Straight Truth

WWW.TEHRANTIMES.COM

TEHRAN TIMES

8 Pages | Price 500,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 47th year | No. 15472 | Saturday | November 14, 2026 | Aban 23, 1405 | Jumada al-Thani 4, 1448

Pezeshkian holds talks with Turkish, Brazilian and Kurdish leaders at COP31

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has held a series of meetings with his Turkish and Brazilian counterparts and the president of Iraq's Kurdistan Region on the sidelines of the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, focusing on expanding bilateral cooperation, strengthening economic and trade ties, and promoting regional peace and stability.

In a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday, the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening relations, particularly in economic and commercial fields, and called for closer coordination among regional countries to address common challenges and safeguard regional stability. ▸ Page 2

Four senators threaten government shutdown unless Congress cuts off Iran war money

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Four Democratic senators said Thursday they will vote against any short-term spending bill that leaves President Donald Trump free to keep paying for the war on Iran, turning the December 11 funding deadline into the first real test of whether Congress will cut off a war it never authorized.

Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, Michael Bennet of Colorado, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland and Bernie Sanders of Vermont want language in the stopgap barring the administration from using appropriated money on the conflict. ▸ Page 5

Iran, Uzbekistan emphasize rail, road, transit co-op in Tashkent meeting

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- In a significant diplomatic and economic engagement, Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, held a pivotal meeting with Ilhom Mahkamov, the Minister of Transport of Uzbekistan, during her official visit to Tashkent.

The high-level discussions centered on the imperative need to facilitate transit operations, develop comprehensive rail and road cooperation, and strengthen logistical and commercial relations between the two nations within the framework of regional corridors. This meeting, held with the explicit aim of examining solutions to expand transport and transit cooperation between the two countries, ▸ Page 4

Beyond Persepolis: Discovering Iran's lesser-known historical and natural treasures

TEHRAN – Beyond the celebrated destinations such as Isfahan, Shiraz and Persepolis lies another side of Iran, one of mountain fortresses, ancient rock carvings, little-explored archaeological sites, colorful islands and remote desert villages, to name a few, where traditional ways of life endure.

Stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf and from the Zagros Mountains to the central deserts, Iran boasts an extraordinary diversity of landscapes and cultural heritage, much of which remains outside conventional tourist itineraries.

For travelers willing to venture beyond the familiar routes, such lesser-known destinations offer a different perspective on Iran, revealing a country whose historical depth and natural diversity extend far beyond its best-known attractions. ▸ Page 6



AP

The "Team Ramstein" sign at the entrance to Ramstein Air Base in southwestern Germany, with US and German flags flying alongside — Washington's largest airbase in Europe and a key transit and refueling hub for US operations in West Asia.

No Safe Distance: Iran Puts US Bases in Europe on Notice

From Fairford to Ramstein, NATO's own admissions expose Europe's footprint in Operation Epic Fury — and Tehran's new doctrine erases geography as a shield

On October 31, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, met Iran's three top commanders. He described "intelligent combat readiness for a powerful confrontation with the enemies" as a requirement of "maximum deterrence" and decreed that every level and type of threat must be met with an "immediate and effective response, without geographical limitation."

By Seyyed Mohammad Torabi

TEHRAN – "If the US launches another war against Iran, every military base involved in the aggression—from West Asia to Europe—will be a legitimate target for Iran's lethal strikes. NO SAFE DISTANCE. NO SAFE HAVEN. NO IMMUNITY."

With these three capitalized lines posted on X on Thursday, November 12, Mohsen Rezaei, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), condensed weeks of Iranian signaling into a single doctrine. The message was not presented as rhetoric but as operational warning: any base from which American aircraft take off to bomb Iran will be treated as a belligerent, regardless of whether it sits in the Persian Gulf or in the heart of Europe.

In a separate interview with Beirut-based Al Mayadeen broadcast the same day, Rezaei clarified that Iran would not restrict retaliation to nearby American installations. European bases used for refuelling, transit, intelligence or launch would qualify. The significance, lies precisely in the geographic scope: Tehran is signalling that a renewed campaign would expose American power far beyond the immediate battlefield.

The warning did not emerge in a vacuum. It is the public, outward-facing formulation of an order issued 14 days earlier at the highest level of the Islamic Republic.

On October 31, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, met Iran's three top commanders — Armed Forces Chief of Staff and Khatam ol-Anbiya Central Headquarters Commander Maj. Gen. Ali Abdollahi, IRGC Commander Maj. Gen. Ahmad Vahidi, and Army Commander Maj. Gen. Amir Hatami. According to the leader's official website, he described "intelligent combat readiness for a powerful confrontation with the enemies" as a requirement of "maximum deterrence" and decreed that every level and type of threat must be met with an "immediate and effective response, without geographical limitation." ▸ Page 3



Mehr/ Saeed Reza Razavi

Funeral held for 350 Unnamed Martyrs in Tehran, other cities amid calls for "revenge"

TEHRAN – Funeral processions for the remains of 350 unnamed martyrs of the eight-year Sacred Defense were held on Friday morning in Tehran and across the country, coinciding with the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (SA) and the Day of the Unnamed Martyr, with massive public turnout.

The procession for 110 unnamed martyrs in the capital moved from the main gate of the University of Tehran toward Meraj-ol-Shohada, attended by senior military and state officials as well as large crowds of residents. ▸ Page 2

Lack of trust in US main obstacle to agreement, Qalibaf says

TEHRAN – Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who heads the country's negotiating team, says the lack of trust in the United States remains the main obstacle to reaching an agreement, adding that Washington has yet to provide a formal and specific response to Tehran's latest proposal.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, Qalibaf said Iran's response was based on the legitimate rights of the Iranian people, who have been subjected to US and Israeli aggression, threats, and crimes. ▸ Page 2

Headquarters formed to mark martyrdom anniversary of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei

TEHRAN – The Headquarters for the Anniversary of the "Bloody Ascension of the Martyred Mujahid Imam" has been established by order of Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohsen Khamenei, Head of the Office for Preserving and Promoting the Thought and Works of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

According to the decree, the headquarters will organize programs marking the martyrdom anniversary of the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution on 9 Esfand, at both national and international levels.

Among the appointed members are First Vice President Mohammad-Reza Aref, Custodian of Astan Quds Razavi Hojjatoleslam Ahmad Marvi, Head of the Basij Organization Hojjatoleslam Hossein Taeb, Advisor to the Leader Gholam-Ali Haddad Adel, Head of the Friday Prayer Imams' Policymaking Council Hojjatoleslam Mohammad-Javad Haj Ali Akbari, and Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani. ▸ Page 2

Bahrain in focus as Iran targets US radar, downs MQ-1 drone

TEHRAN – Iran's Armed Forces have announced the destruction of a US early-warning radar installation in Bahrain and the downing of an American MQ-1 drone off the country's southern coast, as Tehran issued a renewed warning that it would respond decisively to further military aggression.

The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) said its Aerospace Force had targeted and destroyed a US military early-warning radar on the island of Bahrain in an operation carried out on Friday. According to an IRGC statement, the strike was conducted in response to an air attack on a telecommunications tower in Sirik, in Iran's southern Hormozgan Province.

The statement described the radar as belonging to the US forces involved in the aggression against Iran, warning Washington against further aerial provocations and 'oil smuggling' in the Strait of Hormuz. ▸ Page 3

Assembly of Experts calls revision of Iran's defense doctrine an inevitable necessity

TEHRAN – Iran's Assembly of Experts has described a review of the country's defense doctrine and the strengthening of its deterrence capabilities as an unavoidable national necessity, calling for serious consideration of withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in response to mounting threats against the country.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the Assembly addressed a range of pressing domestic and foreign policy issues, including growing public demands for withdrawal from the NPT, the need to revise Iran's defense doctrine, the continuation of resistance on the battlefield, and the pursuit of dignified diplomacy.

Referring to repeated threats against Iran, particularly those targeting its nuclear capabilities, the Assembly said such threats had demonstrated that the country could no longer place its confidence in international institutions entrusted with safeguarding its rights and interests. ▸ Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

A war full of costs and failures for US

In a note, Kayhan described the Iran war as a major failure for the US and the Trump administration. The conflict, which was intended to overthrow the Islamic Republic and destroy its nuclear and military capabilities, failed to achieve its objectives. Events eventually reached a point where Iran, by closing the Strait of Hormuz and increasing living costs in America, contributed to political change in the US. Trump and the Republican Party suffered their most serious defeat in decades because of the consequences of the war. It also pointed to reports of deep disagreements inside the White House, extensive dismissals, and growing divisions between the administration and Republican leaders. Kayhan further argued that when the destruction of American military bases in the region, the decline of US global influence, and the possibility of war costs reaching $1 trillion are taken into account, the conflict could be remembered as one of the greatest foreign policy failures in US history.

Hamshahri: Iran-China strategic ties must move from statements to projects

Hamshahri examined ways to turn Iran-China cooperation into practical results. Quoting China affairs researcher Vahid Ghorbani, the newspaper said that the most urgent task is transforming Iran's strategic approach toward China into an operational and results-oriented program. He stated that Iran is simultaneously dealing with three major challenges: managing the consequences of war, redefining regional security arrangements, and restoring and strengthening the country's economic capacity. To achieve these goals, Iran's political and economic diplomacy toward China must become more coordinated. He also stressed the importance of actively using the capacities of BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to serve Iran's national interests. In addition, Tehran should clearly define its economic priorities for Chinese partners. Economic cooperation cannot be built solely on political declarations and statements. Instead, it requires concrete projects, financing mechanisms, investment plans, and effective implementation frameworks capable of producing measurable outcomes.

Farhikhtegan: We must break the naval blockade

Farhikhtegan interviewed international economics expert Ahmad Salehi about the so-called "iron wall" initiative and methods of overcoming it. Salehi stated that Iran's maritime blockade has been accompanied by military threats and pressure on commercial shipping, enabling the US to enforce the policy to some extent. He noted that a separate plan known as the "iron wall" has also been discussed in connection with the Caspian Sea region. While military threats may exist there, he argued that along other land routes Washington is more likely to rely on diplomacy and pressure directed at neighboring countries. The most important step in preventing the success of a land blockade is first to break the naval blockade. Current conditions make it an appropriate time for Iran to take greater initiative in challenging maritime restrictions. He emphasized the importance of expanding diplomatic engagement with countries that maintain extensive trade relations with Tehran, particularly Iraq, Afghanistan, and Turkey. Iran should make greater use of its political and economic leverage in those countries.

Donya-e-Eqtesad: Three paths ahead for the market

Donya-e-Eqtesad analyzed oil price fluctuations and the impact of war-related developments on global energy markets. The newspaper outlined three possible scenarios. The first is continued decline. If negotiations advance, maritime traffic increases, and US oil inventories continue to grow, prices could remain under pressure. The main requirement for this outcome is the absence of a major disruption to supply flows. The second is limited volatility. If attacks continue at current levels while no political agreement is reached, the market may remain trapped between abundant supply and ongoing geopolitical risks. Based on existing data, the newspaper considered this the most likely scenario. The third is a surge in risk. An attack on a major oil tanker, a key export terminal, or an incident that significantly disrupts insurance services and maritime transportation could quickly restore risk premiums to the market. The key turning point would be a shift from isolated attacks to broader disruptions affecting energy supplies and shipping routes.

Arman-e-Melli: From environment to diplomacy

Arman-e-Melli discussed a meeting between Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of the COP31 climate conference in Antalya. The newspaper argued that the meeting was more than a routine encounter between neighboring countries. The talks took place amid tensions linked to the Iran-US war, concerns about instability in West Asia, and ongoing diplomatic efforts to prevent renewed conflict. The newspaper described Pakistan as holding a role for Tehran that goes beyond that of an eastern neighbor, noting its regional political and security influence and its recent role in facilitating communication and mediation between Tehran and Washington. Continued consultations, implementation of economic agreements, expansion of bilateral cooperation, and preservation of Islamabad's mediating role could strengthen relations between the two countries and support regional stability.

Pezeshkian holds talks with Turkish, Brazilian and Kurdish leaders at COP31

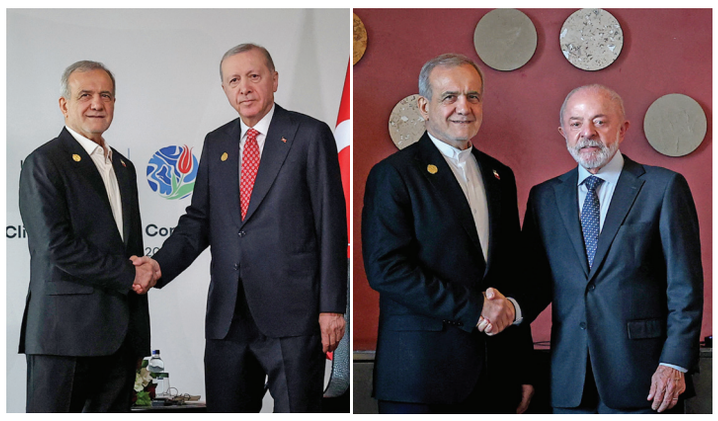
From page 1 ▸ Highlighting the deep-rooted historical, cultural and civilizational bonds between Iran and Turkey, Pezeshkian and Erdogan stressed the need to make fuller use of their countries' respective capacities to expand cooperation across political, economic, commercial and regional fields.

