Straight Truth

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Officials' shifting explanations deepen doubts over US airspace shutdown

By staff writer

TEHRAN — The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration grounded every departing flight in the country on Friday, and the public's first explanation fit in a single phrase: a "temporary telecommunications outage."

The order began at 3:54 p.m. Eastern Time and lasted until 8:15 p.m. It left thousands of flights canceled and a government that has spent months promising a modernized air traffic system, explaining why its old one failed everywhere at once. ▸ Page **5**

From the battlefield to the ballot box: war comes home

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Western leaders assumed they could keep the Palestinian bloodshed, the flames of war in Iran, and the resulting costs far removed from their own societies.

They believed American and European citizens would continue watching the war unfold on their screens, without it affecting their lives or reshaping their political choices. But the massacres in Gaza shattered the moral barrier, while U.S.-Zionist aggression against Iran shook energy and shipping markets.

Then came the ballot boxes and popular protests, declaring that wars ignited beyond national borders can return home as questions of legitimacy, bills to be paid, and votes of political punishment. ▸ Page **5**

Global artistic initiatives to support Gaza

The "Together for Palestine" initiative, launched by British musician Brian Eno, is preparing to organize a major charity event in New York City to raise funds for the residents of the Gaza Strip.

This step follows the great success achieved by the initiative in London, where the proceeds from its previous concert exceeded two million pounds sterling with the participation of a selection of global stars, Alquds reported.

American singer Billie Eilish called on her followers on social media platforms to provide urgent donations to UNRWA, in light of the deteriorating humanitarian conditions experienced by displaced persons in the Strip.

Eilish's call came in conjunction with reports indicating that the properties and shelters of more than 26,000 Palestinian families were damaged by floods and heavy rains that hit displacement areas. ▸ Page **8**

Isfahan's pigeon towers emerge as potential World Heritage candidate

TEHRAN – Iran's historic pigeon towers in Isfahan province could have the potential to be nominated for UNESCO World Heritage status, prompting renewed calls for comprehensive documentation, comparative research and stronger conservation measures to establish their significance on a global scale.

The towers, many dating from the Safavid era, are more than distinctive mud-brick structures built to shelter pigeons. They represent an ingenious combination of vernacular architecture, traditional agricultural technology and natural resource management that supported farming communities across Iran's central plateau.

Alireza Izadi, director-general of the office for registration, preservation and rehabilitation of cultural heritage at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, ▸ Page **6**



AFP

UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (right) welcomes his US counterpart Donald Trump upon arrival at the presidential terminal in Abu Dhabi on May 15, 2025.

Bet on the Losing Horse: Abu Dhabi's Gamble in Hormuz

How UAE bankrolled a costly, risky southern corridor to break Iran's control — and failed

Continued Emirati adventurism offers Abu Dhabi nothing but exorbitant bills: billions for pipelines that remain targets, hundreds of millions monthly to keep ports on life support, reputational ruin as Israel's quartermaster in the Persian Gulf, and the transformation of Fujairah, Jebel Ali, Ruwais and Al Dhafra from economic assets into legitimate targets in any next round.

By Seyyed Mohammad Torabi

TEHRAN - TEHRAN – When Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber took the screen at CERAWeek in Houston on March 23, 2026, he chose his words carefully. The Managing Director and Group CEO of ADNOC, speaking by video link because war had closed the skies, called any disruption of the Strait of Hormuz "weaponizing" energy and "economic terrorism against every nation."

He warned that "twenty-one miles wide, twenty million barrels a day" was now squeezed, that oil prices had already risen by 50 percent, and that "no country should be allowed to hold Hormuz hostage. Not now. Not ever." He invited American capital into ADNOC, XRG and AI ventures, and promised ADIPEC in November as proof that the UAE could keep energy flowing.

Eight months later, that Houston speech reads less as analysis and more as confession. The UAE was not describing a crisis. It was announcing its role in it.

From the first bombs, the war moved to Hormuz

From the first hours of the American-Israeli war against Iran on February 28, 2026, it was clear the fate of this war would be decided not in the air over Tehran or Isfahan, but in the waters of the Persian Gulf. Its focal point was inevitable: the Strait of Hormuz.

Washington and Tel Aviv began with a massive air campaign against nuclear sites in Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan, military bases and commanders. Tehran answered where it is strongest. It did not chase American stealth fighters across the sky. It closed the strait.

That single decision reversed the initiative. The aggressors had planned a short, "decisive" air war to force capitulation. Iran turned it into a long war of attrition on energy, insurance, shipping and global inflation – fields where the United States and its Persian Gulf partners are profoundly vulnerable. ▸ Page **3**



Iranian students shine in Open World Astronomy Olympiad

TEHRAN – An Iranian team of six students has achieved remarkable success at the fifth edition of the Open World Astronomy Olympiad (OWAO), winning six gold medals. The Olympiad took place from November 6 to 14 in Russia.

Sarina Alampour, Parsia Hassanzadeh, Elshan Rouhani, Mohammad-Reza Mohammadi, Bardia Qilavizadeh, and Mehdi Aryafar secured gold medals, showcasing their dedication and academic excellence in the competition, IRNA reported.

OWAO is a modern and rapidly growing competition that brings together talented and passionate astronomy students from around the world. ▸ Page **7**

Iran downs 17th US MQ-1 drone, reports two tankers hit by sea mines east of Hormuz Strait

TEHRAN – Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) has shot down another US reconnaissance and combat drone over the Persian Gulf, while the Iranian Navy has reported that two oil tankers separately caught fire after striking sea mines in a restricted maritime zone east of the Strait of Hormuz.

In a statement released on Saturday, the IRGC announced that its Aerospace units had destroyed a US MQ-1-series drone over Qeshm Island using an advanced air defense system. ▸ **Page 2**

Rosatom to increase workforce at Bushehr nuclear plant to 300

TEHRAN – Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom plans to increase its workforce at Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant from the current 180 employees to 300 in the near future, as it moves to resume previously scheduled operations despite ongoing regional tensions.

Rosatom CEO Alexei Likhachev announced the plan on Friday, according to Russia's TASS news agency, saying the company saw no significant risks that would impede the pace of its work at the facility.

"The headcount is growing at present: 180 people are already on the site; we plan to increase it to 300 in the near future," Likhachev said. ▸ **Page 2**

Tehran Chamber's representative office in Khorgos officially opened

TEHRAN- The representative office of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) was opened in Khorgos in the presence of the president and secretary-general of the Tehran Chamber and managers of the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce.

The office began operating in implementation of bilateral agreements and with the aim of expanding trade interactions, exchanging economic information, and introducing investment opportunities. Khorgos is China's connection point to Europe and, relying on rail network connections, plays an important role in container transfer, combined transport, and the movement of goods between East and West. ▸ Page **4**

Senior MP: Iran's steadfastness has left US in a strategic dead end

TEHRAN – Iran's steadfast resistance on multiple fronts has pushed the United States into a strategic dead end, with any further miscalculation by its adversaries likely to provoke an even more consequential response from Tehran, the chairman of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission said.

Ebrahim Azizi made the remarks on Friday, attributing the failure of US and Israeli calculations to the Iranian nation's resilience in the face of sustained hostile actions by Washington and the Israeli regime.

Recalling decades of US hostility toward Iran, Azizi said Washington had sought to undermine the country since the victory of the Islamic Revolution through various measures, including coup attempts such as the Nojeh coup, the Tabas incident, the imposition of war, economic and political sanctions, and efforts to create instability across different sectors. ▸ Page **3**

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Expanding missile range is our new deterrence strategy

Esmail Kosari, a member of Parliament, discussed Iran's missile-range expansion in an interview with Javan. Following growing threats, the Islamic Republic of Iran unveiled an increase in the range of its missiles as part of its broader strategy to strengthen deterrence capabilities. The move came after remarks by Iran's Leader emphasizing an immediate response to threats without geographical limitations. The announcement received extensive international media attention, with some analysts describing it as a sign of a shift in Tehran's deterrence doctrine. Iranian officials have repeatedly stated that if another confrontation occurs, the country will reveal part of its advanced military equipment and capabilities on the battlefield, creating a new level of surprise for its enemies. The country aims to maintain the capabilities necessary to respond wherever required, whether at the regional or extra-regional level, within the framework of deterrence and countering hostile actions by its opponents.

Etemad: A turbulent transition period

In an article, Etemad examined the simultaneous formation of a new government in Israel and the transfer of congressional power in the US. The current transition period is what makes the situation particularly complicated. Recent political setbacks do not necessarily reduce the likelihood of war. Although Trump suffered an electoral defeat, he still retains significant authority as commander in chief. In a post-election environment, he could seek a quick military success to compensate for political weakness. At the same time, Netanyahu may face fewer political costs during a transitional period because he no longer has to contend with immediate electoral pressures. This could encourage him to increase pressure for military action before a new political structure becomes firmly established in Washington. As a result, the period between electoral defeat and the consolidation of new political power may prove to be one of the most dangerous phases rather than a window for peace.

Ettelaat: Israel has lost ground in America

Ettelaat argued that developments in recent years indicate a gradual change in Israel's position within American public opinion and the US political environment. Declining popularity in opinion polls, growing support for reducing military aid, criticism from younger generations, increasing partisan disagreements, and the results of the 2026 midterm elections are all presented as signs that the traditional consensus supporting unconditional backing for Tel Aviv is weakening. However, these developments do not signal the end of the strategic alliance between the US and Israel. Security, economic, and political institutions continue to support the relationship, while presidential powers can limit the impact of some congressional changes. Nevertheless, if current trends continue, including the effects of the Iran war, the persistence of the Palestinian conflict, regional developments, and shifting attitudes among younger Americans, the gap between American society and official Israeli policies could become increasingly visible in the years ahead.

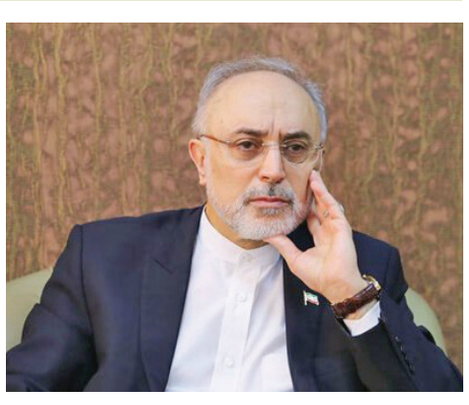
Khorasan: A nuclear decision or a negotiating strategy?

Khorasan examined Iran's nuclear strategy and discussed speculation surrounding possible efforts to develop nuclear propulsion technology. Discussions about such ambitions have existed for years, yet no reliable evidence has emerged showing that Iran has actually entered this field in practice. As a result, questions remain about whether Tehran possesses the technological capabilities required to move in that direction. The analysis argued that even raising such issues could provoke a response from the United States and increase pressure on Washington to accelerate efforts to end the conflict with Iran. It also suggested that Iran's new approach may involve reducing nuclear concessions that had been discussed, directly or indirectly, during months of postwar negotiations. From this perspective, the strategy could be interpreted as a response to intensified pressure and containment efforts by Iran's adversaries, while also preventing the US from gaining additional time to prepare for military action or strengthen the effects of economic and political restrictions.

