, he again declared that "we opened Hormuz" and that oil was "flowing beautifully." Last week, in remarks to reporters before departing for a fundraiser, he repeated that US forces had "kept

Hormuz open" and that Iran could no longer "use the strait as blackmail."

The formulation reached its peak when Trump at one point referred to the waterway as the "Trump Strait," suggesting that US escort operations had effectively renamed and reclaimed it.

Maritime reality does not match the rhetoric.

A recent Bloomberg account, based on testimony from a commercial captain transiting the area, described what "open" currently means in practice: a southbound passage attempted in darkness, under radio silence, without normal AIS transparency, and under direct US naval escort — procedures designed for a combat zone, not a commercial lane. Even under those conditions, the report noted, tankers have remained exposed to attack. ► Page 3

An oil tanker burns after being hit in the ship-to-ship transfer zone at Khor al-Zubair port near Basra, Iraq, late Wednesday, March 11, 2026.



Pezeshkian: Negotiations have no meaning with an enemy that resorts to assassination and threats

TEHRAN — Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said negotiations have no meaning with a party that repeatedly resorts to assassination, sanctions, pressure and threats while breaching its commitments, stressing that the Iranian nation does not accept such an approach.

"Negotiations have no meaning with an enemy that resorts to assassination, sanctions, pressure and threats every day and breaches its commitments, and our nation does not accept such an approach," Pezeshkian said on Monday during a meeting with Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan in Tehran. ► Page 2

Iranian commanders warn any new war would trigger wider regional conflict

TEHRAN — Iranian military commanders have issued a series of increasingly forceful warnings against any renewed US or Israeli military action, saying the Islamic Republic is fully prepared to respond and cautioning regional states against allowing their territory or military facilities to be used in a new conflict. ► Page 3

Iran protests Norway's inaction over unauthorized Starlink operations

TEHRAN — Iran has formally protested to Norway over the continued operation of unauthorized Starlink satellite internet terminals inside Iranian territory, urging Oslo to take immediate steps to halt transmissions that violate Iran's sovereignty and national security.

Iranian Foreign Ministry Director General for International Peace and Security Mohammad Hassan-Nejad Pirkoochi summoned Norwegian Ambassador to Tehran Paul Bjornstad on Sunday and conveyed Tehran's formal protest over Norway's failure to take effective action against unauthorized Starlink operations, according to Iran's Foreign Ministry.

During the meeting, Hassan-Nejad outlined the use of Starlink's satellite communications infrastructure by the United States and Israel to support interventionist activities against Iran. ► Page 2

Iran, Belarus stress expanding monetary, banking cooperation

TEHRAN — The 19th meeting of the Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Belarus, held in Minsk with high-level delegations from both countries, focused on facilitating banking transactions and expanding financial cooperation.

According to IRNA, citing the Central Bank, the bank's delegation, headed by Hossein Kashiri, Director General of International Relations and Cooperation, discussed and exchanged views with Belarusian counterparts during the four-day meeting (September 29-October 2) on practical solutions to remove obstacles to foreign exchange and banking transactions. Establishing a regular mechanism for holding bilateral meetings at the level of central banks, commercial banks, and financial institutions of the two countries was one of the key decisions of the meeting—a move aimed at effectively supporting trade and economic flows and expanding mutual investments. ► Page 4

US scrambles all 12 B-1 bombers out of Britain over unexplained threats

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Twelve American B-1 strategic bombers left RAF Fairford over the weekend in a hasty pullout that exposes the growing vulnerability of Western bases supporting Washington's aggressive military operations against Iran.

The withdrawal was executed with unusual speed. According to the New York Times, the Pentagon's European Command said Sunday that the entire fleet was redeployed to home stations in the United States, including Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

Air Force commanders ordered the departure so urgently that several heavy bombers took off while aerial refueling tankers were still scrambling to support the long flight across the Atlantic. ► Page 5

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

World War III and the diplomatic track

Ham-Mihan analyzed growing speculation about a possible Third World War and the diplomatic options available to the parties involved. Political discussions have recently been dominated by concerns over whether another conflict is becoming unavoidable. Several developments have intensified these fears, including the deployment of a third US aircraft carrier group to the CENTCOM region, meetings involving American, Israeli, and Arab military commanders, Netanyahu's visit to Abu Dhabi, and Trump's increasingly aggressive rhetoric. Despite these signs of escalation, war cannot yet be considered inevitable. Diplomatic channels remain open, and proposals have reportedly been exchanged between the two sides. However, Trump may be less willing to return to earlier diplomatic arrangements, particularly after criticism within the United States and developments in the Strait of Hormuz. Following claims that the United States helped restore navigation through the strait, Trump may now seek greater concessions from Iran, especially regarding its nuclear program, while offering limited benefits in return. The paper concludes that although military tensions are rising, opportunities for diplomacy still exist.

Siasat-e-Rooz: US will have no choice but to leave

Siasat-e-Rooz focused on the USS Roosevelt aircraft carrier which is heading toward the Arabian Sea. It argued that although American officials continue to speak about military options and highlight the carrier's presence in West Asia, recent developments show that economic and political tools have become more important than military threats. The newspaper pointed to Trump's economic promises and discussions surrounding international energy negotiations as evidence that military pressure has lost much of its effectiveness. Whether the Roosevelt was sent for military purposes or merely as a display of power makes little difference. The reopening of the Strait of Hormuz depends on meeting Iran's conditions. Any military miscalculation would trigger a stronger and faster response than previous confrontations. Iran is the key actor shaping regional developments, and the United States will eventually be forced to reduce its presence and withdraw from the region. From this perspective, military deployments are largely symbolic and cannot fundamentally alter regional realities.

Hamshahri: The new reality of Hormuz

In a commentary, Hamshahri discussed the transit of an Iraqi oil tanker carrying two million barrels of crude oil through the Strait of Hormuz. While some observers viewed the event as evidence that the waterway had reopened, the newspaper argued that this interpretation is inaccurate. According to the article, there is a significant difference between a strait being physically open and functioning normally for commercial traffic.

Araghchi: Iran using all diplomatic capacities to safeguard national interests



TEHRAN- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has stressed the importance of continued diplomatic consultations to explain Tehran's positions amid sensitive regional and international developments. In a post on Instagram, he said he had briefed foreign ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and representatives of interna-

Although ships can still pass through Hormuz and the route has not been blocked, normal shipping conditions have not returned. The Iraqi tanker's journey is presented not as proof of a fully reopened strait but as an example of a new operational reality. Passage remains possible, yet each voyage entails extensive risk management. Political authorization, security concerns, insurance coverage, transportation costs, cargo destination, and legal responsibility all play central roles in determining whether ships can travel through the waterway. As a result, Hormuz continues to function, but under much more complicated conditions than before.

Sobh-e-No: Iran has entered America's electoral battle

Sobh-e-No examined comments made by Hakeem Jeffries, the Democratic leader in the US House of Representatives, and the broader political challenges facing Trump. Jeffries accused Republicans of pursuing a costly and reckless confrontation with Iran that has placed increasing pressure on American citizens. According to the newspaper, Trump's reaction highlights the deep political divisions within Washington and demonstrates how Iran has become an important issue in domestic US politics rather than merely a foreign policy concern. The article argues that Democrats are attempting to present themselves as advocates of peace and stability, while Trump seeks to draw public attention to economic security and political competition at home. Both parties are effectively competing to define which costs matter most to voters: the costs associated with war and inflation or the costs of losing political power. In this sense, Iran has become a key topic in America's electoral debate.

Donya-e-Eqtasad: A deepening energy crisis

Donya-e Eqtasad examined the energy consequences of the continuing US-Iran conflict. It noted that many observers initially expected the confrontation to be brief and that Trump had predicted a quick resolution. Months later, however, the conflict remains unresolved. The article argues that two critical maritime chokepoints, the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab, are no longer operating without restrictions. Strategic reserves have declined, fuel costs have risen, and refining capacity has faced growing pressure. According to the newspaper, the crisis demonstrates that the effects of conflict extend beyond oil prices. Shipping disruptions, reduced exports, difficulties in imports, vulnerabilities in energy infrastructure, and refining constraints have combined to place significant pressure on global markets. The paper warns that a prolonged conflict could further weaken reserves and alternative supply networks, especially if energy facilities become targets, increasing strain on the global economy.

tional organizations in Tehran on Sunday. Araghchi emphasized that sustained dialogue with foreign representatives is essential to convey Iran's views and clarify developments. He said the Foreign Ministry would use all available diplomatic capacities to safeguard national interests and strengthen Iran's security.

Pezeshkian: Negotiations have no meaning with an enemy that resorts to assassination and threats

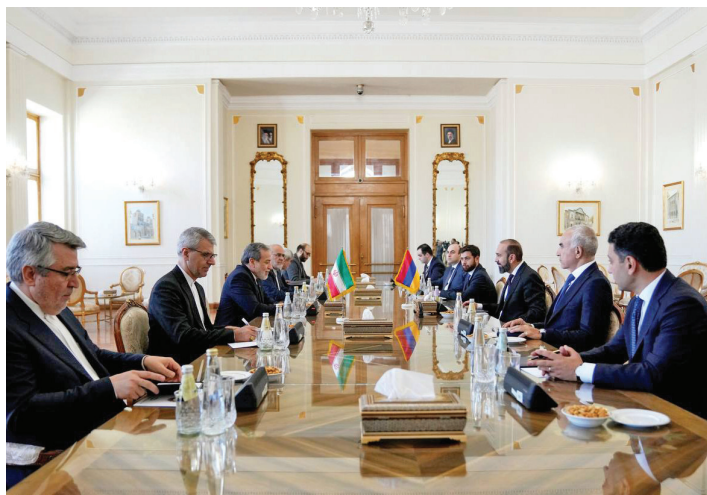
From page 1 ▶ The Armenian foreign minister is visiting Tehran for talks with senior Iranian officials and has also held meetings with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf.

Pezeshkian said Iran had repeatedly demonstrated its good faith regarding its nuclear activities and had been subject to extensive monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), yet the United States had continued to exert pressure on Iran based on unfounded allegations.

He reiterated Iran's readiness for dialogue and verification concerning its nuclear activities, while questioning the rationale behind attacks on Iranian nuclear, scientific and academic facilities.

The president said that whenever IAEA inspectors had visited Iran, information concerning nuclear facilities and scientists had subsequently been exposed, followed by attacks on facilities and the killing of scientists. He stressed that nuclear facilities under IAEA supervision must not be targeted under international law.

Pezeshkian also criticized the United States for launching attacks on Iran and then calling for negotiations, saying Iran had been attacked three times after engaging in talks. He said Washington was not genuinely seeking dialogue but pursuing the objective



of weakening the Islamic Republic.

Referring to the deaths of 168 children in Minab, the president questioned the lack of accountability over their deaths while the United States continued to raise the issue of human rights.

Pezeshkian said Iran's experience had demonstrated that negotiations could not be meaningful with a party that repeatedly resorts to assassination, sanctions, pressure and threats while failing to honor its commitments.

He said the US attack, which was aimed at undermining Iran's political system, had instead strengthened national cohesion.