They identified expanding bilateral trade, removing obstacles to economic exchanges, encouraging greater private-sector participation and making better use of existing opportunities as key priorities. Both presidents also emphasized mutual respect, good-neighborly relations and shared interests as the foundations of stronger bilateral ties.

On regional developments, the two leaders underscored the importance of dialogue, constructive engagement and stronger cooperation among regional countries to prevent tensions, address security challenges and promote lasting peace, stability and sustainable development.

In a separate meeting with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Pezeshkian called for broader cooperation between Tehran and Brasília, particularly in economic, trade, scientific, technological and agricultural sectors.

The two presidents emphasized the importance of making greater use of their countries' complementary capacities, expanding trade exchanges and encouraging closer engagement between their private sectors.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian meets and holds talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (L) and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (R) on the sidelines of the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya.

They also exchanged views on regional and international developments, stressing the importance of strengthening the role of independent countries in global affairs and upholding national sovereignty, international law and constructive multilateral cooperation.

Pezeshkian also met with President of Iraq's Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Barzani, with discussions focusing on strengthening economic and commercial relations and addressing regional security developments.

The Iranian president stressed Tehran's readiness to expand cooperation with the Kurdistan Region across various sectors, particularly trade and economic activities, and called for greater use of existing capacities and opportunities to boost bilateral exchanges.

He also emphasized the long-standing friendly relations between the two sides, saying efforts to economically isolate Iran would not succeed given its close ties with neighboring countries and communities, including the people of the Kurdistan Region.

Pezeshkian further criticized the United States and Israel over their military aggression against Iran, describing the attacks and the killing of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and schoolchildren as violations of international law and humanitarian principles. He said that, having failed to achieve their objectives militarily, Iran's adversaries were now seeking to exert economic pressure by restricting routes used to transport essential goods, food and medicine.

Barzani, for his part, stressed the importance of lasting peace and stability in the region, noting that military aggression against Iran would only have further complicated the regional situation without achieving its intended objectives.

He reaffirmed that the Kurdistan Region would not allow its territory to be used for any action threatening Iran's security or sovereignty, describing Iran as a longstanding supporter of the region whose assistance during difficult times would not be forgotten.

Barzani also expressed readiness to expand economic and trade relations with Iran and praised the resilience of the Iranian people and armed forces.

The meetings with Erdogan, Lula and Barzani were part of Pezeshkian's diplomatic engagements on the sidelines of COP31. He had previously held talks with the leaders of Iraq, Norway, Armenia and Pakistan, discussing bilateral relations, regional developments and prospects for expanded economic and political cooperation.

The 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference is being held in Antalya, Turkey, from November 9 to 20, bringing together world leaders, government representatives and international organizations to discuss global climate challenges.

Funeral held for 350 Unnamed Martyrs in Tehran, other cities amid calls for "revenge"

From page 1 ▸ The remains of 240 other martyrs were carried in funeral ceremonies in other cities simultaneously. The martyrs had been recovered from the operational zones of Fakkeh, Sharhani, Shalamcheh, Majnoon, Mehran, east of the Dijleh and Chilat.

President Masoud Pezeshkian attended the Tehran ceremony. Mourners welcomed him chanting: "Our word is one: revenge, revenge."

IRGC Commander-in-Chief Maj. Gen. Ahmad Vahidi also attended the ceremony. Speaking on the sidelines, he said the martyrs remain enduring and illuminating role models for the Iranian nation, adding that the people of Iran have for years taken the martyrs as their example and follow their path.

Referring to the public demand for avenging the blood of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Vahidi said: "This demand of the people will be fulfilled."

Stressing that any hostile act and even the slightest aggression by the enemy will be met with dreadful and painful blows, he added: "The enemy should learn from the successive defeats it has suffered; otherwise, greater lessons lie ahead."

Brig. Gen. Mohammad-Reza Naqdi, Advisor to the IRGC Commander-in-Chief, told Defa Press on the sidelines of the Tehran procession that the demand for revenge over the martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei reflects the general will of the people.

"The people loved and still love their Leader, and will accept nothing but revenge," Naqdi said.

He added that the demand is not new, noting that for the past 257 nights people have chanted it every night in squares in cities and villages across the country, and that the call will continue.

"This matter will not end without taking revenge on the killers of the martyred Leader, and God willing, this revenge will be taken," he said.

Lack of trust in US main obstacle to agreement, Qalibaf says

TEHRAN – Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who heads the country's negotiating team, says the lack of trust in the United States remains the main obstacle to reaching an agreement, adding that Washington has yet to provide a formal and specific response to Tehran's latest proposal.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, Qalibaf said Iran's response was based on the legitimate rights of the Iranian people, who have been subjected to US and Israeli aggression, threats, and crimes.

"The ball is now in the US court. It must make a decision and announce it," he said, referring to the seven conditions Iran has set for further negotiations.

Qalibaf said Tehran remained prepared to reach an agreement, provided Washington honored its previous commitments and abandoned 'excessive demands.' He rejected US criticism that Iran's conditions were unreasonable, emphasizing that they concerned the country's basic rights rather than additional concessions.

"The main obstacle to an agreement is this lack of trust," he said, citing Washington's longstanding hostility toward Iran and its repeated failure to honor its commitments.

Among Iran's key demands, Qalibaf said, are an end to the US naval blockade of Iranian ports, an end to American interference in the Strait of Hormuz, the withdrawal of additional US forces deployed to the region after the war, and the lifting of sanctions.

He described the naval blockade as "a brutal act of war under international law," saying it had impeded food supplies, trade, and access to health care, while disrupting the daily lives of ordinary people.

"These are the minimum conditions we have set so that, if they are met, we can continue negotiations," he said.

The seven-point framework also calls for an end to the war against Iran and the Resistance Front, a ceasefire in Lebanon, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory, Qalibaf added.

He identified Qatar and Pakistan as the principal mediators between Tehran and Washington, while noting that Russia, China, and other regional countries were also working to bring the two sides closer.

According to Qalibaf, US officials approached Russian President Vladimir Putin during a visit to Moscow and asked him to contact Iran to help facilitate direct negotiations. Tehran subsequently conveyed its position and demands to Moscow, he said.



The mediators had discussed implementing the necessary measures within two days, Qalibaf said, stressing, however, that any progress depended on Washington's response.

He also dismissed reports of changes to Iran's negotiating team, confirming that he remained in charge of the six-member delegation and continued to oversee the talks.

Qalibaf said Iran was determined to end the state of "neither war nor peace" and establish sustainable deterrence, emphasizing that this objective did not necessarily have to be achieved through negotiations.

"The Islamic Republic does not necessarily need to negotiate simply to avoid war. We believe we must move toward establishing sustainable deterrence in the country," he said.

"We are not warmongers, we are not seeking war, and we do not want the war to continue," Qalibaf said, warning that Iran would respond firmly if the United States or the Israeli regime launched another attack.

He further argued that the US military presence in West Asia had fueled insecurity rather than contributed to regional stability, calling on countries in the region to work together to establish lasting security without outside interference.

The head of Iran's negotiating team also stressed that Tehran would not accept any arrangement that excluded the Strait of Hormuz from the negotiations. The future status of the strategic waterway, he said, should be determined through an understanding between its two coastal states, Iran and Oman, in accordance with international law.

Headquarters formed to mark martyrdom anniversary of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei

TEHRAN – The Headquarters for the Anniversary of the "Bloody Ascension of the Martyred Mujahid Imam" has been established by order of Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohsen Khamenei, Head of the Office for Preserving and Promoting the Thought and Works of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

According to the decree, the headquarters will organize programs marking the martyrdom anniversary of the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution on 9 Esfand, at both national and international levels.

Among the appointed members are First Vice President Mohammad-Reza Aref, Custodian of Astan Quds Razavi Hojjatoleslam Ahmad Marvi, Head of the Basij Organization Hojjatoleslam Hossein Taeb, Advisor to the Leader Gholam-Ali Haddad Adel, Head of the Friday Prayer Imams' Policymaking Council Hojjatoleslam Mohammad-Javad Haj Ali Akbari, and Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani.

The decree defines the headquarters' main mission as explaining the thought and practice of the late Leader, portraying dimensions of his personality, and promoting awareness of his "school" with the aim of continuing his path and message. It also stresses strengthening the spiritual awakening of the Iranian nation and the Islamic Ummah, and deepening national and Islamic cohesion.

The headquarters is tasked with paying special attention to a broad international audience — from Muslims in East Asia to youth in Europe and North America, and pro-Palestine students at American universities who were the addressees of his three letters — while prioritizing popular and grassroots activities. It is to design and implement precise cultural, artistic, political and social programs tailored to diverse audiences.

The order further emphasizes that the headquarters will operate under the guidance of the successor Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, and calls for strict avoidance of formalities and unnecessary expenditures, in line with the late Leader's repeated recommendations.

No safe distance: Iran puts US bases in Europe on notice

From Fairford to Ramstein, NATO's own admissions expose Europe's footprint in Operation Epic Fury — and Tehran's new doctrine erases geography as a shield

From Page 1 ▸ The statement added: "If the enemies once again launch military or terrorist attacks, it is the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic and the Iranian nation who will determine the time and conditions of their end." The target bank, Ayatollah Khamenei ordered, must be updated so that all kinds of "tangible and intangible" assets of the American-Zionist enemy fall within reach. The commanders, in turn, reported readiness along the Persian Gulf coast, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman and the northwestern and southeastern borders, alongside a "several-fold increase" in production of ammunition, reconnaissance, support and combat weapons.

That October 31 directive is now the doctrinal anchor for everything Tehran says about Europe. A Tehran Times analysis on the same day summarized the conclusion in the capital: when countries accompany aggressors by providing bases, airspace, fuel, intelligence or political cover, there is no reason they should remain immune. Under Iran's reading of the inherent right of self-defense, any facility used to attack Iran is by definition a legitimate military target, and geography does not grant immunity.

What makes the claim potent is that Europe's role is no longer a matter of Iranian allegation alone. It has been acknowledged by NATO itself.

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, visiting Washington in June in an attempt to ease transatlantic tensions, twice openly defended Europe's contribution. In a Fox News interview cited by Al Jazeera, Rutte said that aside from "isolated cases," ally after ally made bases available for what the U.S. calls Operation Epic Fury, the joint U.S.-Israeli war launched on February 28. "When you look at the numbers, 4-5,000 US planes [were] taking off from bases in Europe in the six weeks this war took place," he said. He cited 500 U.S. sorties from bases in Italy and noted Romania had to cut commercial flights to host U.S. tankers. "Without NATO and without Europe as a platform for projecting U.S. power," Rutte argued, the United States could not have carried out the operation. He added that European allies are now pre-positioning assets near the Strait of Hormuz to help with demining and freedom of navigation.

A detailed BBC Persian investigation published October 2 mapped that platform. Britain's



Fairford stands as the clearest case of a European base used for direct strikes on Iranian soil, with U.S. bombers flying from there since the start of the war. The IRGC in July explicitly named Fairford and warned that bases used to bomb Iran would be "legitimate targets." Other British bases functioned mainly as transit and support hubs, while London insists its Cyprus bases, including Akrotiri, were not used for offensive operations against Iran.

The rest of the network, according to the BBC, Al Jazeera and DW, was logistical but decisive. Germany's Ramstein became a major hub for movement, refuellers and, according to Poland's Centre for Eastern Studies, very likely a source of guided munitions. Portugal's Lajes in the Azores saw a surge of U.S. traffic before the war and served as a transit point, though Lisbon said combat flights required separate authorization and confirmed it rejected some U.S. requests. Greece's Souda, Italy's Aviano and Sigonella — Rome hosts nearly 120 U.S. facilities — and France's Istres and Avord hosted C-17 transports and KC-135 tankers. Romania in March approved U.S. tankers, surveillance gear and satellite communications; Bulgaria's parliament on July 22 approved up to eight KC-135s and 250 U.S. personnel at Bezmer, stressing no direct attacks would originate from its soil. Turkey, despite hosting Incirlik, said the base was not used in attacks, and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned the U.S.-Israeli strikes.

Not all of Europe complied, and those divisions provoked Washington's fury. Spain under Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez took the sharpest line, refusing use of Moron and Rota for attacks on Iran and later closing airspace to U.S. aircraft involved in the war. Fifteen U.S. aircraft, mostly KC-135s, left Spain, at least seven moving to Ramstein. President Donald Trump called Spain "a horror show" and "terrible" and threatened to cut off trade. France authorized only a temporary presence of U.S. support aircraft on condition they would "in no way" participate in operations against Iran, limited to defense of regional partners, and in late March blocked an Israeli airspace transit for U.S.-linked weaponry. Italy under Giorgia Meloni authorized only "technical and logistical, non-kinetic activities" under its constitution and 1954 bilateral agreements.