Jam-e-Jam: Significant losses suffered across the Persian Gulf region

In an explanation, Jam-e-Jam reviewed the economic situation of regional countries aligned with the United States. The economic growth forecast for members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council was reduced from 4.4% to 1.3%. The aviation, tourism, and air travel sectors in Persian Gulf Arab states have experienced significant declines. Citing assessments by Western think tanks, it argued that food and water security in the Persian Gulf region remains fragile. GCC states reportedly obtain more than 90% of their drinking water through desalination facilities, making them highly vulnerable to infrastructure disruptions. According to the editorial, these conditions highlight the strategic vulnerabilities of southern Persian Gulf states that have pursued cooperation with the US and Israel. The newspaper further said these countries, along with many others that have been affected by the unlawful war carried out by the United States and Israel against Iran, increasingly view the Trump-Netanyahu alliance as responsible for significant material and non-material losses suffered across the region.

Iran demonstrated remarkable strength in two wars, says ex-FM



TEHRAN – Iran demonstrated extraordinary resilience and strength in the two imposed wars (the 12-day war and the Ramadan war), surprising the international community with its ability to withstand external pressure, former Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Salehi has said.

Speaking to Mehr News Agency, Salehi, who also previously headed the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), reflected on the two wars Iran has experienced over the past two years, saying the Islamic Republic had displayed remarkable capabilities in the face of widespread international expectations.

"We do not claim to be a global military power, nor do we claim to be a global economic power. But we can say with confidence that we have been able to stand firm against the bullying and unjust pressure imposed on us by others," he stated.

Salehi pointed to the importance of national unity in the face of wars and economic pressure, saying people has backed the government and prevented the political system from collapsing under pressure.

Drawing a comparison with the Arab Spring and the Islamic Awakening movements, he said popular uprisings in several countries had failed to achieve their intended outcomes because of the lack of necessary unity between the people and their governments.

In Iran's case, he argued, the principle of Velayat-e Faqih (Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist) had played a pivotal role in preserving the cohesion and continuity of the Islamic Revolution.

Iran downs 17th US MQ-1 drone, reports two tankers hit by sea mines east of Hormuz Strait





From page 1 ▶ The downing marked the 17th US MQ-1 drone destroyed by the IRGC, according to the statement, which described the incident as another failure of US reconnaissance operations along Iran's maritime borders.

The IRGC also reported that its forces had so far destroyed 56 US MQ-9 drones, bringing the total number of MQ-1 and MQ-9 drones downed to 73.

Meanwhile, the Iranian Navy announced that two oil tankers had separately struck sea mines and caught fire in a prohibited area east of the Strait of Hormuz.

According to statements issued by the Navy's public relations office on Saturday, the two incidents occurred after the vessels entered the restricted maritime zone despite prior warnings from Iranian authorities.

The Navy said one of the tankers was sailing through the designated unsafe area early Saturday morning while its tracking and identification systems were switched off. The vessel subsequently struck a sea mine, caught fire and was disabled.

In a separate announcement, the Navy reported that another tanker had met the same fate after hitting a naval mine in the restricted waters.

The Iranian Navy stressed that the eastern approaches to the Strait of Hormuz remained under its full control and surveillance, warning that vessels attempting to enter prohibited waters while disabling their tracking systems would face serious consequences.

It also cautioned tanker owners against risking their vessels and investments by disregarding Iranian warnings and relying on 'unfounded statements' by the US president.

The Navy further warned that any vessel violating navigation restrictions and entering the designated minefield would be exposed to the risk of fire and explosion.

Rosatom to increase workforce at Bushehr nuclear plant to 300

From page 1 ▶ He acknowledged that the regional situation remained tense but said Rosatom was seeking to restore its operations to the planned pace and reach its target workforce level over the coming year.

On October 28, Likhachev said the corporation aimed to increase the number of Russian personnel in Iran to 700. Rosatom had previously evacuated hundreds of its employees from the country on security grounds following US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

In November 2025, Likhachev told Russia's Channel One that Rosatom planned to construct two additional nuclear power units,



each with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts, alongside the existing unit at the Bushehr plant. He also said construction was progressing.

Meanwhile, on September 24, 2025, Iran and Russia signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the construction of small nuclear power plants in Iran. The agreement was concluded following a meeting in Moscow between Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), and Likhachev.

Two days later, on September 26, an implementation agreement worth $25 billion was signed for the construction of four advanced third-generation nuclear power units in Sirik, Hormozgan Province. The agreement was concluded between Iran Hormoz Company and a Rosatom project company.

Iran calls on US to end aggression, lift maritime blockade



TEHRAN – Iran has called on the United States to immediately end its aggression against the country, lift its maritime blockade and provide credible guarantees against further attacks, warning that any renewed US-Israeli aggression would be met with an immediate and decisive response.

Addressing a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East in New York on Friday, Gholamhossein Darzi, Iran's Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, said insecurity in the Persian Gulf and around the Strait of Hormuz was a direct consequence of US-Israeli military aggression and Washington's unlawful measures against Iran.

Darzi said the United States had launched wars of aggression against Iran on June 13, 2025, and again on February 28, 2026, in flagrant violation of the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law.

He said the two rounds of aggression had claimed more than 5,000 lives, including 254 children and 251 women, while extensive attacks had targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, bridges, industrial facilities, airports, transport networks and energy installations.

Referring to the February 28 attacks, Darzi said two waves of US Tomahawk missiles had struck a school in Minab, killing 168 children. He also cited a US strike on Lamerd Stadium that killed at least 21 civilians, including children, and wounded around 100 others.

The Iranian envoy further condemned threats by US officials to destroy Iran's power plants and bridges, describing such threats and attacks on civilian infrastructure as violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes.

He stressed that Iran's military response had been undertaken in accordance with its inherent right to self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter, targeting US military facilities, bases and assets in the region used to launch attacks against Iran.

Turning to maritime security, Darzi said the insecurity surrounding the Strait of Hormuz stemmed directly from the aggression against Iran, attacks on its ports, maritime installations and commercial vessels, and the military and maritime blockade imposed on the country.

He described the blockade as an attempt to collectively punish a population of 90 million, warning that depriving civilians of food, medicine and other essential supplies constituted a grave violation of international humanitarian law and could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Darzi also held accountable countries that had facilitated the attacks by making their territories, airspace, military bases and logistical and intelligence infrastructure available to the United States and Israel.

He emphasized that Iran remained committed to peace and stability in the Persian Gulf, reiterating Tehran's position that regional security arrangements should be established by the countries of the region themselves, without foreign interference and in accordance with international law.

The Iranian diplomat said the presence of foreign military forces and US bases in the region had become a major source of insecurity, instability and tension, posing serious risks to maritime safety.

On UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), Darzi said Iran rejected the measure as politically motivated and adopted through a one-sided process that overlooked the root causes of the crisis and failed to recognize Iran's inherent right to self-defense.

He argued that the resolution had undermined the principles of the UN Charter by failing to identify the United States and Israel as the aggressors, adding that no Security Council resolution could deprive a member state of its right to defend itself against an armed attack.

Darzi also reiterated that Iran had never ruled out diplomacy, but said repeated US military actions and threats during previous rounds of negotiations had created profound distrust and raised serious doubts about the prospects for renewed talks.

He said Washington must demonstrate its commitment to a diplomatic solution by ending its aggression unconditionally, providing credible guarantees against further attacks, respecting Iran's sovereign rights and lifting the maritime blockade and other unlawful unilateral coercive measures.

"Any renewed war of aggression by the United States and the Israeli regime will be met with an immediate and decisive response," Darzi warned, adding that Iran would take all necessary measures to protect its people, national security, vital interests and territorial integrity.

Addressing Yemen, the Iranian envoy categorically rejected 'baseless accusations' against Iran, reaffirming Tehran's support for Yemen's sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity.

He called on the Security Council to adopt a balanced approach that takes account of realities on the ground, respects the Yemeni people's right to determine their own future and addresses the root causes of the conflict.

Darzi also criticized certain Persian Gulf states for facilitating US-Israeli military operations against Iran by providing access to their territory, airspace and military and logistical facilities. He said such actions violated the UN Charter and international law and entailed state responsibility, including an obligation to provide full reparation for the material and moral damage caused to Iran and its people.

Bet on the losing horse: Abu Dhabi's gamble in Hormuz

How UAE bankrolled a costly, risky southern corridor to break Iran's control — and failed

From Page 1 ▶



20M barrels a day: The artery no pipeline can replace

To understand why, one needs only the numbers. In 2025, according to the International Energy Agency, an average of nearly 20 million barrels per day of crude and petroleum products transited Hormuz, about 25 percent of the world's seaborne oil trade, plus about 19 percent of global LNG trade. At its narrowest, the strait is only 22 nautical miles wide, split between Iranian and Omani territorial waters. There is no maritime substitute of equal capacity, flexibility and economy.

Only Saudi Arabia and the UAE possess pipelines that can partially bypass it, with combined spare capacity estimated by Washington at 3.5 to 5.5 million barrels per day. In other words, even at full tilt, bypasses can carry barely a quarter of normal Hormuz flows. Whoever controls the strait controls the pulse of the world economy.

Iran's closure did exactly that. Within weeks, nearly one billion barrels were drained from global inventories, diesel stocks in some markets fell to their lowest seasonal level in 35 years, and some buyers faced a 600 billion cubic feet LNG supply gap. Logistics costs, once less than 5 percent of the price of a barrel, surged to over 30 percent. Tanker war-risk premiums jumped from 1-3 percent of hull value to 7.5-10 percent. Fuel rationing returned in parts of Asia and Europe, and central banks warned of a new inflationary wave driven not by demand, but by war.

This was not collateral damage. It was deterrence. Tehran made clear that if its oil cannot be exported safely and its sovereignty is attacked, no hostile power will enjoy cheap, secure energy.

Night smuggling in the southern corridor

Diplomacy briefly offered an exit. On June 17, 2026, after weeks of indirect contacts, U.S. President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding. It declared removal of the U.S. naval blockade and committed Iran to "make arrangements using its best efforts for the safe passage of commercial vessels with no charge, for 60 days only," with the future administration of the strait to be determined by Iran in consultation with Oman and other Persian Gulf states.

In Tehran's reading, the message was historic: management of the strait "will never return to the way it was before the war," as Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf later put it. In May, Iran had already established the Persian Gulf Strait Authority and announced that no vessel could pass without its permit. The Islamabad formula recognized reality – security in Hormuz cannot be imposed by distant fleets, but must be arranged by the littoral states, above all Iran in the north and Oman in the south.

Washington, however, used the 60-day window not to build shared security but to neutralize it. Instead of cooperating with Iranian-Omani arrangements, U.S. Central Command forced shipping into an artificial "southern corridor" hugging the Omani and Emirati coasts, far from Iran's legal traffic separation scheme. Ship operators were told to register with the U.S. military, switch off AIS transponders and telephones, assemble at night in single-file convoys of 15 to 20 tankers, and run dark under American fighter cover. Empty tankers were rushed in, loaded in Persian Gulf ports, and rushed out.

By August, CENTCOM boasted of 1,300 transits since May and 660 million barrels moved, rising to 5-7 million barrels per day in July – about 40-50 percent of pre-war levels. The Wall Street Journal, embedded aboard the carrier George Washington, described nightly launches of F-35C and F/A-18 jets, jamming aircraft, anti-submarine helicopters and more than a dozen destroyers shielding oil in transit. It was presented as "freedom of navigation." In practice, it was state-organized smuggling to bypass the coastal state.

It is here that the position of the Leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, becomes decisive. From the start, he defined Hormuz not as a mere waterway but as an inseparable part of Iran's sovereignty, strategic depth and legitimate leverage against aggression.