Iran-Armenia ties

Pezeshkian also referred to his recent meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in New York, describing it as con-

structive and stressing the need to further expand cooperation between Tehran and Yerevan in trade, science, culture and technology.

The Iranian president described the Armenian community in Iran as a valuable asset in strengthening relations between the two countries, emphasizing the long-standing bonds between the Iranian and Armenian peoples. Mirzoyan conveyed warm greetings from Prime Minister Pashinyan to Pezeshkian and expressed satisfaction with the meeting.

The Armenian foreign minister said relations between Iran and Armenia were growing stronger by the day and that bilateral cooperation was continuing at the international level as well. Despite sanctions, he said, Armenia remained determined to maintain

and strengthen its engagement with Iran.

Araghchi: Regional countries should determine the future of the Caucasus

In his meeting with Mirzoyan, Araghchi stressed that lasting peace and stability in the Caucasus depend on regional countries resolving their differences through dialogue and preventing interference by extra-regional powers.

The Iranian foreign minister said Tehran attaches particular importance to its relations with Armenia, describing the ties between the two countries as rooted in longstanding historical and cultural bonds.

He said Iran's policy was to further expand relations with its neighbors, particularly in the Caucasus and Central Asia, stressing that stronger interaction and cooperation among regional states could contribute to security, stability and economic prosperity.

"Lasting peace and stability in the region depend on the countries of the region resolving their issues themselves and preventing the interference of extra-regional forces," Araghchi said.

He welcomed continued positive interactions between Armenia and Azerbaijan and emphasized the importance of preserving peace and stability in the Caucasus.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

President calls for practical, cross-political plans to counter economic pressure

TEHRAN— President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for practical, implementable, and politically inclusive plans to address Iran's economic and social challenges, saying his administration has adopted a new approach to managing the special circumstances facing the country.

Speaking at a consultative meeting with members of the Parliament on Monday, Pezeshkian said improving people's livelihoods and economic conditions was the government's top priority, particularly amid the pressures resulting from war and sanctions.

He said the country's current circumstances require cooperation and greater synergy among government institutions, lawmakers and different segments of society, stressing that efforts to address economic and social problems should be based on national unity and cooperation rather than confrontation.

Pezeshkian said the pressure on Iran's economy had increased in recent months, but added that public support and measures taken by government officials had prevented the enemy's economic war from achieving its objectives.

In a post on X on Sunday night, the president said the administration had adopted a new arrangement for managing the current conditions, adding that the enemy's plan in recent months had been to cut the country's

vital lifelines in an attempt to place greater pressure on the people.

At Monday's meeting, Pezeshkian said improving the livelihoods of people in need, female-headed households, low-income families and other vulnerable groups should remain at the center of government policymaking.

He said practical initiatives to improve people's living conditions could begin at the "neighborhood and community level, including through greater use of neighborhood-based governance and mosque-centered initiatives."

"Laws cannot be implemented through force and pressure," Pezeshkian said, emphasizing the importance of increasing public services, interaction and mutual assistance to encourage positive changes in society.

Call for national synergy

The president stressed that overcoming the country's challenges requires stronger coordination among all institutions and social groups.

"There is no such thing as government and non-government; we are all one nation," he said, calling for practical and implementable plans to address economic and social problems.

Pezeshkian said that while different views



may exist at the theoretical level, proposed solutions must ultimately be capable of implementation.

Energy savings and continued production

Pezeshkian also described energy conservation, consumption management and higher productivity as essential under the current circumstances.

Improved energy consumption patterns could free up resources that could be directed toward supporting livelihoods and improving incomes and wages, he argued.

At the same time, he stressed that energy-saving measures should not disrupt production. The government, he said, is pursuing efforts to ensure that electricity and energy supplies to production units and businesses are not cut, allowing economic activity to continue and helping prevent unemployment.

Iran protests Norway's inaction over unauthorized Starlink operations

From page 1 ▶ During the meeting, Hassan-Nejad outlined the use of Starlink's satellite communications infrastructure by the United States and Israel to support interventionist activities against Iran.

He said Tehran strongly objected to Norway's continued failure to fulfill its responsibilities as the administration responsible for registering the Starlink satellite network with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

The Iranian official referred to decisions and conclusions reached by the ITU's Radio Regulations Board (RRB) over the past several years, saying they require Norway to take appropriate measures to prevent unauthorized Starlink transmissions from operating inside Iranian territory.

-----ITU has examined

the dispute since 2023

The dispute is not new and has been under consideration by the ITU's Radio Regulations Board since 2023.

According to documents published by the ITU, Iran has repeatedly reported the continued operation of Starlink terminals on its territory without authorization. The Board has also repeatedly urged Norway and the United States to take appropriate measures to have unauthorized Starlink terminals in Iran disabled.

The ITU's regulatory framework states that transmitting earth stations may operate within a country only when authorized by that country's administration. The Board has specifically cited Article 18 of the Radio Regulations and Resolution 22 concerning the operation of transmitting earth stations.

At its 98th meeting, the Board concluded that there was evidence of unauthorized Starlink transmissions inside Iran and urged Norway to take all appropriate measures within its capacity to immediately cease such transmissions, including remotely disabling terminals where necessary. The Board also asked Norway and the United States to explain why it had not been possible to disable unauthorized terminals in Iran in the same way that Starlink terminals had reportedly been disabled in several other countries.

The Board subsequently maintained its position. At its 100th meeting, it noted Norway's unwillingness to enforce earlier decisions requiring the immediate cessation of unauthorized Starlink transmissions, while also noting that Starlink had demonstrated the tech-

nical capability to identify and remotely disable terminals operating illegally in a particular area.

At its 101st meeting, the Board said the actions of Norway were not compliant with obligations under relevant ITU resolutions and Article 18 of the Radio Regulations. It nevertheless concluded that it did not have the authority to suspend the frequency assignments of satellite systems because of non-compliance by the notifying administration.

Iran calls for immediate action

Against this background, Hossein-Nejad told the Norwegian ambassador that Tehran had repeatedly followed up on the issue but had yet to see effective action.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Trump's strait may be open, but hormuz Is not

US claims of normal traffic collide with dark transits, million-dollar tanker rates, and \$9.99 diesel fuel signs

From Page 1 ▶ That is not a definition of normal traffic. That is the definition of a contested strait.

Charter markets confirm the assessment. Daily hire rates for large tankers operating in the Persian Gulf, which market sources previously placed at around \$50,000 per day, are now cited at up to \$1.3 million per day for high-risk voyages, once war-risk premiums, security costs, insurance surcharges, and crew bonuses are factored in. No functioning, open strait produces a 26-fold spike in the cost of using it.

Insurers have effectively redrawn the map. Most mainstream cover excludes the northern and central channels without special war-risk approval, forcing traffic into a narrow southern corridor that is congested, slow, and heavily militarized. Delays of days, last-minute voyage cancellations, and owners refusing Gulf orders have become routine.

The security incidents explain why. In recent weeks, at least three commercial vessels have been hit or narrowly missed while approaching or exiting the strait — including a VLCC struck by an unmanned system that forced an emergency diversion, a product tanker damaged by a proximity explosion that injured crew members, and an unarmed bulk carrier and tanker pair that came under fire in an incident the US described as defensive but regional media described as an attack on civilian shipping.

The pattern is consistent: even escorted, even silent, even in darkness, passage is not guaranteed.

The consequences are now visible inside the US itself.

Diesel boards at some US gas stations have displayed \$9.99 — not because the price is \$9.99, but because legacy signage cannot display double digits. In California, the Midwest, and parts of the Southeast, diesel has in practice exceeded \$10 per gallon, while regular gasoline has surged to levels not seen in US history. Trucking companies have warned of cascading food and logistics costs.

Trump has tried to contain the fallout with a familiar toolkit: emergency releases from strategic reserves, public pressure on refin-



ers and retailers to cap margins, temporary waivers on fuel blends, and repeated promises — including a much-publicized pledge of \$5,000 payments to voters — to offset the pain. So far, none has restored confidence.

Polling shows fuel prices and inflation are now the top concern for US voters ahead of the midterm elections. Within Trump's own base, the seven-month war — sold initially as a days-long operation, or at most a four-to-six-week campaign — is increasingly described in US media as the most unpopular US military engagement in decades. Republican strategists openly warn that energy prices could cost the party Congress.

It is in this context that Iran has floated a seven-day plan for the full reopening of the strait: a phased, verifiable de-escalation involving a mutual ceasefire on commercial shipping, withdrawal of offensive strike assets from the immediate vicinity of the traffic separation scheme, joint monitoring through regional intermediaries, and a return to normal insurance and AIS operations within one week.

Tehran presents the initiative as proof that closure is a reversible, political decision — not a military fait accompli by the US. Washington has so far dismissed it as a stalling tactic,

while continuing to insist the strait needs no reopening because it is already open.

That insistence is the point, analysts in Tehran argue. The conclusion emerging here is twofold:

First, by declaring Hormuz open and traffic normal, Trump seeks to calm US fuel markets psychologically even when he cannot calm them physically. If voters and traders believe the corridor functions, panic buying eases and prices may be contained at the margins.

Second, and more strategically, Washington wants to signal to Tehran that the Hormuz card is already burned — that Iran's principal leverage has been neutralized by US naval power, and that Tehran therefore has no choice but to concede and accept US terms.

In other words, “open” is not a maritime description. It is a political operation.

But a strait where captains sail dark and silent, where charter rates rise from \$50,000 to \$1.3 million, where civilian ships are still hit under escort, and where US motorists stare at \$9.99 signs that cannot tell the truth, is not open by any professional standard.

Trump may have opened his own strait. Hormuz remains closed.

Will Trump roll the dice again? Dostoevsky has the answer

From Page 1 ▶ One of Dostoevsky's most famous and captivating works is the novel *The Gambler*, written in just 26 days, whose dramatic creation was itself driven by the financial pressure of the author's own gambling losses. It makes no difference where a gambler is from or what the instrument of gambling is; throughout history, gamblers have remained utterly loyal to one thing: never walking away from the table. Winners press on to win more; losers press on to recover their losses — both convinced of their luck.

Alexei Ivanovich, the hero of the novel, like every other gambler, is faithful to this unwritten pact. When he wins a handsome sum, he keeps playing to make more; and when he loses for the first time: “With a feeling like a

sick quail, as though I would like to make my way out of the crowd and go home, I staked another fifty gulden — this time on the red.”

The attack on Venezuela was, for Trump — albeit through cheating — the equivalent of a sweet win. But for one addicted to gambling, a sweet win is not only never enough; it further stimulates the instinct. Egged on by the then head of Mossad, the US president fell under the illusion that it was now time to land the whale. Defeating an Iran that has stood against America since 1979 and has outlasted every previous president could immortalize his name in history. Less than a year ago, he had attempted this gamble and lost — and he thought that this time the story would be different.

A war that was supposed to last a few days, or at most four to six weeks, has now turned into a seven-month quagmire for America, with price displays at some gas stations showing \$9.99 for diesel — simply because they are physically incapable of displaying a higher figure. Trump's late-February gamble has become the most unpopular American war in decades and has brought his voter base to the brink of collapse.