Trump's disappointment was public: "I was disappointed with Italy. I was disappointed with the UK, Germany, and France. We were disappointed with most of them." Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Manama said Europe's refusal to allow bases undermined the alliance. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz replied that the operation is not a NATO mission, that Washington had not consulted Berlin, and that there is still "no convincing plan for how this operation could succeed." Defense Minister Boris Pistorius was blunter: "This is not our war, we have not started it." President Emmanuel Macron echoed: "We are not party to the conflict."

Tehran reads this record as complicity, not neutrality. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei, responding to Rutte on September 25, wrote on X that Rutte's remarks were "a frank confession" that Europe "knowingly and actively participated" while repeatedly denying it during the war. He said the EU, its members and NATO must answer for political, military, logistical or other support that contributed to killing and destruction, and that European citizens have the right to demand answers from governments, including for fuel-price hikes stemming from an illegal war.

That legal-political argument is now paired with an explicit military threat across multiple institutions. The IRGC, in a statement on November 4 marking the anniversary of the 1979 embassy seizure, pledged an "immediate, effective response without geographical limits to every level and type of threat," citing Ayatollah Khamenei's order to update the target bank. Kayhan newspaper, published under supervision of a representative of the Leader, wrote that potential targets are no longer confined to the Middle East and could reach "the heart of Europe." Government supporters hung a banner outside the German Embassy in Tehran quoting Rezaei: "Europe will pay the price for supporting Israel." Fars reported Iran had warned Berlin its regional assets would be treated as "legitimate defensive targets" if it entered open confrontation, after Tehran summoned the German ambassador.

Parliament has amplified the same line. Ahmad Bakhshayesh Ardestani, member of the National Security Committee, told Euronews on November 4: "If America uses its bases in Europe, including in Italy and Germany, Iran's missiles will be fired towards Europe. In the two previous wars we did not do this, but this time we will not let Europe's assistance go without consequence." Fellow committee member Fada Hossein Maleki said Iran has prepared a new approach that would surprise both the U.S. and Europe. MP Hossein-Ali Haji Deligani warned Tehran's response would be "strategic, voluminous and manifold without geographical considerations," covering Europe and pushing oil beyond $150. Brig. Gen. Abolfazl Shekarchi vowed a tenfold response to Trump's threat of a five-times-stronger strike.

Europe's hesitation is driven less by sympathy for Tehran than by cost and lack of control. Polls cited by international media show 58% of Germans, 49% of Britons and 68% of Spaniards oppose the war. Rising energy prices and cost-of-living protests across France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Albania have sharpened opposition.

Taken together, Rezaei's post is therefore more than a post. It translates Ayatollah Khamenei's October 31 "no geographical limitation" order into a named addressee — every base involved, from West Asia to Europe — backed by Rutte's numbers, Fairford's precedent, and a parliament and IRGC already speaking of Europe as within range. Tehran's calculation, as regional analysts observe, is to raise the anticipated price of facilitation so that European capitals withhold airspace, bases and fuel for a third round.

Assembly of Experts calls revision of Iran's defense doctrine an inevitable necessity

From Page 1 ▸ "Accordingly, examining withdrawal from the NPT, revisiting the country's defense doctrine and establishing the necessary deterrence capabilities have become unavoidable necessities and matters of national and public demand," the statement said, urging officials to address these demands in accordance with the Leader's guidance.

The Assembly also cautioned against making concessions to Washington in the hope of curbing its hostility toward Iran, citing the Leader's remarks that those who believe concessions could persuade the United States to abandon its antagonistic stance toward the Iranian nation are seriously mistaken.

It further recalled his warning that even the slightest inclination toward surrender to an arrogant, domineering adversary would squander the immense national capital secured through the blood of martyrs and the sacrifices of the Iranian people, while emboldening the enemy to pursue further excessive demands and acts of aggression.

The statement called on government officials to stand shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces and the Iranian people in firmly pursuing the country's rights and national interests, expressing confidence that they would enjoy the nation's unwavering support and divine assistance.

Economic defense and wartime coordination

The Assembly also warned that Iran's adversaries were increasingly seeking to undermine the country's resilience through economic warfare, including attempts to impose an air and land blockade and disrupt vital economic lifelines.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran's top generals reaffirm devastating response to any aggression

TEHRAN – Senior Iranian military commanders have warned that any act of aggression against the country, however limited, would trigger an immediate and devastating response, as the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) highlighted Iran's growing missile capabilities, including the deployment of missiles carrying two-ton warheads over distances of up to 1,500 kilometers.

Speaking at a funeral ceremony in Tehran on Friday for 110 unidentified martyrs of the Sacred Defense (the 1980–1988 Iraqi-imposed war against Iran), IRGC Deputy Commander Major General Mostafa Izadi said Iran's Armed Forces had reached a level of military capability and deterrence that enabled them to thwart threats to the country's security and sovereignty.

He said Iranian missile units were launching missiles equipped with two-ton warheads at targets as far as 1,500 kilometers away, adding that enemy bases on land and at sea had come under devastating attacks by Iranian forces.

Izadi said the adversaries had entered the battlefield directly after realizing that their agents and mercenaries were incapable of confronting the Islamic Revolution. He added that their objectives included fragmenting Iran, overthrowing its political system, depriving it of its nuclear and missile capabilities, weakening the Resistance Front and plundering its oil resources.

The IRGC deputy chief added Iran's military strength had forced its adversaries to acknowledge a significant depletion of their missile stockpiles and other resources. He stressed that the Armed Forces would respond to any threat with immediate, effective and deterrent action, without geographical limitations.

In a separate warning at the same funeral ceremony, IRGC Commander Major General Ahmad Vahidi said even the slightest act of aggression against Iran would be met with devastating and painful strikes.

Vahidi urged the adversaries to learn from the repeated defeats they had suffered, warning, "The slightest aggression will be answered with devastating and painful strikes."

The IRGC chief also reaffirmed Iran's determination to advance its missile program despite threats and sanctions, invoking the legacy of martyr Hassan Tehrani Moghaddam, widely regarded as the father of Iran's missile program.

Referring to Tehrani Moghaddam's pioneering work, Vahidi said Iran's missile capabilities had been built through faith, determination and perseverance, and that the country's defense and technological progress could not be halted by external pressure. He noted that Iranian fighters were continuing this path by developing advanced capabilities in mountain facilities and deep underground.

The commanders' warnings are in line with the emphasis placed by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei on maintaining intelligent combat readiness and maximum deterrence. The Leader has stressed that any renewed military or terrorist attack against Iran must be met with an immediate, forceful response, without geographical restrictions, and that Iran's Armed Forces and nation would determine when and under what conditions such a confrontation would end.

Bahrain in focus as Iran targets US radar, downs MQ-1 drone

From Page 1 ▸ The IRGC said its Aerospace Force remained on full alert and was prepared to respond without geographical limitations if violations or attacks were repeated. It also warned that companies violating the rules or cooperating with the adversary would face more severe punitive measures.

In a separate announcement on Friday, the Iranian Army's Navy said it had shot down a US MQ-1 unmanned aerial vehicle near Kuhestak, along the coast of Sirik in Hormozgan Province, east of the Strait of Hormuz.

According to the statement, the drone was detected, tracked and intercepted by an advanced air-defense system operating as part of Iran's integrated air-defense network. The system struck the aircraft after tracking it in the Kuhestak coastal area.

The MQ-1 Predator is a medium-altitude, long-endurance remotely piloted aircraft developed by US defense contractor General Atomics. It was extensively used by the US military for surveillance and combat operations in West Asia and other regions. The US Air Force retired its MQ-1 fleet in 2018, transitioning to the more advanced MQ-9 Reaper.

Iran's IRGC has previously announced the downing of multiple US drones during the ongoing conflict. Last Friday, the Corps said it had brought down its 16th MQ-1 since the beginning of the US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

The developments come amid heightened tensions over the Strait of Hormuz, through which Iran has restricted maritime passage since the early stages of the war launched by the United States and Israel against Iran on February 28. The conflict was brought to a temporary halt by a ceasefire in early April following Iran's retaliatory operations.

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has reiterated that Iran retains its right to legitimate self-defense under international law in the event of an armed attack by the United States.

Araghchi said that, in the absence of a valid legal justification for the use of force, any US military attack against Iran would constitute an internationally wrongful act for which Washington would bear responsibility.

He emphasized that Iran continued to exercise its right to self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which recognizes the inherent right of



individual and collective self-defense in response to an armed attack.

In remarks published on November 11, Araghchi also criticized 'Washington's persistent reliance on failed policies and baseless assumptions' about Iran. Referring to earlier US pressure tactics, he recalled former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's demand that Iranians comply with Washington's demands if they wanted to secure their livelihoods, and said current Secretary of State Marco Rubio had repeated the same rhetoric.

A cog in Netanyahu's genocide machine takes the floor at the European Parliament

By Atrin Eskandari

TEHRAN- Reza Pahlavi, the deposed and disgraced former crown prince who fled Iran nearly half a century ago, recently turned up at the European Parliament. Once again masquerading as the voice of the Iranian people, this clown without a crown trotted out the same lines he has repeated hundreds of times in recent years. None of this is surprising coming from him. Nothing else was ever to be expected. After all, now that his ties to Israel are out in the open, he can no longer be dismissed as just another opposition figure or a prince pining for the Peacock Throne. He has earned a more fitting title: a direct agent of Israel and of Netanyahu.

What is truly baffling is Europe. Even as the cost-of-living squeeze drives its own citizens into the streets, it still falls for dream-peddlers and wheeler-dealers like Reza Pahlavi. The Europeans seem to have forgotten that the mass protests across their continent are fueled by soaring prices, the fallout of the unprovoked war the United States and Israel imposed on Iran. And one of that war's chief instigators was none other than Reza Pahlavi's paymaster, Netanyahu. It was a war without cause. It spilled so much innocent blood and showed once again how bankrupt the West's human rights claims are. Its devastation has since washed up on the streets of Europe. And now Europe rolls out the red carpet in its parliament for a chief agent and cheerleader of those very wars, so that he can peddle his hollow claims and lies once again.

The real question is this: are Europe's statesmen genuinely oblivious, or simply pretending to be asleep? They need only walk the streets after dark, not just in Tehran but in any of hundreds of cities and villages across Iran. They would see that nearly 250 nights after the war began, tens of millions of Iranians are still out every night, and their chants heap curses on the very man who claims to be their voice.

If the Europeans wish to keep lowering themselves into the well on Netanyahu's rotten rope, the rope of a man who has trampled every norm of human decency, by all means. But they would do well to remember that our sweet Persian tongue keeps a bitter little proverb for just such occasions: whoever digs a well for others ends up at the bottom of it.

Tehran Chamber delegation pursues transport, transit co-op at Istanbul's Logitrans 2026



TEHRAN- A trade delegation from the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture visited the 19th International Istanbul Transport and Logistics Exhibition, Logitrans 2026, led by Peyman Sanandaji, head of the chamber's Transport Committee, and accompanied by representatives of transport-sector associations.

The chamber has sent such a delegation for the third consecutive year to enable dialogue and networking between Iranian transport and logistics actors and their Turkish counterparts and other economic partners taking part in the event.

Logitrans, held during November 11-13, is a trade fair for logistics and transport, and one of the most prominent trade fairs in the region which serves as a key meeting point for professionals in the transport and logistics industry. Held annually, the event attracts participants not only from Turkey but also from many other countries around the world.

During the visit, the delegation reviewed the capabilities of Turkish transport companies and held consultations with managers of major Turkish transport associations on joint cooperation in transit, road transport and rail transport. In a meeting with the head of UTIKAD, Turkey's Association of International Forwarding and Logistics Service Providers—described as Turkey's largest and most inclusive nongovernmental body in transport and logistics, with more than 700 active transport and trade companies under its umbrella—the two sides discussed expanding bilateral cooperation, identifying new opportunities for interaction and examining ways to facilitate cargo flows between the two countries. Both sides declared readiness to expand cooperation to speed up transit services through UTIKAD and the Tehran Chamber's Transport Committee. The delegation also held preliminary talks with Turkish rail transport companies on developing rail cooperation between Iran and Turkey; it was agreed that rail associations from both countries would examine cooperation opportunities through working contacts.