On October 31, in a meeting with Army Commander Major General Amir Hatami, IRGC Commander Major General Ahmad Vahidi, Chief of Staff Major General Ali Abdollahi and other senior commanders, he ordered "smart combat readiness for a powerful response, maximum deterrence, and an immediate and effective response with no geographical limitation," tasking the armed forces with updating both material and non-material target banks of the U.S. and Israel and declaring that the timing and conditions for ending aggression will be set by Iran. The doctrine is clear: aggression that begins with strikes on Fordow and Natanz will not end in Washington, and control of Hormuz will not be surrendered to those who bombed Iran.

After the collapse of the Islamabad understanding in early August and the U.S. re-imposition of its blockade, Washington has tried to keep the strait "half-open" by night smuggling through that southern route. It cannot do so alone. The operation requires a forward base, a bypass pipeline, a storage hub outside the strait, and someone to pay. That someone is the United Arab Emirates.

Fujairah pays, Al Dhafra hosts: The UAE's four-dimensional role

The UAE's role is pivotal and four-dimensional – logistical, financial, military and political.

Logistically, Fujairah is the heart of the detour. The 406-km Habshan-Fujairah pipeline, ADCOP, with capacity of about 1.8 million barrels per day, is the only Emirati route that loads crude directly onto the Gulf of Oman, 130 km south of Hormuz, without entering the strait. Since March 10 it has run at maximum. Exports from Fujairah jumped from 1.17 million barrels per day in February to 1.62 million in March, up 38 percent, according to Kpler. ADNOC, on direct orders from Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed on May 15, is fast-tracking a second $3-billion West-East pipeline to add another 1.2-1.5 million barrels per day by 2027, for a combined 3.3 million, plus a planned products pipeline for diesel, gasoline and jet fuel.

Fujairah itself has been transformed from a bunkering port into a war hub: over 10 million cubic meters of commercial storage, 42 million barrels of underground caverns, the world's third-largest storage center, ship-to-ship transfer anchorages off Fujairah and Sohar that handled over 70 percent of crude still crossing the strait in August, and new terminals built by DP World at Fujairah, Dibba and Khor Fakkan. Small dark tankers that slip out of the southern corridor discharge to VLCCs waiting in the Gulf of Oman. Without Fujairah, the southern corridor has no exit.

Financially, Abu Dhabi has underwritten this artificial corridor in full. It kept Jebel Ali alive at a cost of about $100 million a month to allow 48-hour resumption, absorbs soaring overland costs 4-5 times normal shipping, offers Murban crude loaded at Fujairah at a premium for "delivery certainty," and signed a May strategic storage deal allowing India to hold reserves in Fujairah while ADNOC can store up to 30 million barrels in India. Coupled with the U.S. Development Finance Corporation's political-risk insurance imposed by Trump on March 3, Emirati money bridges the gap between an uneconomic route and a war necessity. Analysts at Rystad estimate 6-7 million barrels per day now move via the southern route plus 2 million via Fujairah – 8 million of 15 million lost. The other 7 million remain missing, and the 8 million that move do so at war prices paid ultimately by consumers, but advanced by Abu Dhabi.

Militarily, the UAE is the only Persian Gulf state alongside Bahrain to join the 22-nation U.S.-led coalition declared March 21 to reopen Hormuz. On March 18 it was first to signal willingness; on April 5 it formally backed a U.S. military operation to take control of the strait. Six Baynunah-class corvettes armed with 180-km Exocet Block 3 and ESSM missiles now do escort and patrol at the strait's approaches. Two Gowind corvettes, Bani Yas and Al Emarat, add surveillance. Al Dhafra Air Base in Abu Dhabi hosts U.S. Patriots, F-15Es, F-35s and tankers that fly nightly combat air patrols against Shahed drones and anti-ship cruise missiles. French Rafales from Base 104 in the UAE fly alongside. By May 10, the UAE claimed 551 ballistic missiles, 2,265 drones and 29 cruise missiles intercepted by its layered THAAD, Patriot, Barak-8 and Pantsir shield – a shield without which Fujairah, Ruwais and Habshan could not function after at least seven direct Iranian strikes on Fujairah's tanks and loading arms.

Politically, Abu Dhabi provided legal cover for violating Iranian-Omani arrangements by proposing a so-called "Hormuz Security Force" and signing condemnations of Iran's "de facto closure."

Bet on the losing horse

Nor can this be separated from the UAE-Israeli nexus. Since the Abraham Accords, Abu Dhabi's overt and covert ties with Tel Aviv – intelligence sharing, radar integration, technology, and the scrambling of Emirati Mirage 2000s during the war and the alleged use of Emirati soil in attacks on Iran, which Abu Dhabi denies – have made the UAE in Iranian eyes not a neutral logistics provider but a party to the aggression. When Fujairah refuels ships that break Iran's declared permit regime, when Al Dhafra launches cover for convoys that defy the Strait Authority, and when Emirati funds insure what American guns escort, neutrality is fiction.

The conclusion is unavoidable. The UAE has entered a dangerous gamble and bet on the losing horse. The southern corridor it bankrolls is artificial, costly and high-risk.

Iran, by contrast, has shown it can absorb strikes, degrade the enemy's radar and surveillance, adapt with fast boats and residual sensors, and keep the strait's administration in its hands. The world has learned that Hormuz cannot be secured against Iran, only with Iran and Oman.

Continued Emirati adventurism offers Abu Dhabi nothing but exorbitant bills: billions for pipelines that remain targets, hundreds of millions monthly to keep ports on life support, reputational ruin as Israel's quartermaster in the Persian Gulf, and the transformation of Fujairah, Jebel Ali, Ruwais and Al Dhafra from economic assets into legitimate targets in any next round. The horse it backed – an American-Israeli order that bombs nuclear facilities and then demands free shipping – has already lost control of the strait. Doubling the bet will not win the race.

Senior MP: Iran's steadfastness has left US in a strategic dead end

From Page 1 ▶ He said the US president's contradictory and frequently changing statements on negotiations, agreements, war, military action, the Strait of Hormuz and threats to destroy Iran reflected Washington's failure to anticipate the Islamic Republic's response and its inability to bring developments under control.



Addressing political developments in the United States and the occupied territories, Azizi said Iran did not regard changes in American political parties or administrations as significant, stressing that neither Republican nor Democratic governments altered Washington's fundamental approach toward the Iranian nation.

He described the two parties as essentially pursuing the same hostile policy toward Iran, saying their differences did not change their opposition to the Iranian nation or their willingness to wage war against the country.

Nevertheless, he said the political setbacks suffered by the ruling parties in the United States and the Israeli regime carried an important message about the resilience of the Iranian nation that the international community should recognize.

"We had already warned that any war would take on a regional dimension, and it did. We had announced that we would close the Strait of Hormuz, and we did. We had also stated that we would strike any source of threat, and we carried it out," Azizi said.

He warned that if Iran's adversaries continued to miscalculate, the country's response would be more painful and regret-inducing than ever before.

Iran rejects normal IAEA inspections under abnormal conditions



TEHRAN – Iran's Mission to the United Nations Office in Vienna has condemned resolutions adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors on Iran as legally and technically flawed, stressing that normal implementation of safeguards cannot resume under the abnormal conditions created by attacks on the country's safeguarded nuclear facilities.

In a statement posted on its X account, the Iranian mission also criticized IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi's reporting on Iran, arguing that the Board's decisions were adopted through an abuse of process and that US-Israeli attacks had disrupted inspections and forced the Agency to withdraw its inspectors.

The mission said the IAEA had based its reports on Board of Governors resolutions that were "technically and legally flawed," adopted through an abuse of process, and contained findings that exceeded the Board's legal authority.

It further noted that Grossi himself had acknowledged that attacks on Iran's safeguarded nuclear facilities had created unprecedented circumstances, disrupted inspections and compelled the Agency to withdraw its inspectors, while making it necessary to take Iran's security concerns into account.

"The US erased its aggression from biased resolutions, but not its consequences from reality. Facts don't vanish because politics demands!" the mission stated.

It emphasized that the normal implementation of safeguards could not resume under abnormal circumstances, calling on the Board of Governors to address the root causes of the current situation.

The mission also criticized the Board for including the aggressor among its members, saying this made any effort to address the underlying causes an impossible task.

'Strengthening strategic ties with China must be a priority for Iran'

TEHRAN – A member of the Iranian Parliament's Presiding Board has called for closer coordination among government bodies to strengthen strategic relations between Iran and China and translate existing agreements and opportunities into tangible results.

Speaking to Mehr News Agency, Farshad Ebrahimpour said China, given its extensive relations with Iran and Arab countries, was well positioned to establish a sustainable regional security framework.

Referring to the 2023 agreement between Tehran and Riyadh, brokered by Beijing, Ebrahimpour said the initiative had demonstrated China's capacity to help ease regional tensions. However, he stressed that such cooperation should lead to lasting mechanisms for security dialogue and mutual respect for national sovereignty.

Regional stability, he added, cannot be achieved without taking Iran's security and national interests into account.

Ebrahimpour said relations with China should not be viewed merely as a means of easing international pressure. Rather, they should serve as an opportunity to strengthen national security and advance Iran's economic development.

The parliament member pointed to the gap between economic agreements with China and their practical outcomes, saying that the 25-year Comprehensive Cooperation Program, along with the opportunities arising from Iran's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS, provides significant potential for expanding economic ties.

However, he cautioned that signing agreements and memorandums of understanding does not, in itself, guarantee investment, technology transfer or the implementation of economic projects.

Economic relations with China, he emphasized, should go beyond imports of goods and equipment and instead promote joint investment, strengthen domestic production, facilitate the transfer of technical know-how and create employment opportunities.

Ebrahimpour also underscored the need to draw on China's diplomatic capabilities to bring an end to the current state of neither war nor peace.

Iran's demands, he said, should not be confined to a cessation of hostilities, as ending a war and preventing further aggression are closely interconnected objectives. A political agreement alone, he stressed, cannot guarantee lasting security.

Given its international standing and extensive ties with countries across the region, China can play an effective role in ending the war, preventing further aggression, and supporting national sovereignty and the principle of non-aggression, he added.

Tehran Chamber's representative office in Khorgos officially opened

TEHRAN- The representative office of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) was opened in Khorgos in the presence of the president and secretary-general of the Tehran Chamber and managers of the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce.

The office began operating in implementation of bilateral agreements and with the aim of expanding trade interactions, exchanging economic information, and introducing investment opportunities. Khorgos is China's connection point to Europe and, relying on rail network connections, plays an important role in container transfer, combined transport, and the movement of goods between East and West.

Concurrent with the dispatch of the Tehran Chamber's trade delegation to China, the Chamber's representative office was opened in Khorgos, and Jalil Adibi was introduced as the Chamber's representative in Khorgos. Strengthening ties between Iranian and Chinese trading firms, introducing reputable partners, and supporting Iran's private sector in Chinese and Central Asian markets are among the stated goals of launching this representative office.

Last year, the Tehran Chamber and the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce signed a cooperation memorandum, drawing a joint framework for developing trade relations and utilizing the economic and logistical capacities of the Khorgos dry port. In implementation of this memorandum, the representative office of the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce was opened in Mordad of this year (July–August), concurrent with the trade delegation's trip to Tehran. Continuing this process, and four months after the Khorgos Chamber representative was established at the Tehran Chamber, the official representative office of the Tehran Chamber in Khorgos also officially began operations.

Under the memorandum signed last year by Mahmoud Najafi Arab, president of the Tehran Chamber, and Ma Fuming, president of the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce, the parties agreed to exchange information and trade delegations, introduce economic opportunities and capabilities, develop logistical cooperation, facilitate the active presence of private-sector actors in each other's markets, and lay the groundwork for increasing trade exchanges. Another agreed axis was the establishment of a Tehran Chamber representative office in Khorgos and vice versa, which was realized with the presence of the Tehran Chamber delegation in Khorgos.