A rational man in such circumstances would revise his calculations and abandon the folly. But it must not be forgotten that we are dealing with a tired and desperate gambler who has promised each spectator \$5,000 to cheer him on louder, who does not shrink from attacking a school and massacring chil-

dren to secure victory, and who regards sinking an unarmed vessel as entertainment. Losing the gamble is not the main problem; the main problem is his false hope in luck.

Some sources say Trump has stated in closed-door meetings that the reason the war has produced no result is that the attacks were not severe enough.

At the end of Dostoevsky's novel, Alexei, who has lost everything, recalls a memory in which he once had only one gulden left in a game and won 170 with it, and says: “This is a fact — That is what one's last gulden can sometimes mean! And what if I had lost heart that time, if I had not dared to make up my mind? ... Tomorrow, tomorrow all shall be ended!”

stressing that any hostile action originating from the territory of a regional country would prompt a different form of response from Iran.

■ Iran, Pakistan review regional developments

Iranian and Pakistani officials have discussed regional developments on the sidelines of the Moscow Format consultations on Afghanistan. Iran's Foreign Ministry Director General for South Asia Mohammad Reza Bahrami held talks Sunday with Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan Affairs Sadiq Khan and his delegation. The discussions preceded the fifth Moscow Format meeting, hosted by Russia. The regional platform, established in 2017, brings together Afghanistan's neighbors and major regional states to exchange views and promote coordination on peace and stability.

Momeni is scheduled to meet Qatar's Interior Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and other senior officials. He is accompanied by a delegation including the Interior Ministry's deputy for economic affairs and regional development, its director general for international affairs, and the governors of Tehran, Hormozgan and Bushehr provinces, along with several ministerial advisers.

■ Iran warns regional states over attacks from their territory

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei has warned regional countries against allowing their territory or facilities to be used for attacks on Iran. Referring to the region's experience with US military interventions, Baqaei said neighboring states should reconsider providing facilities for Israeli attacks. “We must all bear in mind that we are permanent neighbors,” he said,

Iranian commanders warn any new war would trigger wider regional conflict

From Page 1 ▶ The warnings, delivered separately by Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Ali Abdollahi, Army Commander Major General Amir Hatami and Brigadier General Ali Fadavi, head of the advisory group to the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), underscore Tehran's stated policy of treating any renewed attack as a broader regional security crisis rather than a conflict confined to Iranian territory.

In a message issued Monday, Abdollahi said reports suggesting that the United States and Israel could be preparing for another war against Iran appeared to be linked to renewed allegations concerning Iran's nuclear program.

He said the Iranian people would not submit to pressure or accept attempts to impose another war on the country, stressing that the Armed Forces remain prepared to confront threats at any level.

Abdollahi warned that another Israeli attack would carry consequences for the entire region, saying the Israeli regime had already experienced the consequences of previous confrontations with Iran and would face a powerful response if it made another “miscalculation.”

“We are confident that the vicious Zionist regime has neither now nor at any other time had, or will have, the ability to confront a powerful Iran,” he said.

Warning to Washington

The senior Iranian commander also delivered a direct warning to Washington, saying Iran would respond to any US military action without restrictions, regardless of when such action might occur.

“If the US, itself or at the instigation of the child-killing Zionist regime, takes action against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian Armed Forces will immediately and forcefully target US interests without limitation in a painful manner,” Abdollahi warned.

His reference to the US congressional elections appeared intended to underline that Tehran considers its response to any military action independent of the US domestic political calendar.

Abdollahi also addressed countries in the region that host US military forces, warning them against allowing their territories to become launch points for attacks on Iran.

He argued that the continued deployment of American forces in the region is itself a source of insecurity and economic pressure, and cautioned regional governments that a new conflict would not necessarily remain limited to the territory of the parties directly involved.

“Be aware that if a new war against Iran begins, its flames will engulf everyone,” he said.

Iran rejects nuclear allegations

Abdollahi further rejected Israeli allegations that Iran's nuclear program had entered a military phase, describing such claims as part of an effort to portray the Islamic Republic as a threat.

He questioned the credibility of such accusations when made by Israel, which possesses a substantial nuclear arsenal while not being a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The commander also warned international organizations, particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), against issuing ‘unfounded statements concerning Iran's nuclear facilities.’

He concluded by saying Iran was “stronger than ever” and prepared to confront any threat, while expressing confidence in God help.

Mohsen Rezaei has also warned that any further miscalculation by Iran's adversaries would lead to new fronts and larger surprises.

“Every miscalculation by the enemy against Iran has resulted in a heavy defeat for it,” Rezaei wrote on social media platform X on Monday. “The next mistake will open new fronts and bring bigger surprises.”

Rezaei said Iran would overcome the current complex circumstances with the wise leadership of Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei,

national unity and coordination among state institutions.

Army Chief: war has not ended

Separately, Army Commander Major General Amir Hatami said the confrontation with Iran had not ended and that the Armed Forces would maintain their readiness to deliver a “crushing response” to any renewed threat.

Addressing commanders of Army units in Fars Province, Hatami said the failure of the enemy to achieve its objectives through military means had led it to pursue other forms of pressure, including economic sanctions, efforts to put the Iranian population under economic strain, and attempts to create insecurity and unrest.

He stressed that Iran's Armed Forces would maintain a high level of vigilance and respond decisively should the enemy make another mistake.

Hatami also called for the opportunities created by the recent US-Israeli-imposed wars to be used to consolidate Iran's strategic gains and prevent the recurrence of war, emphasizing the importance of continued resilience and perseverance.

“War is an arena of resilience,” the Army chief said, arguing that the side capable of demonstrating greater endurance would ultimately prevail.

He said Iran, as the defending side, possessed significant resilience both among its population and within its Armed Forces.

IRGC general warns regional states

Ali Fadavi, meanwhile, issued one of the most explicit warnings to regional countries hosting US forces, saying any location used to launch an attack against Iran would be considered a legitimate target.

Speaking in a televised interview, he said Iran had already communicated its red lines to regional governments.

Fadavi stressed that Iran had not targeted regional countries themselves, but had struck US military bases located on their territory, arguing that Tehran regards American military facilities abroad as extensions of US territory when they are used in operations against Iran.

“We have declared our red line to the countries of the region,” Fadavi said. “Any point from which an action against Iran originates will be targeted.”

He said the southern Persian Gulf states host some US military installations and warned that if attacks against Iran were launched from those facilities, they would be subject to retaliation.

His remarks reflect Tehran's long-standing warning that regional countries could avoid becoming parties to a confrontation by preventing their territory and military infrastructure from being used for offensive operations against Iran.

Hormuz and the US military presence

Fadavi also linked the warnings to the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, saying the waterway had remained firmly under Iran's control in recent months.

He stated that, despite the longstanding US military presence in the Persian Gulf, American forces had moved significantly farther from Iran's shores and that no US vessel was currently present in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman or even the northern Indian Ocean.

“The Americans have fled and moved more than 1,000 kilometers away from our borders,” Fadavi said, attributing the repositioning to the military power of Iran and the IRGC Navy rather than a voluntary US decision.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which a substantial share of global seaborne oil and LNG trade normally passes, has remained central to the wider security equation surrounding Iran and the Persian Gulf. Any major military confrontation in or around the waterway would therefore carry consequences well beyond the immediate parties, potentially affecting energy markets, shipping insurance, maritime security and regional trade.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, Belarus stress expanding monetary, banking cooperation

From Page 1 ▶ In part of his negotiations, Kashiri, referring to Iran's abundant economic capacities, expressed the full readiness of the country's banking network and financial institutions to attract direct investments and for Belarusian banks to participate in Iran's major economic and commercial projects.

This meeting, held with the aim of deepening bilateral relations in specialized financial areas, is considered an important step toward monetary independence and diversifying financial pathways between the two countries under the current conditions of the international economy.

On the eve of the Iran-Belarus Joint Economic Committee, the Director General of the Central Asia, Caucasus and Russia Office of the Iran Trade Promotion Organization announced: The value of trade exchanges between Iran and Belarus in 2025 amounted to \$76 million.

According to IRNA, citing the Iran Trade Promotion Organization, Mehdi Babaei stated that agricultural and petrochemical products had the largest share in Iran's exports to Belarus, and added: The 19th meeting of the Iran-Belarus Joint Economic Cooperation Committee will be held with the participation of Seyed Mohammad Atabak, Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, and the Minister of Industry of the Republic of Belarus.

Babaei considered the holding of joint committees as a foundation for strengthening and expanding mutual cooperation between the two countries and added: At this meeting, emphasis will be placed on developing cooperation in the fields of trade and industry, agriculture, investment, health and pharmaceuticals, as well as strengthening interaction between the private sectors of the two countries, with the aim of expanding Iran-Belarus economic and trade relations as much as possible.

According to him, at the end of this meeting, a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the industry ministers of the two countries will be signed. Also, meeting with the Prime Minister and officials of the Republic of Belarus and the opening of Iran's dedicated trade pavilion with the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union at the "InnoProm Belarus" exhibition are among the other programs planned within the framework of this meeting.

Back in mid-August, Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister for planning and Economy Affairs met with the Minister of Agriculture and Food of Belarus, emphasizing the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of agricultural fertilizers, machinery, and joint investment.

According to Mehr News Agency, Akbar Fathi, Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister for planning and Economy Affairs, met and held talks with Yuri Gorlov, Minister of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus, on the sidelines of the 7th meeting of the Policy Council of Agriculture and Industry of the Eurasian Economic Union, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

During the meeting, the capacities and areas for developing agricultural and economic cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Belarus were reviewed, and both sides emphasized the need to strengthen bilateral interactions and utilize existing capacities to develop trade and investment in the agricultural sector.

One of the main axes of the negotiations was the continuation and development of cooperation between the two countries in the supply and trade of potash and phosphate fertilizers. In this regard, existing capacities for expanding trade cooperation, as well as examining areas for joint investment in the production and supply of agricultural inputs, were taken into consideration.

The Iranian side, referring to the importance of sustainable supply of inputs needed by the agricultural sector, emphasized the use of capacities of EAEU member states to diversify input supply sources and develop long-term cooperation.

Also during this meeting, capacities for joint cooperation in the field of agricultural machinery and equipment were discussed and exchanged.

Both sides emphasized identifying the capacities of manufacturing companies and

private sector activists of the two countries and paving the way for the development of exchanges, technology transfer, and joint investments in the field of agricultural machinery and equipment.

The development of trade in agricultural and food products between Iran and Belarus was another focus of this meeting. Within this framework, existing capacities for increasing trade exchanges in the fields of poultry meat, dairy products, and various fruits were reviewed, and the need to facilitate trade and create suitable grounds for greater presence of producers and exporters of the two countries in each other's markets was emphasized.

Also, the issue of developing trade relations and utilizing the capacities of existing agreements and mechanisms to increase the volume of agricultural and food product exchanges between the two countries was taken into consideration.

At the end of this meeting, both sides emphasized the continuation of consultations and follow-up on the issues raised with the aim of developing joint investments, increasing agricultural trade, strengthening cooperation in the field of inputs and agricultural machinery, and creating new opportunities for private sector cooperation.

The meeting was held within the framework of the programs of the 7th Policy Council of Agriculture and Industry of the Eurasian Economic Union and in line with strengthening the agricultural diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and developing economic interactions with the member states of this union.