On the second day of the delegation's presence at Logitrans 2026, Sanandaji met Alper Ozel, chairman of the executive board of Turkey's International Transport Association (UND), at the association's booth. They discussed issues and challenges in land transport between Iran and Turkey. Sanandaji thanked Turkish transport industry actors for their support and cooperation in moving and exchanging goods between Iran and other countries via Turkey, and stressed the need to strengthen interaction between the two sides' transport associations. Pointing to existing challenges in road transport and cargo transit between Iran and Turkey, he said the Tehran Chamber and its Transport Commission were ready to work with UND to examine the problems and obstacles and reach practical, joint solutions. Ozel referred to the history of transport and transit cooperation between the two countries and declared UND's readiness to cooperate and exchange views with the Tehran Chamber and Iranian transport associations. He stressed the need for continued communication among actors in the sector and for exchanging views on ways to facilitate goods movement between the two countries. The meeting also stressed the need to follow up common transport issues, strengthen links among specialized associations and examine solutions to make trade and transit exchanges between Iran and Turkey smoother. The delegation's visit was aimed at reviewing transport and logistics capacities, learning about the latest services and technologies in the sector, and developing commercial and professional ties.

The delegation also met Iran's Consul General in Istanbul, Ahmad Mohammadi. Sanandaji outlined the private sector's efforts to strengthen rail transport and facilitate cargo transit between Iran and Turkey. Referring to restrictions on cargo transport and transit, he said the Transport Commission had corresponded and negotiated with Turkish associations and companies to advance objectives and diversify transport routes, and that previous talks had been followed up during the exhibition. He also referred to the capacity of Turkey's Hopa port and an agreement by the Tehran Chamber to facilitate and accelerate the sea transport of Iranian companies' goods from that port, asking Iran's embassy and consulate in Turkey to help facilitate the matter. Consul General Mohammadi noted Turkey's cooperation with Iran during the recent war and the US economic siege, and announced the readiness of Iran's government representation in Istanbul to address problems related to Iranian companies' transit through Turkey. He highlighted the capacity of Istanbul exhibitions to connect businesses from the two countries and asked private transport companies to help increase transit via Turkey, especially for key products such as medicine.

Overall, the reports underscore the Iranian private sector's push to expand rail and transit links with Turkey, reduce land-transport obstacles, diversify routes and use alternative ports to keep trade moving.

Iranian ambassador meets Algerian minister to discuss expanding economic cooperation

TEHRAN- Algeria's Minister of Foreign Trade and Export Promotion met with the Ambassador of Iran to review the status and prospects of bilateral economic and trade cooperation and ways to strengthen it.

According to an ISNA report, Kamel Rezig, Algeria's Minister of Foreign Trade and Export Promotion, met and held talks with Nasser Kanaani, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Algeria, on November 11, in Algiers, the capital.

According to a statement by Algeria's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Export Promotion, during the meeting the two sides exchanged views on the status and prospects of economic and trade cooperation between the two countries and ways to strengthen it.

Developing bilateral partnership and expanding areas of trade exchange in line with securing the common interests of the two countries were among other topics of the meeting.

The two sides also examined the activation of the Iran-Algeria Joint Trade Council—a mechanism considered important for strengthening communication and coordination among the two countries' economic actors, increasing trade exchanges, and identifying new opportunities for cooperation.

Iran, Uzbekistan emphasize rail, road, transit co-op in Tashkent meeting

From Page 1 ▸ saw both parties emphasize the extensive capacities for bilateral cooperation while stressing the critical need to remove existing obstacles and facilitate the seamless flow of trade and transit exchanges along regional routes.

Minister Sadegh characterized her trip to Tashkent and her meetings with Uzbek officials as indicative of the strategic importance of political, economic, transport, and transit relations between the two countries. She referred to her previous negotiations with Minister Mahkamov on the sidelines of the 14th Meeting of Transport Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) held in Astana, Kazakhstan, and emphasized the need for continuous follow-up and operationalization of the agreements reached during those discussions. This continuity in diplomatic engagement underscores the commitment of both nations to translating high-level agreements into tangible outcomes that benefit their respective economies and populations.

The Iranian Minister, assessing favorably the process of Iran-Uzbekistan cooperation in the road, air, and rail sectors, called for holding a trilateral rail meeting with the participation of Iran, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. This proposed gathering would serve to strengthen coordination and accelerate the development of rail cooperation among the three countries, recognizing that regional connectivity requires multilateral approaches that address shared interests and mutual benefits. The initiative reflects Iran's broader strategy of positioning itself as a vital transit hub connecting Central Asia to global markets through its extensive transportation infrastructure.

Iran's port capacities and regional connectivity

Minister Sadegh, referring to the significant capacities of both countries in the fields of logistics and transit, described the capacity of Iran's northern and southern ports as a valuable opportunity for the development of regional interactions. She announced the imminent connection of Chabahar Port to the country's rail network, a development that she characterized as paving the way for enhancing transit capacities, expanding logistics cooperation, and facilitating regional countries' access to open waters. This announcement holds particular significance given Chabahar's strategic location on the Gulf of Oman, which positions it as a critical gateway for landlocked Central Asian nations seeking reliable access to international shipping routes.

Welcoming the development of corridor relations and multilateral cooperation, Sadegh emphasized utilizing the complementary capacities of the two countries to strengthen the position of Iran and Uzbekistan in the regional transport and transit network. The Iranian Minister's vision encompasses a comprehensive approach to regional connectivity that leverages Iran's geographic advantages as a bridge between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf, while simultaneously benefiting from Uzbekistan's position as a major economic player in Central Asia with growing trade ambitions and infrastructure development goals.



Further in the meeting, Ilhom Mahkamov, Minister of Transport of Uzbekistan, emphasized the importance of comprehensive development of transport cooperation with Iran and announced his country's readiness to expand interactions and implement joint programs in this area. Referring to the existing cooperation between the two countries in the road and rail transport sectors, he emphasized the need to continue consultations, follow up on agreements, and provide the necessary grounds for the further development of bilateral cooperation. The Uzbek Minister's statements reflected his country's recognition of Iran's strategic importance as a transit partner and its willingness to deepen engagement across multiple transportation modalities.

Provincial diplomacy: Mazandaran's economic engagement with Uzbekistan

The cooperation between Iran and Uzbekistan extends beyond the national level, as evidenced by provincial-level engagement and economic diplomacy. According to a Khabar Online report from Mazandaran, Fariddin Nasriyev, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Iran, met with Mehdi Younesi Rostami, Governor of Mazandaran province, on October 22, and while thanking the provincial officials for their warm hospitality, emphasized the broad capacities for economic and trade cooperation between Mazandaran and Uzbekistan. This meeting demonstrates the multifaceted nature of Iran-Uzbekistan relations, which increasingly involve provincial actors and private sector stakeholders in the pursuit of expanded economic ties.

Referring to the meeting held at the Mazandaran Chamber of Commerce, Ambassador Nasriyev stated that a very good meeting had been held with the participation of economic actors, which shows the high interest of Iranian traders in cooperating with Uzbekistan, as well as the desire of Uzbek traders to benefit from the capacities and manufactured products of Mazandaran. This mutual interest in commercial engagement suggests a growing appetite among private sector actors in both countries to explore new markets and business opportunities, driven by the recognition that regional trade integration can yield substantial economic dividends.

The Ambassador also expressed satisfaction over the presence of a Mazandarani in the co-presidency of the Iran-Uzbekistan Chamber of Commerce, describing this as an opportunity to strengthen economic ties and facilitate cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries. Referring to last year's visit of a Mazandaran delegation to Uzbekistan, Nasriyev assessed that visit as positive and constructive and noted that the trend of trade cooperation between the two sides is increasingly expanding, with suitable grounds existing for further development of these relations. He announced intensive planning for visits by officials in the next two to three months, including a planned visit to Uzbekistan and an invitation for the Governor of Mazandaran to travel to the country, so that the ground can be further prepared for strengthening economic and trade cooperation.

The Ambassador also referred to interactions between Mazandaran Province and Uzbekistan's Fergana Province, considering the exchange of trade delegations between the two regions an effective step toward developing economic relations. This sister-province relationship provides a framework for sustained cooperation and mutual understanding at the subnational level, facilitating the identification of investment opportunities and the expansion of trade exchanges in ways that complement national-level initiatives.

Growing trade and future prospects

The broader context of Iran-Uzbekistan economic relations is characterized by significant growth potential. In late September, Mehr News Agency reported that Uzbekistan's $1.4 billion food market is open to Iranian exporters, with trade between the two countries reaching $305 million in the first half of 2026, and three cooperation documents recently signed. This data reveals both the progress achieved and the substantial opportunities that remain to be exploited in bilateral trade relations.

According to this report, Uzbekistan is becoming one of Central Asia's growing markets, as its food imports in the first quarter of 2026 jumped by nearly 46% to $1.4 billion. Yet Iran's share of this market remains limited, and economic actors believe that expanding Iran's food industry exports to Tashkent requires resolving financial and transportation obstacles and gaining a more accurate understanding of the market dynamics. The recognition of these challenges indicates a pragmatic approach to trade expansion that acknowledges the need for targeted interventions to overcome existing barriers.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has pursued its foreign trade development path more rapidly, and growth in imports, increased foreign investment, and expanded ties with regional markets have made the country one of Central Asia's notable markets. According to the latest statistics from Uzbekistan's National Statistics Committee, the country's imports in the first quarter of 2026 reached $12.2 billion, with food products and live animals accounting for approximately $1.4 billion and growing by 45.9% compared with the same period last year. These figures demonstrate that Uzbekistan's food market is not merely a domestic consumer market but, given the country's population of more than 37 million and its position as one of Central Asia's trade hubs, could become increasingly important for regional food exporters.

Iran's commercial attaché in Uzbekistan, Rahmatollah Khormali, referring to more than $280 million in trade between the two countries in the first five months of this year, cited agricultural exports, technological cooperation, and joint investment as key pillars for expanding Iran-Uzbekistan trade. He noted that follow-ups by the agriculture ministries of both countries paved the way for sending a 120-member delegation headed by the Minister of Agriculture and a group of activists and experts in agriculture, aquaculture, machinery, and processing industries to Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan ranks second among Iran's export destinations among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and has considerable capacity for expanding trade relations, with agriculture being one of the priority areas in developing trade between the two countries.

Khormali described food security as another important area of cooperation and noted that in the Uzbek government structure, a Food Security Agency has been established to ensure and improve food security in areas such as livestock, poultry, quarantine, and food products, which can provide a basis for developing specialized and commercial cooperation. He also addressed the potential for technological cooperation, stating that about 30 projects worth $770 million in various fields, including agriculture, are being implemented in Uzbekistan by Iranian companies, indicating the considerable capacity of Iran's private sector to enter the Uzbek market. These developments collectively suggest that Iran-Uzbekistan relations are entering a new phase of expanded engagement across multiple sectors, driven by shared economic interests and complementary capacities.

In conclusion, the meetings between high-level officials and provincial actors reflect a comprehensive approach to strengthening Iran-Uzbekistan relations. From the strategic discussions in Tashkent regarding transport corridors and port connectivity to the practical economic diplomacy in Mazandaran focused on trade and investment, both nations are actively pursuing avenues for deeper cooperation. The growing trade figures and planned delegations signal a positive trajectory, though challenges remain in fully realizing the potential of this bilateral relationship. With continued commitment from both governments and active participation from the private sector, Iran and Uzbekistan appear well-positioned to enhance their economic partnership and contribute to regional integration in Central Asia.

Over 530m tons of cargo predicted on east-west route by 2030

TEHRAN - The Deputy Minister of Transport and Urban Development and CEO of the Railway Company, referring to the prediction of transporting more than 530 million tons of cargo on the East-West route by 2030, announced plans to develop rail diplomacy, remove border bottlenecks, and integrate the rail transport network of regional countries with the aim of increasing Iran's share of international transit.

According to an IRNA report, Jabbar-Ali Zakeri, speaking at the 19th International Rail Transport Conference, referred to the railway's plan to sign three memoranda of understanding in the technology field on the sidelines of the conference and added: These memoranda will be concluded with the participation of the private sector and investors, and we hope their results will become visible in the country's rail transport industry in the near future.

The CEO of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Railway Company, referring to Iran University of Science and Technology hosting the event, described the university's Railway Engineering Faculty as one of the country's scientific and specialized capacities and explained: This faculty is one of the unique scientific centers in the Middle East, and an important part of the scientific and technological foundations used in the country's rail projects originates from the scientific and research achievements of this institution and the academics active in this field.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Jensen Huang's exit leaves a much bigger story unexplained

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Jensen Huang built Nvidia into the indispensable supplier of the AI boom and convinced Washington that U.S. leadership depended on it.

His resignation on Thursday leaves a harder question: how did a company with such political reach become the center of an export-control scandal the Trump administration supposedly failed to contain?

The immediate scandal is personal. Huang acknowledged an extramarital affair, and reports of other relationships with Nvidia subordinates deepened pressure on the board.

But the more consequential concern was his relationship with Alice Huang, a former executive at Singapore-based Megaspeed.

U.S. officials reportedly suspect her of "working for Chinese intelligence." No public evidence has established it; the separate scrutiny of Megaspeed's business is better documented.

Nvidia says it has no reason to believe company secrets or U.S. national-security interests were compromised.