Jalil Adibi, representative of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture in Khorgos, referring to the signing of the joint memorandum between the two chambers and one of its clauses on establishing representative offices to accelerate trade processes, said: Establishing communication between the economic firms of the two countries, providing facilities to improve transport and logistics mechanisms, optimizing economic opportunities, dispatching trade delegations, and holding exhibitions to present products are among the axes of the agreement between the Tehran and Khorgos chambers.



Adibi, stating that "one of the most important issues emphasized in this memorandum is the exchange of information in areas related to laws and regulations, and the Tehran Chamber is trying to convey the latest rules and regulations related to trade with China to Iranian economic firms," added: Raising awareness about other trade issues such as costs and customs regulations will also be on the agenda within this framework.

In continuation of his remarks, he provided explanations about the geographical and geopolitical position of the city of Khorgos and said: The city of Khorgos is located in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture on the border between China and Kazakhstan, and Ili Prefecture is itself one of the Uyghur autonomous prefectures of Xinjiang.

Adibi, stating that "Xinjiang has significant capacities in the field of technical equipment, modern agriculture, and e-commerce platforms," noted: The Tehran Chamber has considered this region for two years as one of the strategic cities for economic cooperation with the northwestern and northeastern areas of China and has expanded its communications with the private sector of this region, such as the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce.

He also explained that in the past three months, various measures have been taken in the field of cooperation related to the digital economy, strengthening the capabilities of economic actors in the e-commerce field, and developing customs communications.

According to Adibi, the Tehran Chamber's representative office based at the Khorgos International Chamber of Commerce does not merely serve as an administrative office but provides the possibility of cooperation with the Chinese side in investment, energy, industry, mining, trade, and agriculture.

He also noted that Khorgos is China's connection point to Europe and, relying on rail network connections, plays an important role in container transfer, combined transport, and the movement of goods between East and West. Reducing transport time and costs, diversifying trade routes, and creating an operational link between China, Central Asia, and Europe are among the advantages of utilizing the capacity of this dry port for Iranian economic actors, especially in developing alternative trade routes and strengthening connection to the Eurasian network.

Damaged oil industry facilities reconstruction should be accelerated: acting oil minister

TEHRAN- The Acting Oil Minister, emphasizing the need to accelerate the reconstruction of oil industry facilities damaged in the third imposed war, said: This measure goes beyond the implementation of industrial projects; it is a national and strategic action for the sustainability of energy supply, maintaining public calm, and continuing the country's economic activities.

According to IRNA, Hamid Bovard said on Friday at a meeting to review reconstruction plans for damaged refineries in South Pars: The process of measures taken for reconstruction is favorable, but given the importance of the matter, the speed of implementation must be increased, and projects related to phases 9 and 10 must also proceed with greater focus and seriousness.

Stating that the reconstruction of oil infrastructure should not be regarded merely as an executive and industrial activity, he added: The importance of these projects lies in their direct effects on national interests and the continuation of the country's vital services, and planning for their completion must be done with such an approach.

Referring to the dependence of a major part of the country's population on the gas supply network, the Acting Oil Minister said: Currently, about 95 percent of the country has access to gas, and for this reason, any disruption in the supply of this energy can affect people's daily lives.

Bovard, explaining the country's gas production and consumption conditions, said: During the war, about 230 million cubic meters of gas production capacity was lost. Also, on peak consumption days, the gas imbalance reaches about 250 million cubic meters.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

'US pressures did not stop Iran's foreign trade'

TEHRAN- The spokesman of the Trade Development Committee of the Industry, Mining and Trade House, emphasizing that US pressures have not been able to stop Iran's foreign trade, said: Iran's geographical capacities, economic links with neighboring countries, and the development of cooperation with trade partners such as China, Russia, Pakistan, and Turkey have made it possible for the flow of foreign trade to continue.



Seyed Ruhollah Latifi, in an interview with IRNA, referring to US efforts to limit Iran's foreign trade and impose pressure on neighboring countries to reduce or stop trade exchanges with the country, stated: Despite political and economic pressures, restrictions created on some trade routes, and attempts to prevent the entry and exit of goods, Iran's foreign trade has not stopped, and the country's economic actors, using geographical capacities, alternative routes, and regional transportation facilities, are still carrying out trade activities.

He added: The economy of Iran and neighboring countries is connected through shared borders, mutual economic needs, transportation networks, consumer markets, and supply chains. These links are not merely political, such that they could easily be cut by a change in one government's position or pressure from a foreign power; rather, the economic interests of people, producers, traders, and economic actors on both sides of the borders lie in the continuation of these exchanges.

Latifi, stating that an important part of Iran's trade with neighbors is still flowing, emphasized: In some neighboring countries, we have experienced growth in trade exchanges, and existing capacities at land borders, rail, road, and sea routes have made continued trade possible. Of course, at certain times restrictions have been created at a number of borders, but these cases cannot be interpreted as a halt in Iran's trade with regional countries.

The spokesman of the Trade Development Committee of the Industry, Mining and Trad House, referring to the role of the private sector and economic actors in the country's difficult conditions, said: Traders and merchants play a very important role in maintaining the flow of goods supply in these conditions. In fact, economic actors, by identifying new routes, establishing connections with various suppliers, using the capacities of intermediary countries, and finding diverse solutions for transportation and financial settlement, have not allowed the flow of entry of goods needed by the country to stop.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran's bentonite industry: production and export potential



TEHRAN- This article examines Iran's bentonite industry, highlighting recent production data, major industrial applications, and export potential. It explores the role of bentonite in drilling fluids, foundry operations, construction, iron ore pelletizing, and absorbent products. The article also explains key quality specifications, technical documentation, processing requirements, and supply chain considerations that international buyers should evaluate when sourcing bentonite from Iran.

Iran is an established producer of industrial minerals, including bentonite, a clay material used in manufacturing, engineering, and processing. According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Iran's bentonite production was estimated at 1.3 million metric tons in 2024, compared with 1.31 million metric tons in 2023 and 1.34 million metric tons in 2022.

USGS data also record production of 715,000 metric tons in 2020 and 1.15 million metric tons in 2021. These figures indicate the scale of domestic production, not export volumes. Domestic demand, processing capacity, product grade, and logistics determine what is available to international buyers.

Why bentonite matters to industrial markets

Bentonite is a naturally occurring clay primarily composed of minerals from the smectite group, particularly montmorillonite. Its ability to absorb water, swell, bind particles, and form suspensions makes it useful across several industrial processes.

Sodium and calcium bentonite are two commercially important varieties. Sodium bentonite generally has greater swelling capacity, while calcium bentonite is selected for applications where its particular adsorption and binding properties are suitable. Performance depends on mineral composition, exchangeable cations, processing, and application conditions; buyers should assess test results against their process requirements.

Major industrial applications

Bentonite serves different functions across industries, and each application requires specific material properties.

Oil and gas drilling: Bentonite is used in water-based drilling fluids to suspend cuttings, support borehole stability, and help control fluid loss. Buyers commonly assess viscosity, filtration properties, particle size, and swelling behavior.

Foundry and metal casting: As a binder in molding sand, bentonite contributes to mold strength and casting quality. Moisture content and green compression strength are important evaluation parameters.

Construction and civil engineering: Selected grades are used in slurry-supported excavation, borehole operations, and sealing applications, where swelling behavior and low permeability can be important.

Iron ore pelletizing: Bentonite binds fine iron ore particles into green pellets before further processing. Binding performance, moisture requirements, and particle-size distribution can affect pellet quality.

Cat litter and absorbent products: Bentonite is used in absorbent products, including cat litter. Relevant properties include absorption, clumping performance, granule size, and dust generation.

No single grade is suitable for every application.

Quality specifications and product consistency

For industrial buyers, a product description is not a substitute for technical specifications. Depending on the intended use, evaluation may include:

• Montmorillonite content, to characterize mineral composition.

• Free swelling index, to assess expansion under defined test conditions.

• Viscosity and filtration properties, particularly for drilling-fluid applications.

• Binding performance, for foundry and pelletizing uses.

Acceptance limits vary by application. Buyers should define the required grade, test methods, target values, and tolerances before requesting quotations.

Documentation is equally important. A Certificate of Analysis (COA) reports test results for a specific batch; a Technical Data Sheet (TDS) summarizes product properties; and a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) provides handling and safety information. Where necessary, independent testing and pre-shipment inspection can help verify compliance with agreed specifications.

Test methods and measurement conditions should accompany results; otherwise, swelling and viscosity values may not be directly comparable.

From production to international supply



Natural resources alone do not guarantee a dependable supply. Processing, quality control, packaging, and transportation all affect whether a product reaches the buyer in the required condition.

Depending on the target grade, processing may include drying, grinding, screening, and particle-size classification. Packaging should protect the material from moisture and contamination during storage and transport.



• Moisture content, which affects storage, handling, and processing.

• Particle-size distribution, which influences dispersion and product behavior.

Buyers and suppliers should also agree in advance on order quantity, packaging type, inspection responsibilities, delivery terms, and required shipping documents.

A competitive offer depends not only on price but also on product consistency, documentation, packaging, and delivery reliability.

Iran's bentonite export potential

Iran's reported production provides a substantial domestic base for the industrial use and potential international supply of bentonite. However, export potential cannot be established from production figures alone. It depends on the availability of suitable grades, processing capabilities, domestic consumption, quality assurance, logistics, and destination-market requirements.

Different buyers prioritize different characteristics. A drilling-fluid operator may focus on viscosity and filtration performance, while a foundry buyer may place greater weight on binding properties. Suppliers and trading companies therefore need to communicate product specifications clearly and match each offer to the buyer's intended application.

Before ordering, buyers should confirm the grade, batch documentation, packaging, quantity, and applicable trade terms.

Vornaco and international bentonite sourcing

As an international trading company active in industrial minerals, Vornaco works with businesses evaluating bentonite sourcing options for industrial applications. Buyers can review Vornaco's bentonite supply solutions and discuss product specifications, bulk order requirements, packaging, and delivery arrangements according to their needs.

Conclusion

Iran's bentonite production and the mineral's range of industrial applications provide a basis for participation in regional and international supply chains. Dependable sourcing requires application-specific specifications, consistent quality, clear documentation, suitable packaging, and coordinated logistics.

From the battlefield to the ballot box: war comes home

From page 1 ▸ These developments are not isolated events. They are different expressions of a single moment: the erosion of the hegemonic order's ability to wage war, monopolize its narrative, and leave others to bear its costs.

The collapse of moral immunity

October 7, 2023, marked a major turning point in the history of the conflict, not simply because of what happened that day, but because of what the ensuing genocidal war exposed about the true nature of the Zionist project and the limits of the Western shield protecting it.

What the West presented under the banner of "self-defense" turned into mass killing, starvation, the destruction of hospitals, schools and residential neighborhoods, and an attempt to make life itself impossible in the Gaza Strip.

By October 2026, the number of Palestinians killed in Gaza had exceeded 74,000, according to figures reported by UN agencies citing the Ministry of Health. This is in addition to hundreds of thousands of wounded and displaced people and the devastation of most of the foundations of everyday life.

Yet the political impact of the massacres extended far beyond the Strip. Every child pulled from beneath the rubble demolished another fragment of the Zionist narrative. Every aid convoy prevented from entering exposed Western double standards. And every weapon delivered to the occupying regime shifted its supporting governments from bystanders to active accomplices.