Also in early June, Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, in a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Industry of Belarus, emphasized the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of industry, trade, transport, logistics, and joint production.

In this meeting, the two sides, referring to the growing economic relations between the two countries, stressed the need to increase the volume of trade exchanges and identify new opportunities for cooperation in various industrial and manufacturing sectors.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, pointing to the industrial capabilities of the two countries, cited cooperation in the supply of mining machinery as one of the important axes of joint cooperation and called for expanding interactions among active companies in this field.

During the meeting, the issue of joint tractor production in Iran was examined, and the two sides emphasized utilizing existing technical and industrial capacities to develop cooperation in this sector. Also, areas of cooperation for the joint production of urban and intercity buses and trucks with the participation of companies from both countries were discussed.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade considered the development of transport infrastructure and facilitation of communication among economic activists as requirements for expanding economic relations and stressed the need to establish direct air lines between Iran and Belarus, as well as facilitating the visa issuance process for traders and citizens of the two countries.

In another part of the meeting, the readiness of Iran to export medical equipment, medicine, and health sector products to Belarus was announced, and the two sides emphasized the development of cooperation in this sector.

Furthermore, the development of logistical cooperation and utilization of the capacities of the North-South International Corridor was emphasized as one of the important axes of joint cooperation. The two sides assessed the use of this strategic route as an effective ground for facilitating trade, reducing transport costs, and increasing economic exchanges between the two countries and the region.

At the end of the meeting, the two sides emphasized the continuation of consultations, follow-up of agreements, and strengthening of joint cooperation in the industrial, commercial, and transport fields in order to enhance the level of economic relations between Iran and Belarus.

Hamid Bovard appointed as acting oil minister

TEHRAN- According to Shana, Masoud Pezeshkian, in a decree, while accepting the resignation of Mohsen Paknejad from the position of Minister of Oil, appointed Hamid Bovard as acting head of the ministry.

In the presidential decree addressed to Hamid Bovard, it states:

"Pursuant to Article 135 of the Constitution and in view of your commitment, competence, and executive record, while accepting the resignation of Mr. Mohsen Paknejad, you are hereby appointed as Acting Minister of Oil.

It is expected that, relying on God Almighty and within the framework of the Constitution, the goals of the Vision Document, the general policies approved by the Supreme Leader (may his noble soul be sanctified), and the Seventh Development Plan, while observing the ethical charter of the officials of the Government of National Unity and interacting with the respected Council of Ministers, you will strive diligently to fulfill the government's goals and resolve the country's problems.

I ask God Almighty for your ever-increasing success in duly carrying out the assigned duties."

According to this report, Hamid Bovard, Acting Minister of Oil, was born in 1343 [1964-1965] and is one of the veteran managers of the oil industry. In Shahri-var 1403 [September 2024], he was appointed by the then Minister of Oil as Deputy Minister of Oil and CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company.

Among Hamid Bovard's records are CEO of Maroun Oil and Gas Production Company, CEO of the National Iranian South Oil Company, Iranian Oil Exploration Operations Company, and Iranian Offshore Oil Company.

Mohsen Paknejad was elected as Minister of Oil of the 14th government on 31 Mordad 1403 [August 21, 2024], with 222 affirmative votes from the members of the Parliament, and after two years of service, he resigned from the position, which was accepted by the President.



Production, development programs in oil industry continue strongly

The caretaker of the Ministry of Oil said: The executive programs of the oil industry in the production and development sectors are being pursued strongly with empathy and consensus.

According to IRNA from the Ministry of Oil, Hamid Bovard on Monday at the meeting of the council of deputies of the oil minister, while appreciating the efforts and endeavors of Mohsen Paknejad, the former oil minister, over the past two years, stated: The executive programs of the oil industry in the production and development sectors, as before and with the empathy and consensus that is the slogan of the 14th government, are being pursued strongly.

Regarding the priorities of the Ministry of Oil, he said: A detailed plan is being pursued in the field of rebuilding facilities damaged in the third imposed war, as well as in the field of sales, so that we can successfully pass through the difficult bottlenecks ahead.

The caretaker of the Ministry of Oil, referring to the special current conditions of the country, said: Everyone must join hands so that we can overcome these difficult problems. I believe we must strive with a national perspective for the pride of the country.

Bovard, emphasizing the role of former and current managers in the achievements obtained by the oil ministry of the 14th government, added: Valuable measures have been taken in the oil industry. If today we are in a situation where we can say the current team has been victorious, an important part of it goes back to the performance of the former oil minister, and we also pursue the same path with intensity and seriousness.

Stating that there may be differences of taste or method in the manner of implementation or managerial outlook, he noted: But this issue does not harm the essence of the work, and the main path must continue.

The caretaker of the Ministry of Oil, referring to the important issue of supplying this year's winter fuel given the damage the enemy has inflicted on the gas industry's infrastructure, said: The issue of production stability and winter fuel supply must be pursued specially with the consensus and cooperation of all pillars of the oil industry.

Bovard, noting that according to reports from the National Iranian Oil Products Refining and Distribution Company, the state of liquid fuel storage is appropriate, continued: We must strive to manage fuel supply properly as well.

Emphasizing that the National

Iranian Gas Company must implement appropriate measures to prevent consumerism and promote a correct gas consumption culture, he acknowledged: If we can achieve a 10 percent reduction in consumption, it will be a very important achievement.

The caretaker of the Ministry of Oil considered the role of the people important in the sustainable supply of winter fuel and asked the people to cooperate with the government in using energy carriers, especially gas.

Bovard, referring to the role of the petrochemical industry in providing the country's needed foreign currency, emphasized: The continuity of production and export of petrochemical products has an effective role in strengthening foreign currency revenues and supporting the country's economy. Accordingly, support for the continuity of production, removal of obstacles to exports, and maximum use of the capacities of this industry are being pursued seriously.

He emphasized the necessity of identifying the main issues and priorities of the oil industry and added: I request that, as before, we all strive together for the oil industry and our country; what matters is that the work does not stop.

Tehran to host INVEX 2027 in early Feb. 2027



TEHRAN- The content secretary of INVEX 2027 announced the holding of this conference and exhibition on banking, stock exchange, insurance, and investment in Tehran during February 4-7, 2027.

According to IRNA, Hossein Abdeh Tabrizi stated at the press conference of the Banking, Stock Exchange, Insurance, and Investment Exhibition (INVEX 2027): During this exhibition, the 60th anniversary of the Tehran Stock Exchange will be celebrated.

He added: Although the size of Iran's capital market has not grown to match the country's economy, and the dollar value of this market is estimated at around 100 to 120 billion dollars, the important point is that all necessary instruments for investment in this market have been designed and developed in accordance with different tastes and individuals' risk appetites.

Abdeh Tabrizi, stating that during this exhibition 50 specialized sessions will be held in the fields of capital market, insurance, stock exchange, privatization, and the presence of

the private sector in the economy, announced the holding of sessions on artificial intelligence, the future of the economy, and the capital market.

Emphasizing that Iran's share of the future artificial intelligence market must be determined now and its strategy clarified, he described artificial intelligence and modern technologies and their impact on the capital market as fundamental approaches of INVEX 2027.

This expert in the capital market considered the future of brokerages with the development of artificial intelligence as one of the fundamental questions in the future of the stock exchange and said: There are unknown issues regarding the impact of artificial intelligence on stock market transactions that must be analyzed by experts.

Saeed Eslami Bidgoli, a university economics professor and one of the experts in the capital market, also enumerating the existing capacities in Iran's capital market, said: Due

to the exchange rate, the size of Iran's capital market is estimated at about 100 billion dollars, but there are still various instruments and capacities in this market that can be expanded and deepen stock exchange activities.

Recalling that Iran's capital market is among the 6 largest stock exchanges in the region and the 20 largest in the world, he stated: The development of the capital market in recent years has been indebted to the money market, to the extent that criticisms have even been raised on this issue, because it seems that Iran's capital market has a high dependence on the money market.

Eslami Bidgoli considered the effects of technology on financial markets as one of the main axes of the INVEX 2027 event.

Farshid Shokr-e Khodaei, head of the Investment Committee of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, also at this meeting, referring to the issue of energy imbalance and its effect on industries and the capital market, stated: It seems that the private sector can help the country by investing in energy saving and optimizing energy consumption through the capital market and in the form of instruments such as water, diesel, gas, electricity, and other energy carriers savings deposit certificates.

Emphasizing the need to downsize the government and transfer state responsibilities to the private sector, he said: Currently, all the resources the government obtains are through two ways: oil revenues, taxes, and duties, which given the current economic conditions, the sustainability of these resources is at risk, and therefore we are facing an imbalance in the economy, and the private sector must be active in wealth creation.

At this meeting, the designs of INVEX 2027 and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the capital market in Iran were also unveiled using Iranian elements and Persian script.

Ansarallah sets Aramco sites ablaze as mercenaries commit war crimes in Yemen

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Yemeni armed forces fired a coordinated salvo of heavy ballistic missiles and long-range attack drones deep into the Saudi interior on Monday and Sunday, striking major Saudi Aramco installations in Jeddah, Riyadh, and the Khurais oil field.

The precision retaliatory operations ignited massive fires near strategic energy infrastructure, triggered civil defense alerts in Mecca and Taif, and forced flight cancellations across Saudi commercial airports.

Ansarallah official Mohammed al-Bukhaiti warned international airlines that Saudi airspace remains unsafe while the aggression continues.

Footage of burning Aramco sites has been broadcast, and satellite fire-detection data have corroborated blazes in Jeddah and south of Riyadh.

Yemeni military spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Saree confirmed that these strikes answered more than 50 Saudi air raids launched against civilian centers in Sanaa, Saada, Al-Jawf, and Taiz within a single twelve-hour period.

Mercenary war crimes at Dhubab Airport

While Saudi-backed media promoted tactical movements along the western coast near the Bab al-Mandab Strait, leaked video footage exposed the lawless con-



duct of foreign-funded proxies.

Verified recordings filmed at Dhubab Airport show members of the Saudi-backed Presidential Leadership Council and UAE-funded Southern Giants Brigades forces committing severe war crimes against captured Ansarallah prisoners of war.

The footage shows heavy military vehicles driving intentionally over bound captives, summary executions of unarmed detainees, and the gross mutilation of corpses. These visual records document grave breaches of international humanitarian law and highlight the total collapse of discipline among Riyadh's auxiliary troops.

On the ground, claims by Presidential Leadership Council chairman Rashad al-Alimi regarding gains in Dhubab remain fragile and short-lived.

Historical experience across Taiz, Hodeidah, and Al-Jawf suggests that foreign-backed formations consistently crumble once immediate air support subsides.

Just last month, Yemeni forces demonstrated their tactical agility by liberating Mocha, Dhubbab, and Perim Island in an eighteen-hour coastal push. Similar coalition offensives in 2018 stalled completely, and current frontline reports confirm that Ansarallah units have maintained control over essential supply routes while preparing decisive counterattacks to reclaim temporary proxy gains.

Western collusion and strategic failure

This ongoing aggression relies heavily on direct intelligence and logistical support from Washington and Tel Aviv.

American military officials have supplied targeting data for over 200 sites inside Yemen, alongside more than 100 U.S. advisers operating with coalition command.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly offered military backing to support the campaign, following previous Israeli strikes on Sanaa leadership targets.