Nvidia said Huang had resigned as president, chief executive and director, effective immediately. Chief Financial Officer Colette Kress was named interim CEO; longtime director Harvey C. Jones became the company's first board chair. After 33 years at its helm, he had become the company's public face.

Shares fell as much as 14 percent Thursday, after already retreating from a record high amid AI valuation concerns.

Megaspeed and the spy narrative

Megaspeed bought large quantities of Nvidia equipment and built data-center capacity in Southeast Asia, which could be leased to Chinese customers.

The Information reported that companies linked to Alice Huang helped facilitate at least $7.5 billion in Nvidia chip sales through Chinese companies since 2023.



U.S. authorities are reportedly examining whether hardware was diverted to China in violation of export restrictions. Megaspeed claims it is a legitimate business and has pledged to cooperate with U.S. investigators.

Singapore's account complicates the espionage allegations.

Its Home Affairs Ministry said it began investigating Megaspeed in February 2025 over suspected false declarations in server purchases and related commercial offenses. It explicitly said Alice Huang was not investigated for espionage.

In February 2026, police found insufficient evidence that she had committed the suspected offenses.

They nevertheless issued her a stern warning, saying she had knowingly provided inaccurate information to downplay her role, and barred her from re-entering Singapore. The investigation into Megaspeed and six others remains open.

That does not settle the U.S. inquiry or rule out diversion, but it leaves a gap between public evidence and Washington's most dramatic claim.

The practical questions are more concrete: who bought the chips, where the hardware went, which customers accessed the computing capacity, and whether Nvidia and U.S. regulators checked those transactions properly.

Beijing has also been trying to reduce Chinese dependence on Nvidia, encouraging domestic alternatives and restricting imports of U.S. processors.

Reuters reported this month that about 600,000 H200 chips were sitting in Hong Kong because Beijing had not approved large-scale shipments to the mainland. Chinese companies still want Nvidia's software and computing power, but the government is pushing them toward domestic suppliers.

A private network exploiting Chinese demand for Nvidia capacity does not, by itself, establish a state-directed intelligence operation.

The White House knew

The political question is why Megaspeed remained off the Commerce Department's Entity List, which can restrict access to U.S. goods and technology, despite warnings from other agencies.

The New York Times reported that a Commerce inquiry stalled after Nvidia's general counsel contacted an official. The department has not publicly accepted that account.

The Times also reported that Commerce had not added a company to the list for more than a year, its longest pause in 18 years.

The warnings reached the White House. The Washington Post reported that Secretary of State Marco Rubio briefed President Donald Trump in May on intelligence concerning Huang's relationship with Alice Huang, shortly before the Nvidia chief joined Trump's trip to China.

Huang boarded Air Force One anyway. Trump later defended him as an honorable man and gave an unclear account of when he first learned of the allegations.

On Friday, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent took the dispute public. He said Treasury, the Pentagon, the State Department and the U.S. trade representative had supported adding Megaspeed to the Entity List for months, but the decision rested with Commerce. "Commerce has the pen," he told CNBC.

Bessent also questioned whether Nvidia had properly vetted Megaspeed and possible shell-company intermediaries.

His remarks shifted attention from intelligence speculation to the administration's failure to use powers it says are already sufficient to stop sensitive chips reaching China.

The contradiction runs through Trump's own policy. Following Huang's lobbying, the administration permitted sales of Nvidia's H200 chips to approved Chinese customers, reversing earlier restrictions.

Now senior officials are arguing over whether a Southeast Asian company should have been blacklisted for allegedly helping Chinese customers gain access to Nvidia technology.

The administration has tried to defend commercial access while promising to restrict China's technological rise. Megaspeed shows what happens when those goals collide, and enforcement becomes a matter of interagency politics.

Congress is seeking answers. Republican committee chairmen had requested a closed-door briefing from Huang on Nvidia's security practices before he resigned, and lawmakers say they still want to hear from him.

Washington faces an uncomfortable reckoning: explain why its own warnings failed to move Commerce, and whether an industry with extraordinary access to the White House can be regulated at all.

Six, including a surgeon, killed in Israeli strike on Nasser Hospital in Gaza



An Israeli airstrike on Gaza's Nasser Hospital on Wednesday night killed six people, injured 27 others and caused extensive damage.

Ramiz Alakbarov, Acting UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, said on Thursday said he was deeply alarmed by the attack."

The strike hit the hospital's surgical department. A medical worker, patients and their companions were among the dead, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

"The ongoing violence and recent increase in military operations exacerbate the immense human suffering in Gaza and jeopardize the increasingly fragile ceasefire," Alakbarov said.

Palestinian surgeon Dr. Rizk Abu Shaira was among those killed, the Health Ministry said. He was featured in the 2026 documentary "American Doctor," which followed three American doctors helping to provide medical care in Gaza.

A 13-year-old boy was among the dead.

An array of munitions debris was displayed at the hospital site as media visited on Thursday. Two munitions experts said an image supplied to NBC News appeared to show debris from a GBU-39 Small Diameter Bomb.

Brian Castner, a crisis researcher at Amnesty International, also identified the munitions as belonging to a GBU-39, adding that Israel has used the bomb "in many strikes in Gaza."

Israel is notoriously famous for targeting medical centers, especially in Gaza.

On December 17, 2023, Israel hit the maternity ward at Nasser Hospital, killing a 13-year-old girl and injuring others. Also, on February 14–15, 2024, Israeli forces shelled the hospital's orthopedic department, killing one person and injuring eight, according to MSF.

The Wednesday strike came as families are struggling with the aftermath of heavy storms that battered Gaza last weekend, causing widespread flooding and a deadly sand dune collapse.

An estimated 65 percent of Gaza's population, some 1.4 million people, live in tents or makeshift shelters, according to the UN aid coordination office (OCHA).

Reports indicate that a nine-month-old baby has died of the cold following days of heavy rain and flooding.

Across Gaza, families are exposed to standing water contaminated with sewage, while available pumps, sandbags and other equipment fall short of needs.

Essential laboratory supplies and medical equipment also continue to be denied entry, hampering the detection of disease outbreaks – a risk that grows significantly in winter.

Four senators threaten government shutdown unless Congress cuts off Iran war money

From page 1 ▸ "We intend to fund the government and stop funds for this war," they said. Their statement listed higher prices for gas, groceries and fertilizer, more than 20 American service members killed and hundreds wounded, and none of Trump's stated goals achieved.

Democrats won the House and at least 54 Senate seats on Nov. 3, and Vice President JD Vance has since written that Republicans lost because of the war. Trump called that "largely true," then said "he would do it all again."

Vance's own list of causes included the American relationship with Israel. A Chicago Council survey found 68 percent of Americans think the war has not been worth its costs, and its polling put American feelings toward Israel at their lowest point since 1978.

The bill keeps growing. The Pentagon put the war's cost at $47.1 billion by mid-October. Trump now wants Senate Republicans to pass a $350 billion defense package through reconciliation, and some of them are balking.

Rand Paul called funding the war after that electoral defeat tone deaf. Mike Rounds said the push would "absolutely" raise the risk of a shutdown.

Democrats are not united either. A stopgap needs 60 votes, and Sen. Patty Murray, the top Democrat on Appropriations, says Democrats will not accept supplemental money for the war, though she also favors a short bill that carries government into next year.

Sen. Tim Kaine is drafting his own cutoff language. Van Hollen, who announced Thursday that he will challenge Chuck Schumer for party leader, has suggested Schumer has not pushed hard enough to use the power of the purse. Sanders backs his bid.

Republicans say let them try. Sen. John Kennedy said that if Democrats make funding contingent on "cutting and running," there will be a shutdown.

Backers of a cutoff point to 1973, when Congress ended funding for U.S. combat in Indochina through a spending provision.

The campaign of aggression against Iran shows no sign of ending. Trump promised four to five weeks in the spring. It is now in its ninth month, and he says it ends "when I say it ends."

Yemeni forces complete Aden encirclement

Forces loyal to Yemen's Ansarallah movement have managed to make major advances against Saudi-backed militants south of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, officially completing the encirclement of Aden Province.

Reports said on Friday that the Yemeni forces reached the coastal strip connecting Aden to Lahij Province, Press TV reported.

Saudi-sponsored mercenaries in the areas of al-Suqiya and Ras al-Ara were given two options, surrender and face capture, or withdraw without their weapons, the reports added.

The advances come as Saudi fighter jets have carried out dozens of airstrikes to prevent the Yemeni forces from cementing their gains.

On Thursday, fierce clashes erupted along several fronts near Kharaz Camp, which is considered one of the main military support bases for Saudi-backed militants and houses a large number of warehouses containing various types of weapons.

Saudi oil and military sites targeted

Meanwhile, Yemeni Armed Forces (YAF) spokesperson Yahya Saree said on Friday that forces loyal to the Ansarallah movement had targeted oil infrastructure and military assets in the Saudi kingdom, including a pumping station on the East-West Pipeline with a drone as well as the Yanbu oil facility on the Red Sea.

Saree further said a military cargo plane at Sharurah airport close to Yemen's border was targeted with a drone, while a ballistic missile launched towards Khamis Mushait airbase "scored a direct hit".

The spokesperson added that their forces had targeted the Saudi Aramco headquarters in the capital, Riyadh, but rejected as a "grave falsehood" a Saudi assertion that the they had targeted the kingdom's Mecca region on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is pressing the European Union to adopt an EU Parliament resolution to designate YAF, also called Ansarallah, as a "terrorist organization", according to the Reuters news agency, citing sources familiar with the drive.

But European officials told Reuters the bloc is concerned this could undermine a future peace process.

EU foreign policy spokesperson Anouar El-Anouni said the bloc was in regular contact with Riyadh on regional developments, but declined to comment on any specific discussions under way, according to Reuters.

X suspends Palestinian American campaign account after Senate bid

Social media platform X has suspended the campaign account of Palestinian American writer Ahmed Moor, days after he announced a Democratic primary challenge against Senator John Fetterman in Pennsylvania's 2028 election, Anadolu reports.

Moor announced the suspension Wednesday through his personal X account, sharing a screenshot of the notice displayed on his campaign account, @moorforpa.

"FRIENDS! It's official! We're a threat," he wrote. "They've suspended the campaign account. Help us maintain the momentum by retweeting and please consider donating."

The suspension notice stated that X "suspends accounts that violate our rules" but did not identify the specific rule allegedly breached or explain the decision.

The campaign account had attracted more than 33,000 followers within approximately three days of its launch, according to media reports.

Moor's campaign also addressed the suspension in a post on Bluesky, saying: "Well it's official, Elon Musk is not a fan of the campaign! Our campaign account has been suspended."

The campaign urged supporters to share the post and help maintain its momentum.

X had not publicly provided a specific explanation for the suspension at the time of publication.

Moor announced his Senate campaign on Monday, positioning himself as a challenger to Fetterman, a Democrat who has faced criticism from progressives over his strong support for Israel.

"I'm running to end the war in Iran and to promote the dignity agenda: free healthcare,



free childcare, and affordable housing," Moor said in his campaign announcement.

"I'm calling for accountability for genocide, for ICE and for corruption. And finally, for the protection of our civil liberties in America."

Moor, who was born in Gaza and lives in Philadelphia, has criticized U.S. support for Israel and called for public spending to prioritize domestic needs.

Microsoft outage disrupts businesses, governments globally

A more than 12-hour outage of Microsoft Outlook and Teams crippled communications for businesses and governments globally on Friday, forcing some organizations to revert to fax machines and halting at least one bond repurchase in Europe, Reuters reported.

Microsoft (MSFT.O), opens new tab said server issues were behind the incident that also affected its Copilot AI assistant and that a broader roll-out of software fixes was starting to stabilize the system. It said it was not aware of any malicious activity.

Outlook and Teams are two of the most widely used workplace applications with hundreds of millions of users. The outage prevented people from performing essential functions such as sending emails, managing calendars and hosting virtual meetings.

It affected government agencies from Australia to Japan and the United States, caused delays at trading firms, hindered some companies from publishing earnings and prompted airlines to warn customers of communication lags, according to public statements.

Organizations that host Microsoft services on their own servers, rather than in the cloud, were somewhat spared.

The outage is one of the longest in Microsoft's history and the second disruption to its services this year.

Microsoft said the outage specifically hit features tied to Exchange Online - its cloud-based email and scheduling hub - leaving unconnected applications operational.

SPORTS

Soltanian wins gold in taekwondo: Dakar 2026

TEHRAN – Iran's Benyamin Soltanian claimed gold in the men's +73kg taekwondo competition at the 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal.

Soltanian defeated Spain's Ivan Lysenko Serrano 2-0 in the final to secure the title. He won the opening round 15-8 before taking the second on a tiebreak after the round ended 4-4.

Lysenko Serrano settled for silver, while South Korea's Jun Won Jang and Russia's Bashir Adzhiev shared the bronze medals.

Soltanian's triumph marked Iran's only gold medal at the Dakar 2026 Games, making his victory a significant achievement for the country's young sporting delegation.