Despite the continued official Western alignment with the Zionist regime, the massacres brought about a profound shift in public consciousness, particularly among young people, students, trade unions, and Arab and Muslim minorities.

When war became an election issue

U.S. elections have traditionally been decided primarily on economic issues, taxes and employment opportunities, while foreign policy has taken a back seat, so long as Washington's wars are fought far away and ordinary Americans do not feel their direct costs.

But the aggression against Iran changed that equation. Disruptions to energy supplies and shipping fed directly into fuel, transport and commodity prices, turning foreign policy into a domestic issue that affected American household incomes. The question was no longer: What is America doing in the Middle East? It became: Why should Americans pay, out of their own salaries, for a war they never chose and cannot see an end to?



Amsterdam on Nov. 8 witnessed a demonstration attended by more than 200,000 people, protesting their country's economic and military ties with Israel.

The midterm elections laid bare the scale of public anger. Democrats seized control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate, delivering a sweeping political rebuke to the Trump administration. Voter surveys showed that rising living costs, the war on Iran, and the desire to rein in the president's actions all converged in shaping the vote.

More than half of those who took part considered the war not worth the price it had exacted. Foreign policy had left the confines of strategic planning rooms and entered the household fuel and grocery bills, turning a distant war into an everyday concern inside American homes.

This outcome reveals a shift in how voters calculate the costs of war more than it signals a wholesale ideological transformation within American society. Those who punished the Trump administration did not necessarily become opponents of imperialism. They simply rejected the idea that American power could launch an open-ended war and then demand that they pay for it in the name of national security.

Europe: Two angers converge in the streets

Protests across Europe have taken different forms. Some demonstrations stand in solidarity with Palestine, demanding an end to arms supplies to the Zionist regime and the imposition of sanctions. Others are social movements protesting soaring fuel and housing costs, declining wages, and deteriorating public services.

Yet both currents converge around a single question: How can governments find the money to finance wars while asking their populations to shoulder the burden of austerity?

Amsterdam witnessed a demonstration attended by more than 200,000 people, protesting economic and military ties with the Zionist regime. At the same time, social protests spread across dozens of European countries, driven by the rising costs of living, fuel and housing, alongside the erosion of public services.

The war on Iran added further fuel to Europe's accumulated crises, shaped by neoliberal policies, soaring housing costs, stagnant wages, and the decline of the welfare state. As energy costs climbed, the gap between government priorities and public demands widened. Increasingly, sections of society began drawing a direct connection between the money allocated to war and arms spending and the cuts imposed on schools, hospitals and public services.

Essentially, the costs of hegemony abroad converged with the costs of austerity at home. Moral outrage over Gaza met the anger felt in people's pockets over the war. What unites these two currents is declining trust in governments that raise the banner of human rights while providing political and military cover for the massacre of Palestinians, allocating funds to war as public services and living standards deteriorate.

Iran: Breaking the privilege of waging war without paying the price

The significance of Iran's resilience must be measured both by what it achieved and by what it prevented. It thwarted the expectation of a swift victory and denied the U.S.-Zionist alliance a privilege they had long taken for granted: striking others without paying a proportionate price.

Resilience in the balance of power does not mean emerging unscathed. It means preserving political will and the capacity to respond, while preventing an adversary from turning military superiority into a lasting political victory. Through its geographical position, military capabilities, and influence over the energy and shipping equation, Iran was able to make the continuation of the war a burden on its adversaries and the global economy alike.

A U.S. strike was no longer a decision detached from oil prices, shipping movements, voter sentiment, or the future of the ruling party. The question was no longer, "When will Washington strike?" It became: Can Washington afford the consequences of its own strike?

When public opinion changes, the balance of power changes with it.

This is the deeper meaning behind the debate of a multipolar world. It does not emerge through political declarations, nor does it mean that military and economic powers become equal. It begins when a single power can no longer turn its superiority into unquestioning obedience, and when other states and forces acquire the capacity to resist, absorb attacks, and impose costs on the aggressor.

The new world is taking shape not only through the rise of China and Russia, but also through the resilience of regional powers that refuse to submit, through populations gradually withdrawing their legitimacy from wars of hegemony, and through a global economy whose every lever Washington can no longer control on its own.

The significance of these transformations lies in the power of the people. They have stripped the architects of war of their immunity from accountability and demonstrated that blood spilled beyond Western borders can turn into anger on Western streets, and that the costs they sought to impose on others can return as votes punishing them at the ballot box.

Victory does not begin with the sudden collapse of the hegemonic order, but with the erosion of its ability to escape the consequences of its actions indefinitely.

Baby in Gaza freezes to death as UN counts 245 child deaths in West Bank

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Kinan Ahmad Raqiq died in a tent in Khan Younis on November 12. He was nine months old.

Gaza's Health Ministry called it the first cold-related death of the winter. The hospital that received his body, Nasser, had been hit by an Israeli airstrike the same day. Six people were killed, among them the surgeon Rizq Abu Shaeira.

"I woke up only to see his skin had turned blue, so I rushed him to Nasser Hospital, but he had already died from hypothermia and frozen to death," his father, Ahmed Raqiq, told AFP.

The baby died after a storm that Gaza's Government Media Office says flooded about 70,000 tents in 12 hours. Oxfam estimates the water displaced around 100,000 people.

By November 8, the UN humanitarian office, OCHA, had received appeals from more than 26,000 households whose shelters or belongings were damaged.

Shelter on the wrong side of the border

About 1.4 million Palestinians, 65 percent of Gaza's population, now live in tents or makeshift shelters, OCHA says. More than 150,000 tents are waiting outside the Strip.

Inside, aid agencies have virtually nothing left to distribute. In early November, they calculated that Gaza needed 121,000 tents and 57,000 emergency shelter kits. None of the kits were in stock.

In October, the UN migration agency, IOM, said the supply pipeline covered only 17 percent of winter shelter needs. Reuters reported that 8,600 emergency shelter kits were held up.

The so-called ceasefire was supposed to ease this. A year on, Gaza's Government Media Office says only 35 percent of the agreed aid and reconstruction trucks had entered by late August.

Gaza's civil defense, which warned that infants, the elderly and the sick faced the greatest danger this season, counts ten cold deaths last winter. This winter has barely started.

The West Bank toll

On November 13, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk said Israeli forces had killed at least 245 Palestinian children in the occupied West Bank since October 7, 2023. 41 of them died in incidents involving reported stone-throwing.



"The killing of a child for simply carrying or throwing stones is abhorrent," Türk said.

Other monitors count differently but land in the same range. The Israeli rights group B'Tselem put the figure at 235 through June and found that only two of the 54 children and teenagers killed in 2025 were armed with guns when shot.

This week, Israeli forces shot dead 14-year-old Moataz Iyad Daghlas in Burqa, near Nablus, and wounded two other teenagers.

Palestinian authorities say troops held the boy's body and kept ambulance crews from reaching him.

Settlers add to the picture. ACLED says 2026 is the most violent year for settler violence in the West Bank since it began tracking incidents in 2016.

On October 26, a UN Commission of Inquiry said Israel had continued to commit genocidal acts in Gaza despite the ceasefire and had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Separated by a few dozen miles, Gaza and the West Bank are bound together by the same machinery of genocide.

In Gaza, Israel weaponizes the cold itself, blocking basic tents and shelter kits stacked right outside the border.

In the West Bank, soldiers and armed settlers execute Palestinian children with total impunity under an apartheid regime shielded by Washington.

Kinan Raqiq is the first child frozen to death by Israel's siege this winter, and as temperatures plunge, the genocidal campaign against Palestinian survival continues unchecked.

Efforts to encircle the resistance bloc within its borders

By Batool Subeiti

LONDON – In response to the transformations that could give Iran and its allies greater room to expand their influence, the United States and its allies are not standing idle. Another front in this confrontation involves attempts to weaken the resistance bloc from within and restrict the room for maneuver available to forces aligned with it in each country.

The objective is to prevent Iran from fully taking advantage of the outcomes of the confrontation with the Israeli regime and the United States. In this case, the aim is not necessarily to defeat Iran on the battlefield, but rather to obstruct its ability to translate its achievements into sustainable political and economic influence.

For this reason, pressure is being directed towards Lebanon, Iraq, Iran's borders with neighboring countries, and relations between governments and local political forces. This opens up parallel internal fronts, alongside the military confrontation.

In Lebanon, one aspect of this strategy is the intensification of pressure on Hezbollah, attempts to restrict its freedom of movement, and efforts to push the Lebanese state towards taking measures targeting its weapons and military role. These measures are viewed as part of an attempt to encircle the bloc from all directions. In addition, to reduce its ability to influence the Lebanese and regional balance of power.

The performance of the Lebanese authorities, amid external understandings and pressures, is also regarded as an influential factor in this equation. The authorities' role is seen as serving American demands within what is referred to as the "framework agreement".

The central idea here is that the confrontation is not taking place solely on the battlefield. It also extends to political institutions, decisions concerning the state's monopoly on weapons, and attempts to redefine Hezbollah's position within the Lebanese state and its relationship with the wider regional resistance front.

In Iraq, one of the main areas of pressure centers on demands that the Popular Mobilization Force's weapons be placed exclusively under state control. Furthermore, there are measures associated with restricting the PMF factions and other groups belonging to the resistance bloc. This also includes steps relating to the closure of the Iraqi border with Iran, as well as the possibility of provoking political and security disputes between Baghdad and Tehran.

These developments are attempts to weaken communication between the different components of the resistance bloc and reduce opportunities for coordination, supply and mutual influence. They may also serve to create divisions between Iran and its neighbors, at a time when Iran needs to preserve the widest possible network of regional relationships.

In this context, the objective is not limited to changing the structure of Iraq's military institutions or reorganizing the relationship between the state and armed factions. It may also extend to preventing Iran from transforming its regional position into a more stable network of cooperation.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Officials' shifting explanations deepen doubts over US airspace shutdown

From page 1 ▸ The FAA said trouble had hit the Air Route Traffic Control Centers, the facilities that steer planes between airports.

By evening, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy supplied detail. Switches and routers, he said, "got overloaded with data" and began returning inconsistent information.

He corrected himself mid-sentence: "I shouldn't say they went down." Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin described new technology "overwhelming the older system," while Duffy stressed that none of the new equipment failed.

"We have old switches, old routers," he said. "We use 1980s little copper lines."

Questions the briefing left open

Those accounts do not line up neatly. Mullin said nothing points to a cyberattack and that the failure looked mechanical, then added that officials were "still looking."

Duffy said he did not want to rule out what he called "nefarious activity." Neither explained why backups did not contain the problem, which matters because, as aviation law professor Ron Bartsch told Al Jazeera, the whole industry is built on redundancy.

Washington has a record of tidy first drafts. After the January 2023 outage of the pilot notification system, the FAA first pointed to a damaged file, then blamed contractors who deleted files by mistake.

Nothing said Friday has been independently verified. The Washington Post cited a person briefed on the matter describing a messier picture: the network's timing system faltered, and alerts jumped from a typical 8,000 to 16,000.

A warning already on file

The surprise is hard to square with the paper trail. A Government Accountability Office report in September flagged copper cables dating to the 1960s and said the FAA was pushing through changes without scheduling them properly, so switchovers overlapped and strained the network.

Tony Stanton, a former senior executive at Australia's aviation safety regulator, found it "incredibly surprising" that officials had not anticipated an outage.

Democrats raised a separate objection in October, asking the agency to pause its $875 million AI advisory tool until safety testing and oversight were explained. Its maker, ASI, denies any role, and officials have not linked it to Friday's failure.