Yet years of advanced Western weaponry and foreign advice have failed to resolve Saudi Arabia's core military vulnerabilities or secure its southern border.

The humanitarian cost of the Western-backed campaign continues to climb.

World Health Organization reports confirm over 5,000 casualties since August, alongside a threefold increase in cholera cases across targeted governorates.

Nevertheless, relentless aerial bombardment cannot protect Saudi energy infrastructure from long-range retaliation.

By establishing a direct equation between Saudi aggression and the vulnerability of Aramco facilities in Jeddah and Yanbu, Ansarallah has shattered the coalition's security guarantees, proving that Riyadh cannot achieve through foreign airpower what it has failed to gain on the battlefield for over a decade.

The second message is that the movement is seeking to build relationships with the most influential and major Arab and regional powers. There is little doubt that Ansarallah is closely watching the increasingly prominent roles being played by the three mediators.

This applies both to the wider illegal war against Iran and to the conflicts unfolding close to Yemen. These include the conflicts on the other side of the Red Sea, around the Bab al-Mandab Strait, and in the Horn of Africa. None of these conflicts is remote from Yemen. Nor are they remote from the regional actors involved.

The third message Ansarallah wants to convey is that however long a "truce" may last, it is not a solution. Four years after the guns fell silent, the parties have still failed to put the remaining outstanding issues on a genuine path toward resolution. These include sanctions, the blockade, salaries, fuel, ports, and airports.

Under such circumstances, it was only natural that the conflict would eventually erupt again. This has happened in conflicts and disputes around the world. The underlying causes remain unresolved, and the roots of the conflict continue to run deep.

The fourth message is that war is not a solution in Yemen. It was not the answer during the seven-year war, and it will not be the answer going forward. Economic isolation and blockade, combined with the absence of any political horizon, are a recipe for renewed conflict. They are not a way to preserve the already difficult status quo indefinitely.

The initiative and the regional framework

The Yemeni initiative that Hamas has brought into the public arena fits into the broader effort to establish a regional framework for cooperation and collective security.

Qatar presented this concept from the highest UN platform. Oman's foreign minister subsequently elaborated on it in two articles published in France's Le Monde and Britain's The Economist.

There appears to be a new trend among some Arab and regional actors. They seem increasingly willing to embrace containment rather than exclusion, participation rather than domination, and cooperation rather than confrontation.

If this concept of collective security is given a chance to take shape, one of its priorities should be to address the region's various unresolved problems. They should be placed on a path toward comprehensive negotiated settlements. Such an approach would need to safeguard the legitimate and balanced interests of neighboring states.

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

US scrambles all 12 B-1 bombers out of Britain over unexplained threats



By staff writer

TEHRAN — Twelve American B-1 strategic bombers left RAF Fairford over the weekend in a hasty pullout that exposes the growing vulnerability of Western bases supporting Washington's aggressive military operations against Iran.

The withdrawal was executed with unusual speed. According to the New York Times, the Pentagon's European Command said Sunday that the entire fleet was redeployed to home stations in the United States, including Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

Air Force commanders ordered the departure so urgently that several heavy bombers took off while aerial refueling tankers were still scrambling to support the long flight across the Atlantic.

American and British officials have cited "heightened threat assessments" for the sudden exit. The alert came one week after police stopped five men traveling in white vans near the Gloucestershire base, triggering local evacuations and bomb disposal searches.

Authorities recovered petrol but found no explosives, and all five suspects were released on bail. A dual British-Iranian national arrested days later was similarly freed on bail without formal charges.

Despite the total lack of concrete evidence, political leaders in London, Washington, and Tel Aviv rushed to assign blame to Tehran.

British Prime Minister Andy Burnham cited vague indications of Iranian involvement, while U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio claimed

the incident involved a foreign actor. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu added that his intelligence agencies warned London of a non-specific plot.

The Iranian Embassy in London firmly rejected those allegations, condemning them as unfounded speculation designed to feed anti-Iran propaganda in the United Kingdom.

Iranian officials have emphasized that Western governments routinely manufacture foreign threats to divert public attention from the mounting illegality and strategic failures of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

RAF Fairford has served as a primary staging ground for American air strikes since March, hosting up to two dozen heavy bombers that loaded precision weapons for attacks on Iranian territory.

Flight tracking data recorded at least 29 bomber deployments through the airbase during the military campaign of aggression.

In July, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps warned that host facilities enabling foreign aggression would be treated as legitimate defensive targets.

The abrupt emptying of RAF Fairford demonstrates that projecting military power thousands of miles from home is becoming increasingly precarious.

While Washington claimed its bombers can strike targets globally from domestic bases, the rapid retreat from British soil shows that keeping high-value assets stationed near active conflict zones carries severe risks that the Pentagon can no longer manage.

Experts say Carney's concern about Trump's possible invasion of Canada is valid

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney touched on a wide range of topics during an hour-long interview with the New York Times last month — F-35 jets, Starlink satellites, trade in potash and automobiles and more — but the biggest takeaway was that he had prepared over the past year for the "extreme tail risk" that U.S. President Donald Trump might order military action against Canada.

"I think you have a responsibility in these roles to look at extreme tail risk," said Carney, using a term from the financial world that was his metier as a former central banker for Britain and Canada. "That's just risk management ... it would be irresponsible not to."

The expression refers to a scenario that is considered unlikely but not impossible — the "tail" of a probability curve where the center represents the most likely outcomes.

Carney told the Times that, based on Trump's threats to make Canada a 51st state, he had carefully examined the possibility of U.S.-led military action, but declined to discuss in detail what that involved.

Timothy Sayle, a professor at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto, said Carney's comments indicate a valid concern.

"It makes sense to me that it's at the real extreme end of possibilities, but I don't think it's a zero percent chance," he told National Post.

The U.S. incursion into Venezuela this year and its threats against Greenland made its allies, including Canada and Europe, take notice, Sayle said.

"It can seem outlandish, but ... the United States has made these decisions to enter Venezuela and then to attack Iran that were pretty low-probability events, and yet they did happen. So that's why I can understand the prime

minister's point that it's maybe very very very low risk but, as he said, can't be totally ignored."

As to what form a potential invasion might take, Sayle said the "wild unpredictability of the current American administration" made it difficult to predict, but he imagined several small-scale scenarios. They included "some sort of hot pursuit of a suspected criminal, or somebody that ICE was seeking, across the Canadian border."

He added: "You could imagine an increase of U.S. forces, like the strengthening of U.S. forces in Canada in some way." (According to the U.S. Department of Defense, as of March there were 159 active duty military personnel serving in Canada, plus 33 civilian DoD staff.)

Sayle also suggested "the presence of naval ships, the presence of or overflights by aircraft and ... what could be described as something in the shared interest, but in which Canada was not consulted in the usual means. Americans could either publicly or invisibly flex their might and indicate that Canada's sovereignty wasn't quite as secure as we'd like to think."

The notion has been ridiculed at high levels. This month, when a Canadian reporter asked Admiral Samuel J. Paparo, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, about the possibility of military action against Canada, he was met with incredulity. Paparo called it "preposterous" and added: "Would you ask me please, also, what my attack plans are for the Martians?"

Sayle said that could change. "Canada and the United States militaries obviously have worked so closely together for so long," he said. "I'm sure there's a lot of goodwill and close relationships in the senior ranks, but we are, of course, seeing changes to how general officers are selected in the United States, and who keeps their jobs."

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

Behind Hamas's offer to mediate between Yemen and Saudi Arabia

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN — Many assumed that Hamas's offer to mediate between Yemen and Saudi Arabia was primarily an attempt to avoid choosing sides.

On the one hand, Hamas cannot afford to move in a direction that runs counter to many Arab and regional countries. This is particularly true of the countries that host senior members of the Palestinian resistance movement. It also applies to those working to mediate between Hamas and the Israeli regime, or leading reconciliation efforts between Hamas and other Palestinian parties.

Qatar, Turkey, Egypt, and some other countries have all made no secret of their sympathy and solidarity with Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, Hamas cannot disregard what its own officials call a "blood partnership" with Ansarallah. That partnership was manifested in Ansarallah's decision to militarily support Gaza. It was also evident in its missile and drone attacks on Tel Aviv and deep inside territories occupied by the Zionist regime.

The Yemeni Armed Forces (YAF) also succeeded in disrupting the regime's port of Eilat. The port remains severely impaired, reducing its operating capacity by 85 percent, according to Israeli sources.

The resulting war subjected Yemen to thousands of Israeli and U.S. airstrikes. Washington eventually reached a separate agreement with Ansarallah. It also did so without requiring Ansarallah to refrain from targeting the occupation regime's interests and assets in the Red Sea or on land.

The conflict exacted a heavy toll on Ansarallah and on Yemen as a whole. Many senior political and military leaders were killed alongside civilians. A wide range of civilian and economic facilities were also damaged or destroyed.

But the real surprise came during a private meeting with one of Hamas's senior leaders. He revealed that the initiative had not originated with Hamas. It had come from the government in Sanaa itself.

Ansarallah were the ones who asked Hamas to intervene. They specifically wanted the movement to act through the three-party mediation channel working on Gaza: Qatar, Turkey, and Egypt. They hoped the mediators could open a political and negotiating track between Sanaa and Riyadh.

The objective was to move beyond a simple de-escalation. A truce alone, Ansarallah argues, could never produce lasting peace and stability. The remaining economic, financial, and political issues would also have to be addressed.

That, according to the Palestinian Hamas

leader, was the position conveyed by Ansarallah.

Hamas subsequently passed Ansarallah's proposal on to the three mediating parties. It appears that Hamas has virtually no direct channel to Riyadh. The movement itself is also not regarded by Saudi Arabia as the most suitable mediator.

Ansarallah is well aware of this. Their calculation instead rested on the close relationships Hamas has developed with the three members of the Gaza mediation triangle. The response from the parties concerned, however, has not been sufficiently positive to suggest that this track is likely to be activated anytime soon.

Analysts believe Saudi Arabia is not yet ready for an initiative of this kind. Riyadh does not want to publicize its role in the war. It also sought to avoid that role during the de-escalation and ceasefire negotiations of 2022 by emphasizing it was a Yemeni-Yemeni conflict.

Significance of the initiative

Ansarallah's initiative, which was entrusted to Hamas, comes against the backdrop of the close and mutually reinforcing relationship between the two allies. It also recalls a proposal made by Sayyed Abdul-Malik al-Houthi in 2020.

At the time, Sayyed al-Houthi offered to exchange a Saudi pilot held by his group for the release of several Hamas members detained in the Kingdom.

Hamas welcomed Ansarallah's proposal, but Saudi Arabia ignored it. The detainees were eventually released between 2022 and 2024. This happened either as a result of third-party mediation efforts or because their prison sentences had expired.

Today, Ansarallah's initiative appears intended, among other things, to strengthen Hamas's political standing and give the movement greater credit.

Some Arab and international actors view Hamas as part of the region's problems. Through this initiative, Ansarallah appears to be trying to present Hamas instead as part of the solution.