The fourth edition of the Summer Youth Olympic Games 2026 were held in Dakar, Senegal from 31 October to 13 November. This was the first time the Youth Olympic Games were organized in Africa. Dakar 2026 presented a visionary, ambitious and technically sound YOG project that addresses the long-term aims of the country.

Iran's presence gives Basra tournament value, coach says

TEHRAN - An experienced Iraqi coach believes Iran's participation will raise the technical profile of the four-nation friendly tournament in Basra, despite the postponement of the AFC Asian Cup.

Jabbar Hashim said the delay to the continental competition had reduced the technical significance of the tournament, which was originally intended to serve as an important preparation opportunity for Iraq ahead of the Asian Cup.

Speaking to Iraqi news agency Al-Maalomah, Hashim noted that major competitions provide players and coaching staff with additional motivation, while preparatory matches play an important role in improving players' technical and physical readiness.

However, he highlighted Iran's participation as a key factor in enhancing the tournament's standing.

"Having a strong Asian team like Iran take part gives the tournament greater technical value and takes it beyond the level of ordinary friendly matches," Hashim said.

He added that facing high-caliber opponents would provide an important test for players and help the coaching staff assess their readiness.

Hashim also stressed that Iraq's coaching staff should make the most of the tournament to evaluate players and expand their tactical options ahead of future international assignments.

According to the announced schedule, Iraq will face Lebanon in their opening match on Friday before taking on Iran on Nov. 17 at Basra International Stadium.

The clash between Iraq and Iran is expected to provide a competitive test for both sides as they continue their preparations for upcoming international commitments.

Rahimi, the first Iranian woman to make WTT Contender main draw

TEHRAN - Elina Rahimi has become the first Iranian Women's Singles player to make the main draw of a WTT Contender event after she battled through three rounds of qualifying at WTT Contender Istanbul 2026.

Rahimi's run to the Round of 32 is historic, as she is not only the first woman from her country to do it at this level, but she's also only the second female player from Iran to make the Main Draw at a WTT Series event, after Neda Shahsavari reached the Round of 32 through qualifying at WTT Star Contender Doha II 2021.

Ranked World No.650, Rahimi was the fourth-lowest-ranked player in the Women's Singles Qualifying Draw. She beat World No.691 Katarina Strazar in the first round (11-7, 5-11, 11-7, 11-6) before pulling off a mind-blowing straight-games win over No.6 seed and World No.122 Filippa Bergand (11-6, 11-9, 11-6). The 21-year-old then sealed her spot in the Main Draw with victory over Valeriia Kotsiur (11-6, 11-7, 7-11, 5-11, 11-5), worldtabletennis.com reported.

Rahimi's journey marks a landmark moment for Iranian table tennis, and she now has the chance to test her mettle against one of the world's best players as she faces No. 2 seed and World No. 17 Joo Cheonhui in the Main Draw.

Iran's 38th-place at Dakar 2026: a wake-up call

TEHRAN - Iran's disappointing performance at the 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal, has raised serious questions about the country's ability to develop the next generation of sporting talent.

Iranian athletes collected just one gold, four silver and three bronze medals in Dakar, finishing 38th in the overall standings. The result represents a significant decline compared to the 2018 Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, where Iran secured seven gold, three silver and four bronze medals to finish seventh.

The contrast between the two campaigns is particularly concerning given the importance of the Youth Olympic Games as a platform for identifying, developing and preparing young athletes for senior international competitions.

The event is designed to provide emerging talents with valuable international experience and help them take the first steps towards becoming future Olympic and world champions. For Iran, however, the Dakar campaign offered little evidence of progress.

Winning only one gold medal, compared with seven in Buenos Aires, highlights the scale of the decline. While medal counts do not tell the entire story of a country's sporting development, such a significant drop in the rankings should serve as a warning to Iranian sports officials.

There were, nevertheless, some positive moments for the Iranian delegation. The girls' futsal team made history by defeating Italy in the third-place match to secure a historic bronze medal. Their achievement demonstrated the potential of Iranian female athletes and provided one of the brightest moments of an otherwise disappointing campaign.

However, individual successes cannot conceal the broader problems reflected in Iran's overall performance.

Iran has traditionally been regarded as one of West Asia's major sporting powers, particularly in disciplines such as wrestling, weightlifting, taekwondo and combat sports. Maintaining that position requires continuous investment in grassroots programs, improved coaching structures and systematic talent identification.

The results in Dakar suggest that Iran risks losing ground to emerging sporting nations unless meaningful changes are introduced.

The responsibility now rests with sports administrators and national federations to examine the reasons behind this decline. Greater attention must be paid to youth development, international exposure, coaching standards and providing young athletes with adequate facilities and support.

The athletes competing in Dakar are expected to become the backbone of Iranian sport in the coming years. Their development should therefore be treated as a national priority rather than a short-term project.

The Youth Olympic Games are not simply about medals. They are about building tomorrow's champions. Iran's performance in Dakar should be a wake-up call: without a clear strategy and serious investment in young talent, the country's sporting standing could continue to deteriorate.

Iran to face Palestine on Saturday in Basra tournament

TEHRAN - Iran will begin its campaign in the four-nation friendly tournament in Basra with a meeting against Palestine on Saturday.

Amir Ghalenoei's men will face an opponent that has made significant progress in recent months and enjoyed an impressive run of results.

Palestine have played several friendly matches in 2026, recording two wins and four draws, demonstrating that they have become a difficult side to beat.

After playing out two goalless draws against Kyrgyzstan, Palestine faced New Zealand and secured an impressive 2-2 draw against the Oceania side.

They followed that result with an entertaining 4-2 victory over Tajikistan before drawing 2-2 with Turkish club Konyaspor.

However, their most remarkable result came against China, whom they thrashed 5-0 on home soil in a stunning performance that attracted considerable attention.

Palestine's recent results suggest that Iran will face a challenging test in their opening match in Basra.

Beyond Persepolis: Discovering Iran's lesser-known historical and natural treasures



Qara Kelisa, Armenian Church, northwest Iran

TEHRAN – Beyond the celebrated destinations such as Isfahan, Shiraz and Persepolis lies another side of Iran, one of mountain fortresses, ancient rock carvings, little-explored archaeological sites, colorful islands and remote desert villages, to name a few, where traditional ways of life endure.

Stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf and from the Zagros Mountains to the central deserts, Iran boasts an extraordinary diversity of landscapes and cultural heritage, much of which remains outside conventional tourist itineraries.

For travelers willing to venture beyond the familiar routes, such lesser-known destinations offer a different perspective on Iran, revealing a country whose historical depth and natural diversity extend far beyond its best-known attractions.

Here is a selection of nine places worth discovering:

Alamut Valley: Castles in the heart of the Alborz

Set amid the rugged Alborz Mountains in northern Iran, Alamut Valley is a landscape of steep cliffs, green valleys, traditional villages and medieval fortifications. Its most famous landmark, Alamut Castle, which along with a satellite of other associated ruins, is now a UNESCO World Heritage site, occupies a dramatic rocky outcrop overlooking the surrounding terrain.

The fortress is closely associated with Hasan-i Sabbah, the leader of the Nizari Ismaili community who established his stronghold there in the late 11th century. Alamut subsequently became an important political and intellectual center of the Ismaili state and is often linked in historical accounts to the group known in Western sources as the Assassins.

The remains of the castle offer a glimpse into a turbulent chapter of medieval Iranian history, while the surrounding valley has attractions of its own. Numerous ruined fortresses are scattered across the region, reflecting the strategic importance of its mountainous terrain.

Alamut is also a rewarding destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Hiking routes pass through mountain villages and highland landscapes, with some longer trails connecting the interior valleys to the Caspian-facing slopes of the Alborz range.

Reaching the castle involves a scenic but winding journey from Qazvin, followed by a challenging uphill walk. The combination of history, mountain scenery and rural life makes Alamut an appealing destination for travelers seeking something beyond Iran's major urban attractions.

Qara Kelisa: An ancient Christian sanctuary

In the mountainous countryside of West Azarbaijan province, near Chaldoran, stands Qara Kelisa, also known as the Monastery of Saint Thaddeus. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage property as part of the Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran, it is among the country's most significant Christian monuments.

The monastery is traditionally associated with Saint Thaddeus, one of the apostles believed to have brought Christianity to the region during the first century. According to Armenian Christian tradition, Thaddeus was martyred in the area, and the monastery developed as an important pilgrimage destination.

Its architecture reflects centuries of construction, reconstruction and artistic development. Particularly striking is the contrast between its dark stone sections and lighter masonry, which explains its Turkish-derived name, meaning Black Church.

Beyond its architectural significance, Qara Kelisa remains an important center of Armenian religious heritage. Every year, Armenian pilgrims gather there for ceremonies commemorating Saint Thaddeus, maintaining a tradition that connects contemporary communities with the region's ancient Christian history.

Its remote location, surrounded by mountains and open countryside, adds to its appeal. A visit offers a chance to explore an important dimension of Iran's religious and cultural diversity.

Shapur Cave: A monumental Sasanian sculpture

Hidden in the mountains near Bishapur in Fars province, Shapur Cave is one of the more remarkable archaeological attractions of southwestern Iran.

Located in Tang-e Chogan, the cave is best known for its monumental statue of Shapur I, the Sasanian ruler who reigned from 240 CE to 270 and expanded the empire's influence across much of the region.

Carved from a natural limestone formation at the cave entrance, the statue stands approximately seven meters high. Its imposing figure, distinctive crown and elaborate hairstyle reflect the artistic traditions and royal imagery of the Sasanian period.

Although parts of the sculpture have suffered damage over the centuries, it remains an extraordinary example of monumental rock sculpture from ancient Iran.

The cave itself is part of a wider historical landscape that includes Bishapur, a Sasanian city founded under Shapur I, and the rock reliefs of Tang-e Chogan, which depict royal victories and ceremonies.

Visitors can reach the cave from Bishapur, followed by a hike through the mountainous terrain. The uphill journey requires reasonable fitness, but the opportunity to encounter such a monumental ancient sculpture in its original natural setting makes it a memorable experience.

Kurangun: An ancient Elamite ritual landscape

For travelers fascinated by prehistoric and ancient civilizations, Kurangun in Fars province offers a remarkable encounter with one of Iran's lesser-known archaeological treasures.

Located near Nurabad in Mamasani county, the Kurangun rock relief is carved into a cliff overlooking the Fahliyan River. Generally dated to the second millennium BC, it is attributed to the Elamite civilization, which flourished across southwestern Iran long before the rise of the Achaemenid Empire.

The central scene depicts divine figures seated on a throne, accompanied by rows of worshippers. Some of the figures wear distinctive horned headdresses, while the composition incorporates symbols associated with ancient religious beliefs.

One particularly striking element is the representation of flowing water, traditionally interpreted as a reference to a life-giving divine force.

The relief provides valuable evidence of Elamite religious practices, artistic traditions and cultural connections with neighboring civilizations in Mesopotamia.

Unlike the more frequently visited archaeological sites around Persepolis, Kurangun receives relatively little tourist attention. Its location above a river valley and its impressive antiquity make it an especially rewarding destination for those interested in the early civilizations of the Iranian plateau.

Babak Castle: A mountain fortress with a powerful legacy

High above the forests and mountains near Kaleybar in East Azarbaijan province, Babak Castle stands as one of northwestern Iran's most striking historical fortifications.

Perched on a steep mountain ridge, the fortress is associated with Babak Khorramdin, a prominent leader of the Khorramdinan movement who resisted Abbasid rule during the ninth century.

Babak's rebellion lasted for more than two decades and became an important episode in the history of resistance to the Abbasid Caliphate. His stronghold in the mountainous region offered a strategic defensive position, making it difficult for opposing forces to approach.

Although the fortress is associated with Babak, archaeological evidence and architectural studies suggest that its origins may extend to the Sasanian period, with subsequent occupation and modification.

Today, the castle attracts visitors not only for its historical associations but also for its spectacular setting. Reaching the ruins requires a demanding climb along a mountain trail, but the views across the surrounding forests and highlands make the effort worthwhile.

For travelers interested in history and hiking, Babak Castle offers an opportunity to combine both in one of Iran's most scenic northwestern regions.

Izeh: A forgotten center of Elamite heritage

In Khuzestan province, the city of Izeh offers an extraordinary concentration of archaeological remains associated with the ancient Elamite civilization.

Often overlooked by visitors travelling to southwestern Iran, the region preserves rock reliefs, inscriptions and archaeological sites that provide important insights into a civilization that flourished thousands of years ago.

One of its most significant attractions is Eshkaft-e Salman, also known as the Tarisha sanctuary. The site contains four rock reliefs, two inside a natural cave and two outside it, alongside an important Elamite cuneiform inscription.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

AUCTION SJSCO. B140505

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 10,000 tons STEEL BILLET (Size 150 x 150 mm), with the possibility of increasing the contract amount to 20,000 tons on basis of FOB Bandar Abbas according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section.

Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KOODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN

All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than Monday, November 23, 2026.

For more information, please contact us at:

Tel: +2186084642

Iran calls for stronger anti-drug cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries

TEHRAN – Iran's anti-narcotics police chief, Iraj Kakavand, has stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between Iran and countries in the Asia-Pacific region to combat drug trafficking and enhance regional security.

Given that Asia-Pacific countries are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of instability and insecurity, Kakavand emphasized the importance of expanding law enforcement cooperation and joint efforts, IRIB reported.

He said such cooperation should focus on strengthening intelligence and operational capabilities, exchanging information, and conducting coordinated operations against drug trafficking networks. These efforts, he added, should be based on the principle of shared interests and responsibilities among nations in combating illicit drugs and safeguarding public health and security.

He made the remarks at the forty-seventh meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific (HONLEA), held from November 10 to13, in Vienna, Austria.

Elaborating on the heavy responsibility borne by Iran's law enforcement agencies, the official said protecting borders, combating international networks involved in smuggling and transit of narcotics and psychotropic substances, and ensuring the regional security and stability are among the main objectives of the Anti-narcotics Police of Iran, which has been successfully achieved over the past four decades, IRIB reported.

The seizure of an annual average of approximately 730 tons of various narcotics over the past decade, thanks to the round-the-clock, dedicated efforts driven by a commitment to humanity that transcends considerations of religion, creed, or race, along with the sacrifice of over 4,000



martyrs and 12,000 individuals who sustained injuries in this sacred struggle, demonstrates Iran's firm resolve and determination to decisively combat the pernicious phenomenon of drug trafficking, Kakavand stressed.

"We believe that the stability of the countries in the region is not merely a political issue; it is directly linked to border security, the control of the flow of narcotics, and countering transnational crimes, which will affect the development of nations. Since no single country can effectively address the cross-border challenges of combating narcotics, the strategy of the current meeting regarding the fight against narcotics should focus on the continued expansion of regional and international cooperation," he added.

HONLEA is a regional forum established under the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a subsidiary body of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). HONLEA operates through four regional groups covering Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Asia and the Pacific group was established under an ECOSOC Resolution in 1974.

Supporting Iran's counter-narcotics work pays off beyond its borders: UNODC

In August, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released a report, emphasizing the need to support Iran in the battle against narcotics.

Supporting Iran's counter-narcotics work pays off beyond its borders, the report highlighted, saying it keeps drugs from reaching other regions, cuts into the money that funds the organized crime and supports public health by slowing the spread of addictive synthetic substances.

The main seizure of methamphetamine in and around Middle East and South-East Asia over the past few years has been reported in Iran, according to the report which was published on Thursday.

Iranian seizure of methamphetamine increased from 30,393 kilos in 2022 to 40,453 kilos in 2025, placing the country at the forefront of the fight against drugs trafficking.

In the first quarter of 2026 alone, Iranian authorities have intercepted 3,663 kilograms of methamphetamines destined for Europe and the Persian Gulf.

These weren't just street-level busts. These were five intelligence-led operations targeting industrial-scale shipments originating in Afghanistan, evidence that trafficking networks in the region are shifting toward synthetic drugs.

While international attention has primarily focused on the vast region's declining opium production, advanced criminal drug trafficking networks have successfully shifted toward manufacturing and exporting synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine, commonly known as meth. West Asia is now the epicenter of a synthetic drug boom.

Iran is strategically positioned along the "Afghanistan-West Asia corridor," which serves as the primary trafficking route for these illicit commodities. The clear signal from Tehran is that these substantial shipments are being intercepted before they can reach international markets. Yet, sustained success will require enhanced international cooperation and support.

Each interception reduces the illicit financial flows that fund organized crime and slows the spread of synthetic drugs into new markets. These shipments are not merely statistics. Each seizure disrupts a supply chain that would otherwise put methamphetamine on the streets of Europe and the Persian Gulf, while cutting into the earnings of organized criminal networks.

Through its Country Partnership Programme as well as the Cooperation Framework with the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNODC supports the country efforts in advancing border technology with procurement of detection scanners, strengthening labs forensic capabilities in identify new synthetic compounds as well as regional intelligence sharing.

Sustained donor investment is critical to prevent this route from becoming a gateway for synthetic drugs. However, the scale of the challenge demands more than financial contributions—it requires a collective and sustainable approach by the international community. By supporting UNODC's work in Iran, donor nations are investing in regional stability and international security, while also protecting their own borders from the flow of illicit substances.

Iran proposes WAICO to establish specialized department on AI ethics

TEHRAN – Iran's representatives at the first summit of the World AI Cooperation Organization (WAICO) in Beijing, China, have proposed establishing a specialized department within the organization to address ethical issues related to artificial intelligence.

The proposal aims to place AI ethics among the organization's key areas of focus and promote greater attention to the responsible development and use of artificial intelligence.

"Artificial intelligence, like other advanced technologies, can have dual use; therefore, it is essential to strike a balance between technological advancement, ethical considerations, and its deployment, ensuring that none of these aspects hinders the progress of the others," Mehr news agency quoted Emadoddin Fatemizadeh, an official with the vice-presidency for science and knowledge-based economy, as saying.

Iran's proposal is well-received by some member states, he added.

Cooperation among member states can pave the way for the shared use of technological capabilities. China possesses strong capabilities in certain technological domains, while Iran offers a pool of specialized human resources, theoretical knowledge, and potential areas for the applications of artificial intelligence, he noted.

The initiative aims to identify shared capacities, foster complementary cooperation, ensuring that AI benefits are not monopolized by a few nations, and that developing countries can benefit from AI advantages as well.

Addressing WAICO first summit, Mohammad Reza Ghaebi, an official with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, emphasized the necessity for fair, non-discriminatory, and affordable access to artificial intelligence technologies, infrastructures, computing power, and AI models for all countries, warning that technological restrictions and unilateral coercive measures can exacerbate technological disparities among countries and hinder the collective realization of the benefits associated with this technology.

Referring to the consequences of the militarization of AI, Ghaebi said the use of this technology by the US and Israel in war against Iran led to the martyrdom of 168 students in Shajareh Tayyebeh elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan province.

He highlighted the need to counter the military use of AI, urging the international community to treat the risks posed by the militarization of AI with utmost seriousness, and ensure that the development and use of AI are consistent with the rule of international law and the UN Charter's core principles.

The official announced Iran's readiness for constructive collaborations with member states of WAICO, the sharing of expertise, scientific, and technological capabilities, and participation in developing a human-centered and inclusive ecosystem in the AI sector.

WAICO could redefine the existing global AI order by prioritizing equity and inclusivity in AI access, particularly for developing nations.

Iran agreed to join WAICO in August. Iran's ambassador to China, Abdolreza Rahmani-Fazli, signed the agreement on behalf of the country.

Holding a meeting with Liu Bin, Assistant Minister of China's Foreign Affairs, the official highlighted the importance of multilateral cooperation in shaping the future of advanced technologies.

He also voiced Iran's readiness to actively participate in scientific, research, and practical development of AI, as well as the development of international mechanisms for equitable use of and access to AI.

Joining this international initiative, Iran, as a founding member, is implementing a constructive approach towards evolving



technologies and benefiting from AI for sustainable development and societal progress, Rahmani-Fazli highlighted.

The new organization, first proposed by China at the 2025 World Artificial Intelligence Conference, is planned to be headquartered in Shanghai and is meant to operate as an independent intergovernmental entity.

On July 16, a day before the annual World Artificial Intelligence Conference in Shanghai, officials from 29 countries, including Iran, Russia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Brazil, Kazakhstan, and other countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, signed the agreement to establish WAICO. The event was attended by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres.

The WAICO agreement stresses open participation without conditions tied to political systems or values. It places strong, or rather pointed, emphasis on narrowing the technology-access gap between richer and poorer nations. It seeks to support developing countries in building AI capacity, shaping governance rules and technical standards.

It also aims to promote international cooperation on AI so that it remains beneficial, safe, and fair for all, in line with the principles of the UN Charter and with a people-centered approach.

Iran's UN envoy: Avicenna's legacy underscores power of knowledge in serving humanity

TEHRAN - On November 12, the International Scientific Conference entitled "Abu Ali Sina and His Contribution to the Formation of a New Scientific Worldview" was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva with the participation of Ali Bahreini, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to Geneva.

Addressing the event, Bahreini said: "The world today is grappling with self-centeredness, extremism, and division, and needs wisdom, scientific curiosity, and freedom from prejudice more than ever."

He noted that Avicenna, drawing on Persian, Greek, and Indian intellectual traditions, opened new horizons in understanding humanity and the world. His greatness, Bahreini added, lay not only in his scientific achievements but also in his open-mindedness, intellectual humility, and commitment to truth and humanity.

"Avicenna belongs to all centuries. He is a bridge between East and West and a reminder that the highest form of power is the power of thought placed in the service of humanity," he said.

The conference brought together representatives of the diplomatic corps, international organizations, academic and research institutions, as well as distinguished scholars and researchers, who discussed the significant contribution of Abu Ali Sina (Avicenna) to the advancement of world science and philosophy, the importance of his scientific and intellectual legacy, and the role of his humanistic ideas in fostering dialogue between Eastern and Western civilizations.



Particular attention was also devoted to the preservation, study, digitization and promotion of Ibn Sina's scientific heritage, the strengthening of international scientific cooperation, and the advancement of the universal values of knowledge, enlightenment, rational inquiry and intercultural understanding.

Ilam, Wasit provinces seek cross-border conservation zone to protect wildlife

TEHRAN - Iran's Ilam Province and Iraq's Wasit Province are considering establishing a joint protected area to conserve valuable wildlife species, combat illegal hunting, and promote cross-border tourism across the two border provinces.

Emphasizing the need to expand bilateral cooperation in economic, cultural, sports, and environmental fields, Ilam Governor-General Ahmad Karami said the geographical proximity and longstanding ties between the people of Ilam and Wasit offered valuable opportunities to strengthen relations and implement joint initiatives.

He described the protection of shared border ecosystems as a key priority for cooperation, noting that the presence of rare and valuable wildlife species in the two neighboring provinces made coordinated conservation measures essential to prevent their extinction.

The Ilam Department of Environment had prepared a proposal to establish a "joint protected area" and expressed hope that it would be signed in the presence of the Wasit governor-general and environmental officials from both sides, Karami said on the sidelines of a meeting with the governor-general of Wasit in the Iraqi city of Kut on Thursday.

The initiative, he added, could help effectively combat illegal hunting while creating opportunities for tourists to visit the area and generating sustainable income from its natural and environmental assets.

The Ilam governor-general also proposed signing a sister-city agreement between Ilam and Kut, saying the initiative could strengthen cultural and regional ties and foster closer people-to-people relations between the two provinces.

Iran-Iraq environmental cooperation

In May, Head of the Department of Environment (DOE) Shina Ansari called on Iraqi President Nizar Amedi to help address the environmental challenges facing the two neighboring countries.

In a letter to Amedi, who previously served as Iraq's environment minister, Ansari said Iran and Iraq faced similar environmental problems, including drought, desertification, and sand and dust storms (SDSs), stemming from their shared geographical and climatic conditions.

She stressed that the effects of these challenges extended beyond national borders, requiring close, sustained, and strategic cooperation between the two countries.

Ansari also highlighted the importance of strengthening environmental cooperation, particularly in water resource management and addressing major sources of sand and dust storms.

According to Mehr News Agency, she said Amedi's valuable experience in his previous position could provide an important foundation for tackling shared environmental problems and strengthening bilateral relations.

Water rights, sand and dust storms

In October 2025, Iranian and Iraqi officials discussed environmental challenges affecting the Hour al-Azim wetland, which straddles the border between the two countries, with particular attention to drought and spontaneous fires.

During a meeting in Iraq, Iranian DOE officials stressed the importance of Iraq ensuring the wetland's water rights. The failure to secure these rights has contributed to the wetland's drying up, triggering spontaneous fires that release large amounts of smoke and air pollutants and adversely affect cities in Khuzestan Province, according to the DOE website.

The Iranian delegation also underscored the need for better water resource management and consumption control along the Tigris River to secure the wetland's water supply, prevent fires from spreading in its Iraqi section, and curb the movement of pollutants toward Khuzestan.

Iraqi officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs outlined water levels in reservoirs behind dams along the Tigris River and described the severe drought affecting the region. They pledged to secure the wetland's water rights in the following year.

The two sides also discussed deploying firefighting aircraft and helicopters to extinguish fires and improve wetland management.

Enhancing scientific cooperation to address shared environmental challenges was another issue raised during the meeting.

The DOE has emphasized cooperation with Baghdad to tackle sand and dust storm hotspots in Iraq, which severely affect Iran's western and southwestern regions.

In September 2024, Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, during a meeting with Ansari, said joint environmental initiatives and follow-up on previously reached agreements would be among the main pillars of cooperation with Iraq, IRNA reported.