The bill and the passengers

That night Duffy asked Congress for $50 billion in emergency money, on top of the $12.5 billion lawmakers already provided. "I can't build things if I don't have money," he said.

The request reportedly covers a common automation platform, controller workstations, cloud computing and a sturdier telecommunications backbone. Whether more money fixes a problem that new equipment appears to have helped cause is a question he left alone.

Travelers absorbed the cost first. Cirium counted at least 827 diversions, 670 of them back to the departure airport.

FlightAware tallied 9,132 cancellations for Friday and, by Saturday, more than 12,500 across two days. At Dallas/Fort Worth, a pilot asked why departures had stopped.

The controller said nobody knew, only that it was indefinite and nationwide. Duffy gave college football charters priority and promised normal operations by Thanksgiving, but would not rule out a repeat.

By most counts, it was only the third nationwide ground stop in U.S. history, after the September 11 attacks and the 2023 notification failure.

The second was a deleted file. This one, by the administration's own account, was an old network meeting new equipment it could not handle.

Crash site of former Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi named national heritage site

TEHRAN – The site where former Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and seven others were martyred in a helicopter crash in East Azarbaijan province has been officially registered on Iran's National Heritage List, a provincial cultural heritage official announced on Saturday.

Vahid Navadad, deputy director of East Azarbaijan's Cultural Heritage Department, said the site, located near the village of Uzi in the Dizmar region of Varzaqan county, was registered under No. 34570 in recognition of its national and historical significance.

The crash occurred on May 19, 2024, when a Bell 212 helicopter carrying Raisi and a number of other officials and crew went down in the Dizmar forest area while they were returning to Tabriz from a ceremony marking the inauguration of the Qiz-Qalasi Dam on the Iran-Azerbaijan border.

Those martyred included Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem, the representative of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in East Azarbaijan and Friday prayer leader of Tabriz, and Malek Rahmati, the province's governor-general, along with members of the flight crew and other accompanying personnel.



The Bell 212 carrying President Raisi is captured taking off from the Qiz-Qalasi Dam before the crash, May 19, 2024.

Speaking about the significance of the registration, Navdad described the May 19 incident as one of the most consequential events in Iran's contemporary history.

He said the historical value of a site was not necessarily determined by its age, architectural features or surviving physical remains, adding that places could also acquire national significance through events that become deeply embedded in a country's collective memory and cultural identity.

"The Dizmar region has acquired such a standing by being the setting for one of the most significant events in the country's contemporary history," he said.

Navadad said the national registration would help formally recognize the site's historical and symbolic significance, facilitate professional documentation of its characteristics and provide a legal framework for its protection.

He added that cultural heritage encompassed not only physical monuments but also historical narratives, collective memories and landmarks connecting successive generations.

The registration, he said, would preserve the site as a marker of Iran's national historical memory, alongside the region's natural and geographical significance.

Isfahan's pigeon towers emerge as potential World Heritage candidate

TEHRAN – Iran's historic pigeon towers in Isfahan province could have the potential to be nominated for UNESCO World Heritage status, prompting renewed calls for comprehensive documentation, comparative research and stronger conservation measures to establish their significance on a global scale.

The towers, many dating from the Safavid era, are more than distinctive mud-brick structures built to shelter pigeons. They represent an ingenious combination of vernacular architecture, traditional agricultural technology and natural resource management that supported farming communities across Iran's central plateau.

Alireza Izadi, director-general of the office for registration, preservation and rehabilitation of cultural heritage at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, raised the prospect of their international recognition during a meeting of the supreme council for the registration and buffer zones of immovable heritage in Falavarjan, Isfahan province, Mehr new agency reported on Saturday.

He described the pigeon towers as valuable heritage assets and called for a comprehensive nomination dossier to be prepared to facilitate their potential introduction to the international community.

Izadi also stressed the importance of documenting the climatic, historical and cultural characteristics of heritage sites, completing registration files and securing cooperation among government agencies, municipal authorities and the private sector to provide resources for conservation.

The prospect of a UNESCO nomination, however, raises important questions about what distinguishes Isfahan's pigeon towers from comparable structures elsewhere and whether their documented significance meets the criteria for Outstanding Universal Value required for World Heritage inscription.

Architecture shaped by function and climate

Architect Arman Farahmand said the towers should be understood primarily as functional structures developed in response to specific economic and environmental needs rather than judged solely by their appearance or architectural dimensions.



Their design reflected accumulated knowledge of local climatic conditions, construction materials, pigeon behavior and the practical requirements of collecting bird droppings for agricultural use, he explained.

The interior arrangement was central to their functionality. Numerous nesting niches were built into the walls, while their dimensions and positioning, together with openings for light and ventilation, were carefully considered to accommodate the birds and facilitate the collection of their droppings.

Many towers were constructed from locally available mud bricks and earth, materials widely used in the hot, dry regions of central Iran because of their accessibility, relatively low cost and thermal properties.

Traditional construction techniques also made efficient use of interior space. Arches reinforced the walls, while barrel-vaulted ceilings helped support the structures. The towers were often substantial buildings, commonly reaching heights of approximately 10.5 to 12 meters.

Although their architectural forms vary, many follow a broadly comparable design, with internal structural arrangements helping distribute weight and maintain stability.

Farahmand emphasized that the towers should not be treated as a uniform architectural category. Detailed surveys, architectural drawings, measurements and studies of construction techniques are needed to identify both their shared characteristics and regional variations.

Such documentation, he said, would provide an essential scientific foundation for any international nomination.

An agricultural system built around natural fertilizer

The historical importance of pigeon towers is closely connected to their role in traditional agriculture.

Sohrab Nikpey, a researcher of agricultural history and rural economy, said the structures formed part of the agricultural production system in central Iran, where pigeon droppings were collected and used as fertilizer to improve soil fertility.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

SPORTS

Iran sends 70 athletes to Open SCO Cup

TEHRAN - A total of 70 Iranian athletes are representing the country at the Open Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Moscow.

The international sporting event, running from Nov. 11 to 23 in Moscow and the Moscow Region, has brought together more than 2,000 athletes from Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states and invited teams. Around 100 sets of medals are up for grabs.

The competition features 11 sports: table tennis, trampoline gymnastics, sambo, sport climbing, artistic gymnastics, weightlifting, fencing, rhythmic gymnastics, chess, judo and wushu.

Iran has sent a 70-member delegation to compete in six disciplines: sport climbing, judo, weightlifting, artistic gymnastics, chess and table tennis.

The holding of the Cup has become a new stage in the development of sporting cooperation between the member states of the Organization. The initiative to hold the Cup was put forward at the meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the SCO Member States in Moscow in November 2025 and was included in the final communiqué. In May 2026, at the Meeting of Ministers of Sport of the SCO Member States in Cholpon-Ata, the Regulations for the "Open SCO Cup" were approved.

Andrej Panadic linked with Persepolis

TEHRAN – Iranian giants Persepolis have reportedly expressed interest in appointing Croatian coach Andrej Panadic as part of their coaching staff.

The 57-year-old Croatian is familiar with Iranian football, having previously worked at Persepolis as an assistant to former head coach Branko Ivankovic.

Reports suggest that Persepolis, currently led by Mehdi Tartar, are considering bringing Panadic back to the club. However, no official agreement has been announced so far.

Persepolis are among the leading contenders for the 2026/27 Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) title and are looking to strengthen their coaching setup as they prepare for the new campaign.

Panadic's previous experience with the Tehran-based club could make him an attractive option for the Reds.

Iran are undisputed kings of beach soccer: AFC

TEHRAN - As excitement peaks for the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2026, the-afc.com turns its attention to Group B, which promises to be a thriller.

Leading the cast are defending champions Iran and the-AFC.com takes a look at just what stands in their way.

The undisputed kings of beach soccer in Asia after winning their fourth title in 2025 to move past Japan with the most continental success, Iran will be confident of retaining their title as head coach Ali Naderi continues at the helm with Ali Mirshekari, who was crowned Most Valuable Player and Top Goalscorer at the last edition, leading their charge.

Iran are drawn in Group B along with Lebanon, Afghanistan and Vietnam.

The 2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup will be held in Phang Nga, Thailand.

The group stage will run from Nov. 18 to 23, followed by the quarterfinals on Nov. 25 and semifinals on Nov. 27.

The third-place play-off and final are scheduled for Nov. 28.

Iran trash Sri Lanka at AFC U17 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2027 qualifier

TEHRAN - Iran made it two wins from two after a storming 11-0 victory against Sri Lanka in their AFC U17 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2027 Qualifiers Group D match on Saturday.

Radin Haddarzi got the ball rolling for Iran in the third minute, tapping home from close range after good work from Mohammad Parsa on the right.

Amirmohammad Zarei made it 2-0 in the 13th minute, benefitting from a poor Sri Lanka clearance before Aliasghar Naderi slotted home a 16th minute penalty. A breakaway a minute later saw Naderi tucking in the rebound after Imadh Shareeq had parried Zarei's initial shot with the latter then curling a spectacular free-kick into the top corner in the 28th minute.

Further strikes from Haddarzi (36th), Zarei (45th+1) and Amirali Alimardani (45th+3) gave Iran a comfortable 8-0 lead at the break.

There was to be no respite for Sri Lanka after the interval as Iran pressed on with Amirsam Jannatalipour steering home from close range in the 56th minute after Shareeq had misjudged the flight of the ball with Naderi closing in for an attempted header.

Naderi scored his fourth of the game two minutes later, curling in a beautiful shot from the edge of the box with Jannatalipour's header in the 68th minute completing a superb Iran performance, the-afc.com reported.

Iran's fixtures at 2026 Asian Women's Handball Championship unveiled

TEHRAN – Iran's women's national handball team will begin their campaign at the 21st Asian Women's Handball Championship against Hong Kong on Nov. 23.

The tournament will be held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from Nov. 23 to Dec. 3, 2026.

Team Melli have been drawn in Group A alongside Japan, China, Hong Kong and Bangladesh.

Iran will face China on Nov. 24, Bangladesh on Nov. 25 and Japan on Nov. 28, completing their group-stage schedule.

Group B comprises South Korea, hosts Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, India, Australia and the winner of the IHF Trophy.

Iran defeat Nigeria at FIP World Polo Championship Zone E Qualifiers

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Nigeria 11-3 at the FIP World Polo Championship Zone E Qualifiers on Saturday.

Iran defeated Nigeria, with familiar faces, the Reza brothers, making their mark on the encounter.

In another match, Pakistan stunned India with a 7–4 victory, securing their place in the final.

Nigeria hosts the Federation of International Polo Zone E qualifiers for the World Polo Championship, with teams from Nigeria, India, Iran and Pakistan competing at Guards Polo Club, Abuja, from Nov. 9 to 16.

First Announcement

National Iranian Oil Company

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0540001

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

Item	Material Description	Quantity	UNIT
1	CASING 7" , L-80 , 29 PPF,SML, "VAM", "N.VAM" , DRIFT: 6.125 IN.	10,000	LE
2	CASING 7" , P-110 , 29 PPF,SML, "VAM", "N.VAM" , DRIFT: 6.125 IN.	1,500	LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of **128,110.30 EURO** or **246,904,164,868 RIAL**, in favor of NISOC.

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COP31: DOE chief meets Turkish officials to expand environmental ties



TEHRAN – The head of the Department of Environment (DOE), Shina Ansari, has met with Turkish officials to discuss ways to strengthen environmental cooperation between the two countries.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 31st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is being held in Antalya, Turkey, from November 9 to 20.

The discussions focused on exploring opportunities to expand bilateral collaboration in the environmental sector.