However, the initiative remains at a very early stage. Quite frankly, it may already have died there. Nevertheless, the initiative carries several messages for Yemeni and regional actors. The first message is that Ansarallah is not just attached to Tehran and the IRGC.

The Sanaa government does not conceal its alliance with Iran or the ties that bind it to Tehran. Yet, according to most assessments, Ansarallah acts according to its own calculations and interests. At the same time, they take care, wherever possible, not to stray too far from the Islamic Republic.

Sayyadmanesh ruled out for four weeks with hamstring injury

TEHRAN - Allahyar Sayyadmanesh is expected to be sidelined for around four weeks after suffering a hamstring injury, with the Iranian forward set to miss Lech Poznan's next nine matches.

Sayyadmanesh picked up the injury to his biceps femoris muscle during one of Lech Poznan's recent training sessions. Head coach Niels Frederiksen confirmed the setback after Saturday's 2-2 friendly draw against Energie Cottbus.

"Allahyar's situation is serious. He is out because of a hamstring injury. We expect him to be sidelined for around four weeks, and after four weeks he should return to the team. It is not good news, but that is football," Frederiksen said in an interview with the club's television channel.

The injury comes at a particularly difficult time for Lech Poznan, who are entering a busy stretch of the season.

If Sayyadmanesh follows the expected recovery timeline, he will miss nine consecutive matches across domestic and European competitions.

Among those fixtures are three UEFA Europa League matches against Bayer Leverkusen, Sunderland and Benfica. He is also expected to miss Ekstraklasa games against Slask Wroclaw, Korona Kielce, Legia Warsaw, Wisla Krakow and Zagłębie Lubin, as well as a Polish Cup tie against Siarka.

UEFA's official fixture list confirms Lech's upcoming Europa League meetings with Leverkusen, Sunderland and Benfica.

Sayyadmanesh's absence represents a significant blow for the Polish champions, with the Iranian having been one of their standout performers so far this season.

He has scored seven goals and provided two assists in 15 appearances, placing him third in Lech Poznan's goal-and-assist standings.

The 25-year-old has also made an impressive start to his Ekstraklasa campaign. After the first eight league rounds, Sayyadmanesh had scored five goals in 454 minutes, averaging a goal approximately every 91 minutes.

The Iranian forward has found the net against Piast Gliwice, Widzew Lodz, Gornik Zabrze and Radomki this season, quickly establishing himself as one of Lech Poznan's most effective attacking players.

With Lech facing a demanding schedule on three fronts, Sayyadmanesh's absence could prove particularly costly as the club prepares for a crucial period of the campaign.

Perugia announce signing of Iran star Matin Hosseini

TEHRAN - Sir Safety Perugia have officially announced the signing of Iranian outside hitter Matin Hosseini, who joins the Italian SuperLega club after spending last season with Paykan Tehran.

Born in 2005 and standing at 2.00 meters, Hosseini is regarded as one of the brightest young talents in Iranian volleyball. He made a major breakthrough on the international stage last year when he was named MVP of the 2025 FIVB Men's U21 World Championship, where Iran claimed the world title after defeating Italy in the final.

Hosseini finished the tournament with 112 points, including 81 points from attacks, 13 blocks and 18 aces.

He averaged more than 12 points per match, underlining his all-round ability and attacking impact.

His performances have also earned him recognition at senior level.

The powerful outside hitter was included in Iran head coach Roberto Piazza's squad for the Volleyball Nations League, giving him

the opportunity to gain valuable experience against some of the world's leading national teams.

Perugia's decision to bring Hosseini to Italy represents another important step in the development of a player who has already made a strong impression on the international stage.

Known for his power and attacking ability, Hosseini now faces a new challenge in one of the world's most competitive domestic leagues.

The move to Perugia will give the young Iranian an opportunity to work alongside experienced international players while adapting to the demands and intensity of the Italian SuperLega.

For Iranian volleyball, the transfer is also a significant development. Hosseini's emergence at U21 level and subsequent involvement with the senior national team have marked him as one of the players expected to play an important role in the next generation of Iran's national side.

Perugia, meanwhile, will be hoping that the young Iranian can translate his impressive international performances to club volleyball and continue his rapid development in Italy.

Iran to participate at Basra four-nation tournament

TEHRAN - Iran national football team will participate at the Basra four-nation tournament in November.

The event, scheduled for Nov. 9 to 17, features Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, and Palestine.

The tournament is part of the preparations for the participating national teams ahead of 2027 AFC Asian Cup.

The tournament is expected to provide an important opportunity for coaches to test player readiness and assess their levels ahead of official competitions, as the date for continental commitments approaches.

Iran will start the event with a match against Palestine.

Team Melli have been drawn in Group C along China, Kyrgyzstan and Syria.

Rostami to carry Iran's flag at Asian Para Games

TEHRAN - Rouhollah Rostami, one of Iran's most decorated para powerlifters, has been named the country's flag bearer for the upcoming Asian Para Games in Nagoya, Japan.

The announcement was made by Ghafoor Kargari, president of the National Paralympic Committee of Iran.

Rostami, a world champion in para powerlifting, boasts two Paralympic gold medals as well as multiple world championship titles in his distinguished career.

Rostami's selection adds further significance to his participation in the Games, where he will lead Iran's delegation at the opening ceremony.

Somayeh Rahimi, para archer, will also carry Iran's flag at the closing ceremony of the Games.

Iran will compete with a 166-member sporting delegation featuring 104 men and 62 women across 15 sports.

The delegation has also chosen Ana Jahangard, a nine-year-old student from Minab who was injured and became a para-athlete following the bombing of Shajareh Tayebbeh School, as its spiritual leader.

The Iranian delegation will carry the slogan: "In memory of the children of Hiroshima, Gaza and Minab."

The fifth edition of the Asian Para Games will be held in Nagoya from Oct. 18 to October 24, bringing together athletes from across Asia for one of the continent's biggest multi-sport events for athletes with disabilities.

Heritage is identity: Iranian archaeologist exposes scale of war destruction to historic sites

From Page 1 ▶ Shidrang followed with "Iranian Cultural Heritage Under Fire: Documentation, Risk, and a Plan for Protection," examining conflict-related risks and strategies for safeguarding heritage. Together, the talks spanned both natural and human-induced disasters, reflecting the webinar's central concern with building resilience for cultural heritage.

Shidrang, a faculty member at Shahid Beheshti University, opened with a reminder that heritage is not merely about ancient monuments. "It is about identity. It is about memory. It is about the shared story of humanity," she said, adding that war's direct and indirect effects on tangible and intangible cultural heritage are irreversible and irreparable.

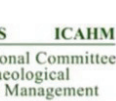
According to the Iranian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, the joint US-Israeli military campaign that began on February 28, 2026, severely damaged districts, houses, prominent buildings, museums, and cultural sites. The Ministry has called the destruction "a clear violation of international law" and "a threat against the historical memory of humanity."

Among the damaged sites are five UNESCO World Heritage properties: the Golestan Palace in Tehran, the Naqsh-e Jahan Square complex and Imam Mosque in Isfahan, and the Trans-Iranian Railway, which was struck at five stations on the fi-



nal night of the conflict.

Shidrang anchored her presentation in the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, noting that Iran is a State Party to the Convention and its Protocols. She cited Article 3, which requires states to prepare in peacetime to safeguard cultural property, and said the Ministry moved valuable artifacts to secure storage and installed protective coverings before and during the war. She also pointed to Article 4(1), which obligates parties to refrain from any act of hostility directed against cultural property; Article 6, which provides for the Blue Shield emblem to mark protect-



ed sites; Article 7, which requires respect for cultural property to be integrated into military regulations; and the 1999 Second Protocol, which establishes individual criminal responsibility for violations. Iran, she noted, installed Blue Shield markers on museums and historic buildings. "The distinctive emblem has legal force under Article 6 only if parties are aware of it and choose to respect it," she said.

The scale of the destruction, according to the Ministry's latest estimates by early summer, included five UNESCO World Heritage sites, seven historical fabrics, and 54 museums damaged to varying degrees. 74 sites were damaged by blast waves, 42 by

AI is reshaping tourism beyond digital services, Iranian researcher says

TEHRAN - Artificial intelligence is moving beyond digital tools and online services to reshape the structure of the tourism industry, influencing how travelers choose destinations, how experiences are designed and how destinations are managed, an Iranian researcher has said.

The theme of World Tourism Day 2026, "Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Redesign Tourism," reflects a broader shift in the industry's approach to technology, Habib Mahmoudi-Chenari told in an interview with Miras Aria news agency published on Wednesday.

Mahmoudi-Chenari said the emphasis on digital transformation, innovation, artificial intelligence, smart tourism, data governance, skills development and ethical technology use points to the need to rethink how tourism systems operate.

He distinguished tourism digitalization, which largely involves transferring traditional processes to online platforms, from tourism redesign, which questions whether existing structures should be rebuilt around new technological capabilities.

Online reservations, electronic payments, websites, mobile applications and digital marketing have helped digitize tourism services. However, artificial intelligence could influence the entire travel process, from inspiring a trip and selecting a destination to planning an itinerary, booking services and analyzing post-trip feedback, he said.

AI could influence destination choices

Artificial intelligence could become a major gateway through which travelers discover tourism products and destinations, Mahmoudi-Chenari said.

Rather than simply answering where to travel, intelligent systems can help travelers identify the experiences they want and match destinations with their interests, budgets, schedules and personal circumstances.

Such systems could recommend accommodation, transport routes, attractions, restaurants and activities based on individual preferences. Travelers interested in cultural heritage, nature, food, agricultural experiences or low-carbon travel could receive tailored itineraries, while families could account for children, older adults or dietary restrictions when planning their trips.

This shift could also affect destination visibility. While tourism promotion has traditionally relied on advertising, branding, location, travel agencies and search engines, a des-

ination's representation in digital data and AI-driven recommendation systems could increasingly influence whether potential visitors discover it.

Connected data essential for smart tourism

Mahmoudi-Chenari cautioned that smart tourism cannot be achieved simply by introducing mobile applications or chatbots.

Information on flights, accommodation, transportation, attractions, events, payments, destination capacity and tourist behavior must be connected and capable of being exchanged across systems, he said. Without such integration, even advanced AI systems may struggle to provide a comprehensive and reliable picture of the travel experience.

He also called for destinations to be redesigned around data-driven management rather than the mere presence of digital infrastructure.

By continuously collecting and analyzing information on visitor flows, attraction capacity, accommodation availability, traffic, water and energy consumption, weather conditions and demand patterns, destination managers could anticipate congestion and resource pressures before they escalate.

Such systems could also help distribute visitors across lesser-known areas, manage pressure on popular attractions and reduce tourism's impact on natural resources and infrastructure.

Data governance and digital inclusion

The researcher said artificial intelligence offers opportunities to improve productivity, personalize services, expand market access for small businesses and support more effective destination management. However, its benefits will depend on how the technology is governed and deployed.

If data and digital infrastructure are controlled primarily by a small number of major platforms, he warned, market power could become more concentrated. Algorithms that repeatedly recommend established destinations could also make it harder for emerging or lesser-known places to gain visibility.

Small rural destinations, family farms, guesthouses and local producers may offer distinctive tourism experiences but remain largely invisible online if they lack digital content, usable data and marketing skills, he said.