A study by four Iranian researchers has also identified Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia as the main sources of sand and dust storms affecting Iran.

The study, titled "Dust in Western Iran: The Emergence of New Sources in Response to Shrinking Water Bodies," was authored by Azar Beyranvand, Ghasem Azizi, Omid Alizadeh, and Ali Darvishi Boloorani and published in the journal Nature on September 27, 2023.

According to the study, the most influential dust sources affecting western Iran are located around Lake Tharthar, the Hour al-Azim Marsh, Lake Razzaza, Lake Habbaniyah, and the West Hammar Marsh. These sources accounted for 110, 79, 59, 56, and 51 dusty days, respectively.

The study further found that dust activity in western Iran peaked between 2008 and 2012, following the substantial shrinkage of major water bodies in Iraq.

TEHRAN TIMES

www.tehrantimes.com

Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**

Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 43051505
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430

Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Moghadasi Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran **P.o. Box:** 14155-4843 **Zip Code:** 1599814713

NOVEMBER 14, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If qualities were to be classified, honesty would be with courage, and cowardice with dishonesty.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:49 Evening: 17:17 Dawn: 5:13 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:40 (tomorrow)

Iranian film 'The Daughter of Lady Fairy' wins at Second Open Eurasian Film Award 'Diamond Butterfly'

TEHRAN – Iranian film "The Daughter of Lady Fairy," written and directed by Alireza Motamedi, won an award at the Second Open Eurasian Film Award "Diamond Butterfly" on November 12 in Moscow, Russia.

At the award ceremony for the laureates of the event, Motamedi received the Best Screenplay award for his film in the competition this year, which featured 41 films from 19 countries, IRNA reported.

After receiving the award, Motamedi said: "I want to address a sentence to the people of Iran, who have gone through very difficult days over the past two years."

"I am proud to be one of the people of Iran who, under the most difficult conditions, have stood by each other and by our country," he noted.

"This film is the story of a middle-aged son's relationship with his mother, who is in a coma, as he tries to take care of her in the hope of the day she wakes up from the coma," he added.

"We plan to screen this film in the coming months in Iran and we hope it will have a good run," the director stated.

Motamedi's award was presented by Margarita Simonyan, one of the managers of Rossiya Segodnya (Russia Today).

Keyvan Moghaddam, the production designer of the film "The Daughter of Lady Fairy," was also among the top three finalists in the category.



The film depicts a sound designer working on a film's dubbing, when a young woman returns to confront her former lover after years of absence. Her unexpected return revives old memories, confronting him with unresolved emotions and painful truths from the past.

As his mother lies in a coma, he finds himself caught between duty and desire, forced to choose between staying by her side or rekindling the love he once lost. Suspended between memory and reality, past and present, he must face a decision that will shape the course of his future.

Motamedi also performs in the 87-minute film, along with Soha Niasti, Marziyeh Boroumand, and Sahra Asadollahi.

After receiving the award, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Russia told reporters that the organizers of most international festivals have been and still are Western countries, and they still strive to select films politically. However, the Open Eurasian Film Award "Diamond Butterfly" is different and it makes it a very important festival.

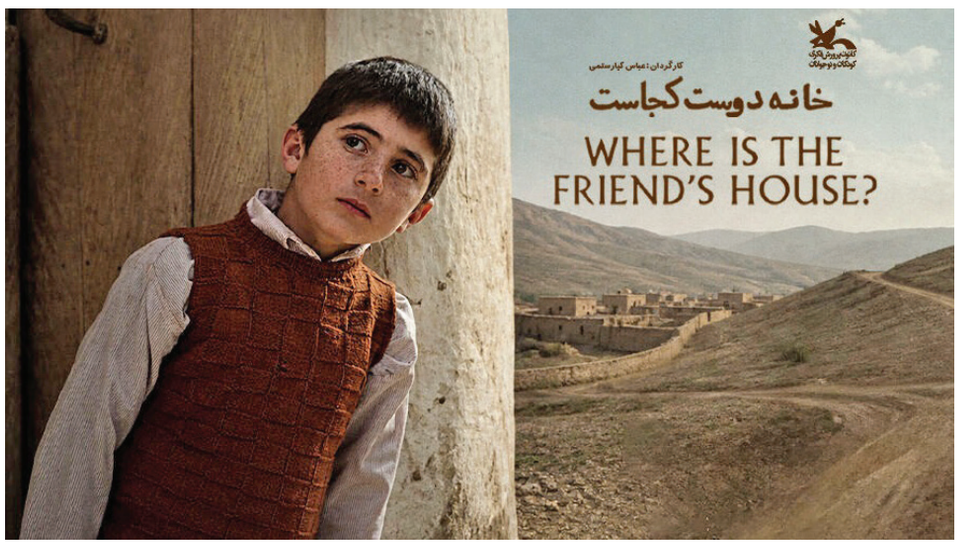
"The perspective and approach of this Festival, which is being held for the second consecutive year this year, is not political. Given the presence of Eurasian and other countries, it can be said to be a festival belonging to the independent countries of the world," Kazem Jalali said.

"We are very happy that Iranian cinema shone at this international festival both last year and this year," he stressed.

Last year, globally-renowned Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi received an award for outstanding contribution to cinema at the first Open Eurasian Film Award "Diamond Butterfly". Russian filmmaker Nikita Mikhalkov presented Majidi with the festival's "Diamond Butterfly" honor, praising his body of work.

The Open Eurasian Film Award "Diamond Butterfly" is a key event organized by the Eurasian Academy of Cinematic Arts. It aims to preserve traditional and universal values through the art of cinema, as well as to support spirituality, cultural identity, and humanism.

'Where Is the Friend's House?' joins Focus Iran lineup at French film festival



TEHRAN – Abbas Kiarostami's acclaimed film "Where Is the Friend's House?", produced by the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon), will be screened in the Focus Iran section of the 46th Amiens International Film Festival in France.

The 1987 film is part of a special program dedicated to Iranian cinema, bringing together a selection of landmark works by established filmmakers and directors from newer generations.

"Where Is the Friend's House?" tells the story of an eight-year-old boy, Ahmad, who accidentally takes home his classmate's school notebook. Determined to return it before his friend faces punishment for failing to complete his homework, Ahmad sets out to find the boy's home in a neighboring village.

What begins as a simple search develops into a journey through the winding streets and rural landscapes of northern Iran, as Ahmad encounters adults who often fail to understand the urgency of his mission. Through the child's perspective, Kiarostami explores themes of responsibility, friendship and compassion, turning an everyday incident into a deeply human story.

The film is widely regarded as one of the significant works of Iranian cinema and the first installment in Kiarostami's Koker Trilogy, followed by "And Life Goes On" (1992) and "Through the Olive Trees" (1994). Its understated storytelling and child-centered perspective helped bring international attention to Kiarostami's filmmaking.

The Focus Iran program also features a selection of landmark Iranian films spanning several generations including "Brick and Mirror" by Ebrahim Golestan, "The Cow" by Dariush Mehrjui, "Close-Up" by Abbas Kiarostami, "Nargess" by Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, and "A Separation" by Asghar Farhadi.

The program also presents four feature films by Karim Lakzadeh: "The Great Leap," "Redhead," "Dark Matter" and "Living Twice, Dying Thrice."

The selection further includes six short films by Iranian women filmmakers, highlighting emerging voices in the country's cinema.

"Where Is the Friend's House?" is scheduled to screen at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 18, at the Cinéma Orson Welles auditorium of the Maison de la Culture d'Amiens.

The 46th Amiens International Film Festival will run from November 13 to 21, presenting more than 130 films from 40 countries, including fiction features, documentaries and animated works.

Cartoon of Day



Catch Me If You Can

Cartoonist: Paolo Calleri from Germany

Tehran gathering marks Dostoevsky's birthday with discussion of his literary legacy

TEHRAN- Iranian writers, artists and cultural figures gathered in Tehran on Wednesday to discuss the enduring relevance of Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky's works and their reflections on the complexities of contemporary human experience at a literary session marking his birthday.

Titled "Dostoevsky and the Human Being Today," the gathering was organized by Amir Kabir Publications as the inaugural event in a new series of literary programs called "Amir Kabir Publications Book Month."

The session brought together participants from different fields of literature and the arts to examine the ideas, characters and philosophical concerns that have made Dostoevsky one of the most influential figures in world literature.

The program featured speeches by writers and cultural figures Qassem-Ali Farasat, Farzad Motamen, Hossein Nourshargh, Farzaneh Shafiei, Farnaz Shahid-Saless and Razieddin Tabib.

The discussions focused on Dostoevsky's literary legacy and the continuing significance of his portrayal of human nature, particularly his exploration of moral conflict, psychological struggles, personal responsibility and the search for meaning.

His works, despite being written in the 19th century, continue to raise questions that resonate with modern readers, including the relationship between individual freedom and social responsibility, the nature of good and evil, and the role of faith and conscience in human life.

November 11 marks the birthday of the Russian novelist, who was born in Moscow in 1821. His literary career spanned a period of profound social and intellectual change in Russia, and his novels reflected the tensions, uncertainties and philosophical debates of his time.

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821–1881) is widely regarded as one of the greatest novelists in Russian and world literature. His distinctive literary approach combines psychological depth, philosophical inquiry and dramatic storytelling, often placing characters in situations where they must confront difficult ethical choices and the consequences of their actions.

Unlike writers who primarily focused on external events and social circumstances, Dostoevsky devoted considerable attention to the inner lives of his characters. His protagonists are frequently divided by conflicting impulses, struggling with guilt, pride, faith, despair and the desire for redemption. Through their experiences, he examined the contradictions of human nature and the complicated relationship between personal suffering and moral development.

His own life was marked by hardship and experiences that deeply shaped his literary vision. In 1849, Dostoevsky was arrested because of his association with the Petrashevsky Circle, a group whose members discussed literature, philosophy and social and political reform. He was sentenced to death, but after being taken to the execution ground and subjected to a mock execution, his sentence was commuted to four years of hard labor in Siberia, followed by compulsory military service.

The experience of imprisonment and exile had a lasting impact on his understanding of suffering, human dignity, faith and redemption. These themes later found expression in several of his works, most notably "The House of the Dead," which drew on his experiences in a Siberian prison camp.

Dostoevsky went on to produce some of the most celebrated novels in literary history. "Crime and Punishment" examines guilt, conscience and the moral consequences of crime through the story of a young man who attempts to justify murder through an intellectual theory. "The Idiot" explores innocence, compassion and the difficulties of maintaining moral integrity in a society driven by ambition and self-interest.

Other major works include "Notes from Underground," "The Possessed" (also translated as "Demons") and "The Brothers Karamazov." The latter, widely considered one of his greatest achievements, addresses questions of faith, doubt, free will, justice and the existence of evil through the conflicts within a troubled family.

More than a century after his death, Dostoevsky remains a central figure in discussions of literature, philosophy and psychology. His novels have been translated into numerous languages and continue to inspire literary criticism, theatrical adaptations, films and academic research. Their lasting appeal lies partly in the author's ability to address universal questions without offering easy answers, leaving readers to confront the moral and existential dilemmas experienced by his characters.

Shawn Mendes, Bella Hadid speak out on Gaza

Canadian singer Shawn Mendes and US Dutch Palestinian model Bella Hadid took to Instagram this week to call for support for Palestinians in Gaza.

Mendes opened his post, shared with his 68 million followers, with the words "FREE PALESTINE," Arab News reported.

"There is a genocide happening before our eyes. The senseless killing in Gaza must stop. The children and families in Palestine have suffered for far too long, and they need our help," he wrote, before addressing other musicians directly: "My friends and fellow artists, I know it can feel scary to speak up; I feel it now as I type this ... The more of us that use our voice, the closer we are to change."

Hadid announced she had donated $50,000 to Tents of Hope's Winter Tent Kits for Gaza, which she said would provide 100 families with a waterproof tent, blankets and mattresses.

"Winter has arrived in Gaza, and for hundreds of thousands of families, the only thing between them and the cold is a worn-out tent," she wrote.

She said aid groups on the ground estimated that Gaza needed at least 300,000 tents.

"I'm not sharing this for the number. I'm sharing it because I believe that if enough of us act, the gap closes one family at a time," she wrote, adding that $25 could buy a family a blanket and $250 a whole tent.

Her post was led by an illustration reading: "Gaza is flooding: 70,000+ tents destroyed."

Hadid and Mendes both took part in the Artists for Aid benefit concert in Los Angeles in January. Organized by Sudanese-Canadian singer and poet Mustafa, the event was co-hosted by Hadid and Chilean American actor Pedro Pascal, with proceeds going to the Palestine Children's Relief Fund and the American Sudanese Physicians Association.

Mendes performed his 2018 track "Youth" with American singer Maggie Rogers at the concert. He first spoke about the war during a show at Lisbon's MEO Arena in August 2025, when he told the audience he regretted not speaking out sooner.

"What's been happening in Gaza has been absolutely breaking my heart," he said.