On Wednesday, Ansari held a meeting with Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yilmaz, elaborating on the destructive impacts of the US-Israeli war against Iran, particularly explosions at fuel storage facilities, and the amount of toxic substances and greenhouse gases, underscoring that the implementation of constructive environmental programs depends on regional stability and security, IRNA reported.

For his part, the Turkish official highlighted the long-standing cultural commonalities between Iran and Turkey, voicing the country's readiness for the expansion of collaborations in different sectors, including the environment.

Referring to the development of the Iran-Turkey joint environmental committee following last year's Zero Waste Forum, which was held in Istanbul in October 2025, he called for the continuation of environmental cooperation, focusing on the protection of biological resources and habitats.

"At a time when regional evolutions have once again highlighted the importance of peace and stability, both parties will focus on not only regional issues but also their shared responsibilities regarding the fight against climate change," Cevdet noted.

The head of the DOE also met Murat Kurum, the Turkish minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The talk was centered around enhancing joint environmental cooperation, accelerating the implementation of bilateral agreements, developing collaborative environmental initiatives, and exchanging expertise on resilient cities and waste management.

The Turkish official announced Turkey's willingness for the promotion of environmental ties in fields like resilient cities, waste management, and the implementation of zero waste program.

COP31 is one of the most significant international gatherings on climate change, bringing together representatives from nearly 200 countries, government officials, experts, scientists, environmental activists, and representatives of international organizations.

Iran is participating in the conference with a delegation of experts and representatives from relevant government bodies, headed by Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment. Iranian experts are focusing on challenges related to drought, financing food systems, war-related environmental degradation, and the presentation of investment-ready adaptation projects.

President Masoud Pezeshkian also attended the conference for the first time. This marks the first time an Iranian president participated in this international gathering at such a high level.

Iran will also present its measures to address climate change, including efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate impacts, reduce gas flaring, adopt high-level policy documents, and implement a climate management plan, despite existing limitations and challenges.

Iranian experts are seeking to strengthen water and climate diplomacy and draw on international experience to address the impacts of climate change. This approach is particularly important given the country's climatic conditions and growing pressure on water resources and the agricultural sector.

Ansari had also said at a meeting reviewing Iran's main challenges and negotiating priorities ahead of COP31 that the country's focus at the climate conference would be on highlighting the environmental consequences of war and calling for international accountability.

In 2025, on the sidelines of the global Zero Waste Forum, held from October 17 to 19, Ansari and Emine Erdogan, the first lady of Turkey, underlined fostering environmental collaborations and sharing experiences.

"Promoting cooperation with neighboring countries, particularly in the environment sector, will lay the ground for regional and international peace," doe.ir quoted Erdogan as saying.

Highlighting the importance of the shared environment challenges, the official said the environment, from land to air and sea, connects countries. Erdogan commended Iran's valuable experiences in the field of environment and announced Turkey's readiness to cooperate with Iran in all fields.

For her part, Ansari said waste management is among the top priorities of the DOE; Iran is willing to benefit from international expertise, including Turkey's successful experiences. She proposed developing ties in preserving biodiversity and protected areas.

Tehran, Moscow set to convene joint ICT working group in 2027

TEHRAN – Iranian and Russian officials have agreed to hold the sixth meeting of their joint working group on information and communication technology (ICT) during the first quarter of 2027, as part of efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the sector.

ICT Minister Sattar Hashemi and Russian Deputy Minister of Digital Development, Communication, and Mass Media, Grigory Borisenko, met on the sidelines of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26), which is taking place in Doha, Qatar, from November 9 to 27 November, Mehr news agency reported.

Holding a specialized forum with the participation of technology companies from the two countries, exploring the possibility of establishing a joint information technology park, and expanding cooperation in the field of cybersecurity were among the main issues proposed by Hashemi during the meeting. He stressed that the sixth joint working group will provide an opportunity to follow up on collaborative projects.

The Russian official, for his part, welcomed these proposals, highlighting the importance of constant interactions, and the development of specialized collaborations in the fields of ICT between both parties.

Lauding Iran's position and support at international forums, Borisenko said that cooperation between the two sides within the framework of ITU, BRICS, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) serve as great opportunities to pursue shared interests, highlighting the importance of continued collaborations.

The fifth meeting of the Iran-Russia joint working group in ICT sector was held in Moscow from December 6 to 7, 2025.

ITU Plenipotentiary Conference

The Plenipotentiary Conference is the principal governing body of the ITU. It serves as the authoritative decision-making mechanism on the organization's strategic and financial plans, leadership, and overall direction.

Held every four years, the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (also known as "Plenipot" or "PP") affirms common positions among ITU's Member States worldwide. PP-26 calls on countries to work "Together for a connected digital future."

Delegates from ITU's 194 Member States will address the world's most pressing digital opportunities and challenges, define the UN agency's strategic vision through 2031, and elect its leadership for the coming four years.

The conference is also expected to address critical, collective issues, such as expanding global connectivity and investment, strengthening the resilience of digital infrastructure, ensuring reliable emergency and humanitarian communications, advancing space-based connectivity and sustainability, and harnessing emerging technologies for development.

PP-26 features an extensive Ministerial Program, with high-level thematic discussions on resilience and emerging technologies, offering senior leaders a platform to exchange insights, showcase national achievements, and address shared challenges. The conference further supports the meaningful participation of women and youth, with dedicated activities on inclusion and accessibility in the digital transformation agenda.

ITU Member States will elect the organization's top management team as well as members of the ITU Council and Radio Regulations Board. Member States will also agree on the organization's strategic and financial roadmap for 2028 to 2031.

An Iranian delegation led by the ICT minister is attending the conference with the aim of bolstering technology diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral collaborations, and pursuing the interests of the country in global governance of information and communication technologies.

Holding meetings with his counterparts and senior officials of the member states, and exploring opportunities for cooperation in advanced technologies and digital economy fields are among the other scheduled plans of the Iranian delegation.

Third Russia-Iran ICT Forum

In October, leading Iranian and Russian companies explored ways to expand bilateral cooperation in advanced technologies at the third Russia-Iran Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Forum.

The forum brought together officials, diplomats, and public- and private-sector representatives from both countries. The participants met on the sidelines of the second Global Digital Forum, held in Moscow from October 8 to 10, IRNA reported.

During the meeting, Alexander Shoitov, Russia's deputy minister of digital development, communications and mass media, said the participation of Iranian companies in the Global Digital Forum offered a valuable opportunity to exchange information and establish new partnerships.

He noted that Iran and Russia had significant potential to expand bilateral cooperation, particularly in artificial intelligence and cybersecurity.

Shoitov also reaffirmed Russia's readiness to deepen bilateral ties and develop joint infrastructure in the ICT sector.

For his part, Iran's ambassador to Russia, Kazem Jalali, highlighted the importance of fostering strategic cooperation between Iran and Russia in the expansion of digital exchanges within a governmental framework. The enhancement of ties helps strengthen the country's capacity for participation in regional and global markets.

Highlighting the expertise and knowledge of Iranian technology companies in the localization of IT infrastructure equipment, Russian companies can establish joint ventures with reliable partners in Iran, gaining access to the country's IT and artificial intelligence services market.

Moreover, Iranian and Russian representatives of high-technology companies showcased their latest cutting-edge accomplishments and presented their comprehensive plans and operational proposals for the promotion of cooperation in advanced technologies.

Exchanging best practices and technological solutions, holding B2B meetings, expanding business networks, and exploring opportunities for joint projects were among other key parts of the Forum. Particular attention was given to practical mechanisms for Russian and Iranian companies to enter new markets and develop cooperation with partners from third countries.

Iranian students shine in Open World Astronomy Olympiad

TEHRAN – An Iranian team of six students has achieved remarkable success at the fifth edition of the Open World Astronomy Olympiad (OWAO), winning six gold medals. The Olympiad took place from November 6 to 14 in Russia.

Sarina Alampour, Parsia Hassanzadeh, Elshan Rouhani, Mohammad-Reza Mohammadi, Bardia Qilavizadeh, and Mehdi Aryafar secured gold medals, showcasing their dedication and academic excellence in the competition, IRNA reported.

OWAO is a modern and rapidly growing competition that brings together talented and passionate astronomy students from around the world. OWAO combines the best astronomical traditions with cutting-edge knowledge assessment methods, and its tasks are developed by leading experts from various countries.

The competition was organized with the support of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

The Olympiad is open to teams of 2 to 6 participants (aged 18 years or younger). Each team may have one team leader and up to two observers (adults). One country can be represented by only one team.

The Olympiad consists of four rounds: theoretical, practical, observational, and test rounds. The working language of the Olympiad is English; however, participants may use a glossary provided by the Academic Committee that has been pre-translated into their national languages by team leaders.

Iran's national Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad team was crowned world champion for the third consecutive year after winning five gold medals at the 19th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA 2026).

Iranian students secured five gold medals at the international competition, which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from September 25 to October 5, 2026.

More than 320 students from over 66 countries took part in this year's Olympiad. Sarina Elmpour, Mohammad-Hossein Hosseini, Hirbod Foudazi, Hossein Masoumi, and Arshia Mirshamsi-Kakhaki won gold medals for Iran.

Milestones at international Olympiads despite war

Talented Iranian students have achieved remarkable success at international Olympiads, winning 13 medals and securing the championship title at the International Physics Olympiad despite the numerous challenges posed by the US-Israeli war against the country.

Last year, Iranian students took part in 14 international scientific competitions but were unable to participate in two Olympiads due to the outbreak of war. Despite the hardships and challenges brought about by the ongoing conflict, they demonstrated their outstanding abilities by setting new benchmarks in various competitions and proudly raising Iran's flag on the international stage. Their remarkable achievements have become a source of great pride for the country, Mehr news agency quoted Seyyed Reza Hosseini, head of the Young Scholars Club, as saying.

The students performed outstandingly at the 56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO); the five-member team ranked first globally, garnering three gold medals and two silver medals, which was exceptional over the past 20 years, he added.

Held from July 4 to 12 in Bucaramanga, Colombia, the IPhO 2026 brought together over 400 students from more than 90 countries.

Hirbod Foudazi, Kian Zarrabian, and Mohammad Mirmohammadi secured gold medals, while Amir-Sam Goharpey and Nima Koushki won silver medals.

Despite attacks on Iran's national artificial intelligence infrastructure that disrupted the team's access to computing resources and data centers, Iranian students won their first gold medal at the International Olympiad in Artificial Intelligence (IOAI), the official said.

The team also won two silver medals and one bronze at the third edition of the competition, held from August 2 to 8 in Astana, Kazakhstan, according to the official.

Shayan Rezaeizadeh grabbed the gold medal, Mohammad-Reza Darvishi, and Mohammad-Amin Nazmfar won the silver medals, while Mani Monjipor received the bronze medal.

Brilliant Iranian students proudly claimed their first-ever medals at the 67th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO), which was organized on July 15 and 16 in Shanghai, China. They won two gold medals, one silver medal, and three bronze medals.

Alireza Joonbakhsh-Najafabadi and Alireza Sharifi won the gold medals, Amirhossein Tayyeb clinched the silver medal, and Arsha Azizeddin, Radin Nik-Eqbali, and Arian Zandi received the bronze medals.

Female Iranian students secured an unprecedented success at the 22nd International Geography Olympiad (iGeo), held from August 11 to 17 in Istanbul, Turkey. They succeeded in winning a bronze medal and three honorable mentions; their performance was inspiring to many other nations, Hosseini further noted.