Addressing this imbalance requires in-

vestment in digital infrastructure, training, data security, common standards and fair access to technology. Tourism workers, local communities, small businesses and emerging destinations should also have a role in shaping the industry's digital future.

Keeping technology human-centered

Mahmoudi-Chenari stressed that tourism redesign should not aim to replace people with machines. Instead, technology should strengthen human capabilities, improve service quality and support the resilience and sustainability of destinations.

He described a smart destination as one that continuously collects data, converts it into information, analyzes the findings, uses them to inform decisions and evaluates the results.

Artificial intelligence can serve as a powerful analytical and decision-support tool in this process, he said, but sustainable transformation requires high-quality data, appropriate infrastructure, shared standards, data security and skilled personnel.

Ultimately, he added, tourism redesign extends beyond technology to encompass economic, social, human, environmental and governance considerations.



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Gahar Lake registered as Iran’s 28th wetland of international importance

TEHRAN – Gahar, an ecologically significant freshwater lake located in western Lorestan province, has been registered in the Ramsar Convention as Iran’s 28th wetland of international importance.

Situated at an elevation of 2,360 meters within the mountainous Oshtorankuh Protected Area, the Lake is in fact made up of two smaller lakes that are situated within 100 meters of each other, named the Upper Gahar and the Lower Gahar.

The Lake’s rare features distinguish it from other lakes in the country, such as the freezing of its water surface in winter. Gahar and surrounding hills support unique biodiversity, including a number of nationally endemic species, such as the flowering plants *Aethionema cephalanthum* and *Dionysia haussknechtii*, and *Capoeta pyragyi*, a cyprinid fish, according to the Ramsar Convention’s website.

It hosts 68 endemic and more than 600 plant species, 53 species of trees and shrubs, 45 mammal species, 30 reptile species, 195 bird species, five amphibian species, and numerous fish species, IRNA reported.

Trout, frogs, turtles, rams, ewes, antelopes, brown bears, foxes, boars, rabbits, eagles, vultures, and yellow falcons are among species living in this area.

The Site also provides habitat for internationally important species, notably the vulnerable leopard (*Panthera pardus*). It serves as an important stopover site for waterbirds such as the vulnerable eastern imperial eagle (*Aquila heliaca*).

Plant species include oak, willow, wild almond, wild pistachio, juniper, ash, milkvetch, thyme, and oregano; in spring and early summer the region is covered with beautiful wildflowers, particularly poppies and fritillaries.

Despite its natural beauty, the Site has remained relatively free from human disturbance due to its remote location. Access to the upstream area of the valley is limited



to hiking trails, as construction of an access road has been prevented.

An established management plan addresses key threats, particularly nutrient enrichment, eutrophication, and disturbance to fish habitats, through regular monitoring supported by an environmental ranger station.

Alagol, Ulmagol and Ajigol Lakes in Mazandaran province, Amirkelayeh Lakein Gilan province, Anzali Wetland in Gilan province, Barm Alvan in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, Bujagh National Park in Gilan province, Choghakhor Wetland in Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari province, Deltas of Rud-e-Gaz and Rud-e-Hara in Hormozgan province, Deltas of Rud-e-Shur, Rud-e-Shirin and Rud-e-Minab in Hormozgan province, Fereydoon Kenar, Ezbaran & Sorkh Ruds Ab-Bandans in Mazandaran province, Gandoman in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province, Gavkhouni Lake and marshes of the lower Zaindeh Rud in Isfahan province, Gomishan Lagoon in Golestan province, Govater Bay and Hur-e-Bahu in Sistan and Baluchestan province, Hamun-e-Puzak in Sistan and Baluchestan province, Hamun-e-Saberi & Hamun-e-Helmand in Sistan and Baluchestan province, Kanibarazan Wetland in West Azarbaijan province, Khuran Straits in Hormozgan province, Lake Gori in East Azarbaijan province, Lake Kobi in East Azarbaijan province,

Lake Parishan and Dasht-e-Arjan in Fars province, Lake Urmia [or Orumiyeh] in West Azarbaijan province, Miankaleh Peninsula, Gorgan Bay and Lapoo-Zaghamarz Ab-bandan in Mazandaran province, Neiriz Lakes & Kamjan Marshes in Fars province, Shadegan Marshes & mudflats of Khoral Amaya & Khor Musa in Khuzestan province, Sheedvar Island in Hormozgan province, Shurgol, Yadegarlu & Dorgeh Sangi Lakes in East Azarbaijan province, and Zarivar in Kordestan province have already been registered in the Ramsar Convention.

Wetlands most threatened ecosystems on Earth

Wetlands represent a vital ecosystem and are known as the kidneys of the Earth. These ecosystems, among other things, provide clean water, protect against floods, restore underground aquifers, and maintain surface water flow during dry periods.

However, they are among the ecosystems with the highest rates of decline, loss, and degradation; they are disappearing three times faster than forests and are Earth’s most threatened ecosystem.

In just 50 years — since 1970 — 35 per cent of the world’s wetlands have been lost. Human activities that lead to loss of wetlands include drainage and infilling for agriculture and construction, pollution, overfishing and overexploitation of resources, invasive species, and climate change.

Wetlands are ecosystems in which water is the primary factor controlling the environment and the associated plant and animal life. A broad definition of wetlands includes both freshwater and marine and coastal ecosystems, such as all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, oases, estuaries, deltas and tidal flats, mangroves and other coastal areas, coral reefs, and all human-made sites such as fishponds, rice paddies, reservoirs, and salt pans.

These lands are critical to people and nature, given the intrinsic value of these ecosystems and their benefits and services, including their environmental, climate, ecological, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational, and aesthetic contributions to sustainable development and human wellbeing.

In an effort to ensure the legal protection of wetlands, prevent encroachment, and establish state sovereignty over these valuable ecosystems, the Department of Environment (DOE) has issued titled deeds for 22 wetlands, covering an area of 1.34 million hectares, across the country.

Issuing title deeds for the rest of the wetlands is on the agenda, ISNA quoted Ahmad-Reza Lahijanzadeh, an official with the Department of Environment, as saying in July.

The effort will serve as a more effective measure to conserve wetlands, prevent unlawful land acquisition, unauthorized change of land use, and infringement of public rights, while paving the way for exercising legal authority over wetlands, as well as facilitating legal pursuit of water rights and proper management of water resources, the official highlighted.

Iran’s geography is distinct, teeming with diverse landscapes. In Iran, 141 wetlands with ecological value, with an area of over 3 million hectares, have been identified, 28 of which are listed in the International Ramsar Convention.

dignified minimum basic needs while prioritizing those with the highest vulnerability, including households headed by women and persons with disabilities.

Operations are implemented in close collaboration and coordination with the Center for Alien and Foreign Immigrant Affairs (CAFIA), WFP’s primary governmental counterpart, and with International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO) and UN agencies, mainly the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to ensure coherent refugee support and referral pathways.

Despite a complex year, marked by economic volatility and temporary operational risks, WFP sustained core assistance to settlement refugees. To safeguard purchasing power, WFP increased cash-based transfer values by 100 percent in January 2025 following the recommendation of a settlement-specific Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) assessment; this was complemented by a one-time cash top-up to cushion households during market instability and reduced income after the Iran-Israel 12-day conflict.

Targeted adjustments preserved program continuity: wheat flour entitlements were reduced from 12 kg to 9 kg per person for November-December, and the school snacks program was suspended for October to December.

These measures limit service disruptions while protecting life-saving transfers for the most vulnerable. Livelihood activities were scaled down given funding shortfalls and corporate efficiency measures, with WFP continuing to explore cost-effective, resilience-building options that can be re-activated as resources allow.

By December 2025, Iran continued to be one of the world’s largest refugee-hosting countries, sheltering approximately 2.5 million Afghans, including 773,000 individuals with official refugee status. Among them, around 35,000 critically vulnerable refugees reside in 20 settlements across 13 provinces.

Iran’s robotics claim team championship at WFC 2026



South Korean and Malaysian teams are placed second and third, respectively, IRNA reported.

WFC serves as a platform connecting young talent with international technological innovation opportunities. It emphasizes youth engagement in AI, competitive drone sports, and autonomous robotics.

Recent achievements

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.

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 Shamel and Sajad Safari-Ghiasabad 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.

Thirteen Iranian students under the age of 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.

Tehran, Baghdad seek closer cooperation against drug trafficking

TEHRAN – Iran and Iraq have stressed the need to strengthen operational intelligence sharing, exchange experiences, and expand joint efforts to combat drug trafficking, as the two countries seek to enhance cooperation in the fight against narcotics.

Iranian Anti-Narcotics Police Chief Brigadier General Iraj Kakavand made the remarks during a meeting with his Iraqi counterpart, Ahmed Al-Zarkani, where he outlined Iran’s measures and efforts to counter drug trafficking.

Kakavand said the two countries’ cooperation in combating drug trafficking has been satisfactory, stressing that an effective and comprehensive response to the phenomenon requires cooperation beyond national borders.

He called for closer bilateral cooperation and faster information exchange between the specialized police forces of the two countries. Under a security and law enforcement cooperation memorandum signed between Iran and Iraq, the two sides can exchange information on drug trafficking and transit methods, as well as the status of arrested traffickers who are nationals of either country, he said.

Kakavand also stressed the need to hold regular meetings between the anti-narcotics police chiefs of the two countries’ border

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 the 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 effectiveness 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.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

TEHRAN – The World Food Program (WFP) has released a report, expounding on activities in Iran over the month of August.

In August, WFP food assistance reached 35,711 beneficiaries, including Afghan and Iraqi refugees, through a hybrid combination of in-kind food and cash-based transfers (CBT).

Refugees are assisted with a staple food basket, which includes fortified wheat flour (a ration of 9 kg per person, reduced from 12 Kg since the month of November 2025 due to funding shortfalls).

Under CBT modality, WFP continued to provide cash assistance to support the essential living costs of vulnerable refugees. The transfer is IRR 8 million (USD 5.2) for households headed by men and IRR 9 million (USD 5.8) for households headed by women.

By August, WFP Iran helped ease the financial burden associated with the gluten-free dietary needs of 60 refugee celiac patients from WFP’s beneficiaries by providing them with an extra cash amount of IRR 9.7 million (USD 6.3) per person as a replacement for their usual food entitlement.

WFP supported 409 refugees with disabilities across eleven settlements, each receiving an additional monthly cash support of IRR 3 million (USD 1.9), on top of their regular aid. Initially launched in two provinces, the initiative was gradually expanded to cover 11 settlements in Saveh, Semnan, Bani Najar, Sarvestan, Bezileh, Abazar, Rafsanjan, Bardsir, Jahrom, Meybod, and Torbat-e-jam.

The school feeding program and education incentives are suspended due to summer holidays, and will resumed with the start of the new academic year.

In August, WFP supported 27 income-generating projects in 18 settlements to improve economic resilience and self-sufficiency for 299 refugees, 38 percent of whom were women, and the remainder were youth. These activities included welding, tailoring, baking, farming, and other trades, providing opportunities for women and youth to develop practical

skills, strengthen social connections, and actively engage with their communities.

As part of the response to the recent escalation, WFP started to provide cash transfers affected Iranian households, with the first round completed reaching 340 households, of which 327 were male-headed households.

Assistance was provided according to household size: IRR 210 million (USD 139.1) for households of one to three members; IRR 350 million (USD 231.9) for households of four to five members; IRR 420 million (USD 278.3) for households of six or more members.

In 2025, WFP sustained food assistance to some 33,300 vulnerable refugees living in 20 settlements across 13 provinces, including 404 refugees with disabilities (40 percent women) who received monthly cash top-ups. About 183 women and 190 men received WFP livelihood support.

WFP doubled cash transfer values since January 2025, safeguarding access to food amid price volatility and protecting the most vulnerable households.

Assistance remained uninterrupted, with targeted adjustments: wheat flour entitlements reduced from 12 kg to 9 kg (Nov-Dec) and school snacks paused (Oct-Dec) to stretch limited resources.

To promote girls’ education and reduce barriers to attendance, approximately 2,629 girl students received cash incentives as part of WFP’s commitment to empowering young women. Some 9,261 boys and girls and their teachers benefitted from WFP school snacks.

For more than four decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran has hosted Afghans fleeing conflict and hardship. In 2025, WFP remained essential to protecting the food security of vulnerable refugees residing in 20 settlements, where households rely on shelter, education and primary health care by the Government and other humanitarian actors, complemented by WFP’s monthly food assistance (through cash and in-kind modalities).

The program’s focus is on maintaining a



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be not like the hypocrite who, when he talks, tells lies; when he gives a promise, he breaks it; and when he is trusted, he proves dishonest.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:52 Evening: 15:59 Dawn: 4:41 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:04 (tomorrow)

Ashkan Rahgozar to serve as juror at Festival of Animation Berlin

TEHRAN – Iranian animator Ashkan Rahgozar will serve as a juror at the New Talents section of the 9th Festival of Animation Berlin (FAB), which will be held from October 8 to 11 in Berlin, Germany.

Rahgozar is one of the four members on the jury panel that also includes animation director Antje Heyn, film producer Franka Sachse, and stop motion designer, IRNA reported.

In addition, Rahgozar's latest animation "Juliet and the King" will be shown during the festival and will be followed by a session titled "Animation Between Art and Challenge," where the director will speak about the making of a hand-drawn animated film in Iran.

In this case study, Rahgozar offers insights into the making of his animated feature film "Juliet and the King".

In the 90-minute 2D family animation, Nasser-al-Din Shah, the Iranian king, gets an invitation to visit France. He loves Europe and he always takes the chance to visit there. While visiting a Romeo-Juliet play in Paris, the actress catches his eye. He falls in love with her so deeply that he asks her to perform the same play in Tehran, so he can impress her and win her heart.

Julie, the actress, decides to take this chance. With the help of her friend Jamal, she goes to perform in Iran, anticipating progress in her career. But she suddenly finds herself among jealous court ladies and the center of the king's attention.

Blending a traditional Disney-style fairy tale with 19th-century Iran as its backdrop, the result is a compelling examination of cultural contrast. Set in the latter half of that century, this story offers Rahgozar's interpretation of how Persian society once viewed the world. While times have certainly evolved, the themes explored remain relevant and thought-provoking.

The animated movie premiered at the 43rd Fajr Film Festival last year. It has participated in several international film festivals and has won six prestigious awards so far.

The Festival of Animation Berlin is the first film festival dedicated to animation in Germany's capital. With the festival focus being on artistic animation of all kinds FAB annually presents the best animated films in both regional and international categories.

FAB aspires not only to promote numerous filmmakers but also to pay tribute to the art of animation. Filmmakers from Berlin and across the globe get the opportunity to associate with like-minded people and present their work to the public.

Apart from competition categories, the festival comprises a rich side program revolving around animation related themes. As a platform where inspiration, creative exchange, innovation, and communication come together, it seeks to create a point of connection between both emerging and established filmmakers as well as local audiences.

Amir Naderi's "The Runner" to screen at Kaohsiung Film Festival



TEHRAN- Amir Naderi's 4K-restored classic "The Runner" will be screened at the 2026 Kaohsiung Film Festival in Taiwan, while the Iranian filmmaker will serve as chair of the jury for the festival's International Short Film Competition.

The 26th edition of the Kaohsiung Film Festival will be held from October 9 to 26 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, according to the festival's official website.

Naderi, a key figure of Iran's New Wave cinema, will chair the five-member final-stage jury of the International Short Film Competition. The competition features short films from around the world, with works selected across various forms and genres.

Alongside his jury duties, Naderi will return to the festival with "The Runner," his acclaimed

1984 film produced by the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA). The digitally restored 4K version has been selected for the festival's Special Screenings section and will have its Taiwan premiere.

"The Runner" is scheduled to be screened at the Kaohsiung Film Archive on October 15 and 20. The first screening will be attended by Naderi and Majid Niroumand, who played the lead role of Amiro, and will be followed by a discussion with the filmmakers.

Set in the southern Iranian port city of Abadan, the film follows Amiro, an orphaned boy who lives alone and struggles to make a living by shining shoes, selling water, and collecting empty bottles. His dreams of

escaping poverty and building a better future drive the story.

Drawing heavily on Naderi's own childhood experiences, "The Runner" portrays the boy's determination to overcome difficult circumstances through education, perseverance, and his desire to discover a wider world. The recurring image of running becomes a central metaphor for survival, freedom, and refusing to surrender to hardship.

The film was selected for the 1985 Venice Film Festival and won the Golden Montgolfiere at the Festival of the Three Continents in Nantes. It has since become one of the internationally recognized works of Iranian cinema and an important example of the country's New Wave filmmaking.

Naderi, who was born in

Abadan in 1946, is regarded as a key figure of the Iranian New Wave. His early films frequently focused on street children, youth and marginalized figures, using spare narratives and a distinctive visual language to explore survival and youthful aspirations. Naderi's films often explored the struggles of working-class people, as seen in his debut film "Goodbye Friend" (1971).

After the Iranian revolution, Naderi continued to make films, including the critically acclaimed "The Runner" and "Harmonica", which gained international recognition and critical acclaim.

The 2026 Kaohsiung Film Festival has selected 40 international and 20 Taiwanese short films for its Short Film Competition from 2,715 submissions received from 97 countries.

Alnam Philharmonic Orchestra brings Hans Zimmer's "Interstellar" music back to Tehran

TEHRAN- The Alnam Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Vahid Alipour, is set to perform its "Interstellar" concert once again at Tehran's Milad Tower, following the positive reception of last year's performance.

The project was first staged at Milad Tower in December 2025, featuring live performances of Hans Zimmer's acclaimed music for Christopher Nolan's "Interstellar" alongside visuals and elements inspired by the film.

The concert attracted audiences during its previous run, with the live orchestral performance and accompanying imagery creating

an immersive experience based on the film's distinctive atmosphere.

For the upcoming performance, the Alnam Philharmonic will once again perform selected pieces composed by Zimmer for "Interstellar" under the baton of Alipour. The project seeks to bring together orchestral music, cinema, and a space-themed visual experience.

The concert is scheduled for October 10 at Milad Tower in Tehran.

Leila Pourmosavi is the producer of the project, while Behrad Soukhakian serves as concertmaster. Soheil Salimzadeh is the ar-

tistic director, Javad Abrahan is artistic adviser and Mohammad Motlaq is the technical director.

Hans Zimmer's score for "Interstellar" is widely recognized for its distinctive combination of orchestral textures and organ-driven sounds, creating an expansive and atmospheric musical language that reflects the film's themes of space, time and human connection. The score, which earned Zimmer an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Score, plays a central role in shaping the emotional and cinematic experience of Christopher Nolan's 2014 science-fiction film.

Cartoon of Day



The Oil Tap
Cartoonist: Javad Takjoo from Iran

Angelina Jolie highlights Gaza destruction with Google Earth satellite images

Angelina Jolie has shared satellite images showing the scale of destruction in Gaza, calling for urgent humanitarian aid and shelter as winter approaches.

The Oscar-winning actress and former UN goodwill ambassador posted a series of before-and-after images on Instagram showing neighborhoods across the enclave devastated by nearly three years of war, The National reported.

"You can now open Google Earth and see what was done to Gaza," Jolie wrote. "Whole neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble. Homes, schools, universities, hospitals, roads, water and sanitation systems, infrastructure that people depended on to survive have been damaged or destroyed."

The updated imagery appeared on online last week, with many on social media expressing shock at the extent of the devastation. Google has not said when the images were published or made available.

It shows entire neighborhoods reduced to rubble and bare ground, with roads, mosques, schools and other landmarks surrounded by widespread destruction.

A UN Satellite Center assess-

ment cited by Jolie found that 82 percent of structures in Gaza had been damaged as of June 16, with about two thirds of those assessed as destroyed.

Jolie, 51, also highlighted the humanitarian situation facing Palestinians as winter approaches, saying 1.98 million people, or 94 percent of Gaza's population, require shelter assistance and essential items. She added that aid and shelter materials continued to face restrictions and delays.

"The Google Earth images show the physical destruction with extraordinary clarity. What they cannot show is what it means to live among it, what happened to the families who were killed, and what life is like for those who survived."

She called for humanitarian aid to reach civilians "at the scale required", for hospitals to receive medical supplies and for conditions to be created that would allow Palestinians to rebuild their homes, schools, hospitals and communities.

The latest post is not the first time Jolie has used her public profile to draw attention to the plight of Palestinians in Gaza.

In January, she travelled to Egypt and visited the Egyptian

side of the Rafah border crossing as part of a humanitarian trip focused on aid destined for Gaza.

During the visit, she met Egyptian Red Crescent workers and other humanitarian groups and toured warehouses containing aid, including medical supplies.

Jolie said at the time that humanitarian access needed to be "sustained, safe, and urgently scaled up" to allow aid, fuel, and medical supplies into Gaza.

She has also been linked to plans to support children orphaned during the conflict.

In October, The National reported that Palestinian activist Samer Sinjilawi said Jolie intended to establish a large SOS village for orphans in Gaza as part of wider efforts to rebuild the enclave.

He said prominent individuals could help launch initiatives alongside government-led reconstruction efforts rather than waiting solely for states to act.

Jolie has been an outspoken voice on the conflict since its early weeks. In October 2023, she condemned the Hamas-led attacks in Israel while saying they could not justify the loss of civilian life in Gaza.

"What happened in Israel is an act of terror, but that cannot

justify the innocent lives lost in bombing a civilian population in Gaza that has nowhere to go, no access to food or water, no possibility of evacuation and not even the basic human right to cross a border to seek refuge," she wrote.

In another post days later, she described Gaza as an "open-air prison" that was "fast becoming a mass grave" and criticized world leaders for failing to demand a humanitarian ceasefire.

Jolie's advocacy follows more than two decades of humanitarian work focused particularly on refugees and people displaced by conflict.

She worked with the UN refugee agency for more than 20 years, first as a goodwill ambassador and later as a special envoy, before stepping down from the role in 2022 to pursue humanitarian and human rights work more broadly.

Her latest intervention comes as satellite imagery has once again brought the physical transformation of Gaza into focus.

"The destruction is visible. The needs are known," Jolie wrote. "What matters now is whether they are met."