Also, in the 19th International Earth Science Olympiad (IESO 2026) in Italy, the Iranian team won an impressive haul of two silver medals, six bronze medals, and a top prize.

Mehraneh Vashaqani-Farahani secured the world's top ranking in the Young Reporters of the International Union of Geological Sciences short documentary category, delivering one of the most notable results for the Iranian team at this year's competition, IRNA reported.

In the individual examinations, Shamim Molla-Qolizadeh and Javad Namjoo each won a silver medal, while Ghazal Qazizadeh took bronze.

Namjoo also won a bronze medal in the Earth System Project (ESP) category. In the International Team Field Investigation (ITFI), Molla-Qolizadeh, Namjoo, Qazizadeh and Vashaqani-Farahani each earned a bronze medal.

Iranian students clinched medals and an honorable mention at the 9th International Economics Olympiad (IEO 2026) held from July 12-20 in Shenzhen China, and the 38th edition of the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI) held from August 9 to 16 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

This year, 270 students from 54 countries attended the IEO competition. Mobin Karimi Dizicheh secured a silver medal. He received an honorable mention and also won Best in Finance, Borna news agency reported.

Mohammad-Hossein Rahimi Nejad, Alireza Atashi, and Ehsan Zolfaghari won the bronze medals.

Hamed Ghaffariaghdas and Arash Ostadsharif-Memar grabbed the silver medals, while Mohammad Shayan won the bronze medal. Moreover, Bahamin Shafaqi received the honorable mention.

The 37th International Biology Olympiad (IBO 2026) took place from July 12 to 19 in the city of Vilnius, Lithuania. The event brought together participants from some 80 countries across five continents.

Radin Bayani, Mohammad-Reza Vaezi, and Amir-Hossein Nosrati grabbed gold medals, while Amir-Hossein Hemmati won the silver medal, IRIB reported.

The 58th International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO 2026) was held from July 10 to 19 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Over 350 students from 90 countries attended the event.

Ali Shamsi-Mofakhar, Mahyar Najar, and Amir-Reza Hosseini secured silver medals, while Ario Seirafi won the bronze medal.

Four Iranian female students attended the Open International Geography Olympiad (OpenGeo) 2026, winning four medals, including a silver medal and three bronze medals for the first time.

Artina Heidari won the silver medal; Setayesh Haqnazari, Sana Karbalaei Vali, and Helia Khodabandelou received the bronze medals, IRIB reported.

The six-member Iranian team has shown brilliance, claiming the championship at the fourth International Mathematics Summer Camp (IMSC) held in Beijing, China, from June 17 to July 12, demonstrating exceptional teamwork and dedication to mathematics.

(See full text at tehrantimescom)

TEHRAN TIMES

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NOVEMBER 15, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The best among you is the one who doesn't harm others with his tongue and hands.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:49 Evening: 17:17 Dawn: 5:14 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:41 (tomorrow)

Iranian painter unveils two paintings commemorating Hazrat Fatemeh Zahra (SA)



TEHRAN – Iranian painter Ali Bahreini unveiled two new paintings depicting the martyrdom of Hazrat Fatemeh Zahra (SA), the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), on Friday, the anniversary of her martyrdom.

The two newly released works portray different moments associated with the martyrdom of Hazrat Fatemeh (SA), Mehr reported.

The first painting depicts the moment of her martyrdom, while the second portrays Imam Ali (AS) mourning over her body during her funeral procession.

Bahreini, an experienced painter and calligrapher known for his religious and historical subjects, has devoted much of his artistic career to depicting figures and events from Islamic history, particularly the lives of the Ahl al-Bayt (the family of Prophet Muhammad).

Born in 1970, in Bushehr province, Bahreini began painting professionally in 1989. Over the course of his career, he has held 18 solo exhibitions in Bushehr province and approximately 11 others in different parts of Iran. He has also participated in 25 group exhibitions.

His artistic approach is primarily realist, although he incorporates elements of traditional Persian miniature painting and Impressionism into his works. Religious themes have been a recurring feature of his artistic output, with paintings such as "The Loneliness of Hazrat Fatemeh," "The Loneliness of Imam Ali," "Birth of the Jasmine," and "Manifestation of the Advent" among his notable works.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Cartoon of Day



Winter in Gaza

Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Turkey

Women artists explore Hadith al-Kisa through calligraphy, visual arts in Tehran



TEHRAN - An exhibition featuring more than 80 artworks inspired by Hadith al-Kisa, created by Iranian women artists, opened at the Khaneh Gallery of the Art Bureau in Tehran on Friday, marking the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Fatemeh Zahra (SA).

Hadith al-Kisa recounts an occasion when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) gathered his close family members under a cloak. In Islamic tradition, the narration highlights the special status of the Prophet's household, known as the Ahl al-Bayt.

The visual arts exhibition brings together works by 50 women artists specializing in calligraphy, illumination, poetry and photography. The artworks offer different artistic interpretations of Hadith al-Kisa, Mehr reported.

Hamideh Givi, a member of the Iranian Calligraphers Association, said the exhibition is being held for the second consecutive year and features more than 80 works produced by members of the Women of the Sun's Design artistic group.

Explaining the exhibition's central theme, Givi said the text of Hadith al-Kisa has been rendered in Naskh calligraphy, while its Persian translation has been written in Nastaliq and Shekasteh Nastaliq scripts.

The exhibition also includes paintings inspired by the narration, alongside poems written by women members of the group. These literary works have been transcribed by calligraphers, while illumination artists have prepared ornamental title pages intended for a forthcoming illustrated book.

The exhibition's poster also incorporates a photograph taken by one of the group's photographers, reflecting the collaborative nature of the project.

Givi noted that the Women of the Sun's Design group has organized several collective exhibitions over the years.

Among the group's previous projects was a workshop held at Tehran's Azadi Tower during the month of Muharram last year, in which participating artists transcribed Ziyarat Ashura, a devotional text recited in remembrance of Imam Hussein (AS) and the martyrs of Karbala. The work was subsequently published as an illustrated book.

Givi said the organizers also plan to publish the outcome of the ongoing exhibition in the form of an illustrated volume, bringing together the calligraphy, poetry, paintings and illumination works presented at the exhibition.

The exhibition opened on November 13 and will run through November 17.

Nolan's 'Odyssey' to be shown, reviewed in Tehran

TEHRAN – The 2026 epic action fantasy film "The Odyssey," written and directed by Christopher Nolan, will be shown at the cineplex of the Tehran Book Garden on Wednesday.

The 172-minute movie screening is set for 16:30 and it will be followed by a review session in the presence of the veteran film critic Masoud Farassati, ILNA reported.

An adaptation of Homer's ancient Greek epic poem the "Odyssey," it stars an ensemble cast including Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Anne Hathaway, Robert Pattinson, Lupita Nyong'o, Samantha Morton, Zendaya, and Charlize Theron.

In the film, Odysseus (Damon), the Greek king of Ithaca, undergoes a long and perilous journey home after the Trojan War and encounters mythical beings as he attempts to reunite with his wife, Penelope (Hathaway).

Throughout his voyage, he is forced to confront the whims of gods, mythological monsters, and trials that stretch both his cunning and his humanity to the breaking point.

With an estimated budget of $250 million, it is among the most expensive films of Nolan's career, and the first feature film to be shot entirely on IMAX's 70 mm film cameras.

The film received acclaim for its direction, performances, and set pieces, though some criticized Nolan's deviations from the source material. It has grossed $1.804 billion worldwide, becoming Nolan's highest-grossing film, the second-highest-grossing film of 2026, the highest-grossing R-rated film ever, the highest-grossing film distributed by Universal, and the eleventh-highest-grossing film of all time.

The "Odyssey" is one of two major epics of ancient Greek literature attributed to Homer, first composed around the 8th or 7th century BC. It is one of the oldest surviving works of literature and remains popular with modern audiences. Like the "Iliad," the "Odyssey" is divided into 24 books. It follows the heroic king of Ithaca, Odysseus (also known by the Latin variant Ulysses), and his homecoming journey after the ten-year-long Trojan War. His journey from Troy to Ithaca lasts an additional ten years, during which time he encounters many perils and all of his crewmates are killed. In Odysseus's long absence, he is presumed dead, leaving his wife Penelope and son Telemachus to contend with a group of unruly suitors competing for Penelope's hand in marriage.

Critics have noted multiple differences between Nolan's and Homer's versions of "The Odyssey". Some have questioned whether Nolan accurately depicts Mycenaean Greece; others have argued that Homer's epic was simply a myth, and others again have stated that while "The Odyssey" is a story, it was rooted in history.

Nolan cut some plot elements and characters, including several gods, while attempting to preserve an appropriate tone. He decided to portray Odysseus as a veteran tired of war and haunted by slaughter. That offers a modern explanation for the length of Odysseus's homecoming—that he was avoiding going home.

Sir Christopher Nolan, 56, is a British and American filmmaker. Known for his Hollywood blockbusters with complex storytelling, Nolan is considered a leading filmmaker of the 21st century. His films have earned over $8 billion worldwide, making him the third-highest-grossing film director of all time.

Nolan's accolades include two Academy Awards, a Golden Globe Award, and two British Academy Film Awards. He was also appointed a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 2019 and was knighted in 2024 for his contributions to film.

Nolan developed an interest in filmmaking from a young age. After studying English literature at University College London, he made several short films before his feature film debut with "Following" (1998). Nolan gained international recognition with his second film, "Memento" (2000), and transitioned into studio filmmaking with "Insomnia" (2002).

He became a high-profile director with "The Dark Knight" trilogy (2005–2012) and found further success with "The Prestige" (2006), "Inception" (2010), "Interstellar" (2014) and "Dunkirk" (2017).

After the release of the critically polarizing "Tenet" (2020), Nolan parted ways with longtime distributor Warner Bros. Pictures over their streaming release strategy and signed with Universal Pictures for the highly successful "Oppenheimer" (2023) and "The Odyssey" (2026). The former won him Academy Awards for Best Director and Best Picture.

Global artistic initiatives to support Gaza

The "Together for Palestine" initiative, launched by British musician Brian Eno, is preparing to organize a major charity event in New York City to raise funds for the residents of the Gaza Strip.

This step follows the great success achieved by the initiative in London, where the proceeds from its previous concert exceeded two million pounds sterling with the participation of a selection of global stars, Alquds reported.

American singer Billie Eilish called on her followers on social media platforms to provide urgent donations to UNRWA, in light of the deteriorating humanitarian conditions experienced by displaced persons in the Strip.

Eilish's call came in conjunction with reports indicating that the properties and shelters of more than 26,000 Palestinian families were damaged by floods and heavy rains that hit displacement areas.

The British capital, London, previously witnessed the launch of this initiative from the Wembley Arena, where Palestinian artist Malak Mattar managed the event artistically amidst a large audience that led to a complete sell-out of tickets.

Prominent musicians and actors participated in that concert, including Richard Gere, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Florence Pugh, with the aim of highlighting the humanitarian suffering in Gaza.

The initiative broadcast a video recording before the London concert in which global artists such as Cillian Murphy, Joaquin Phoenix, and Steve Coogan appeared, demanding an immediate ceasefire.

The live broadcast via the internet allowed audiences from all over the world to follow the performances and contribute to the donations allocated to support relief and medical efforts inside the besieged Strip.

The organizers of the initiative announced that the financial proceeds, which included ticket sales and products associated with the concert, were directed through the Choose Love foundation to three Palestinian entities active in the field.

These entities include the Welfare Association (Taawon), the Palestine Children's Relief Fund, and the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, to ensure that aid reaches those entitled to it among the victims of the occupation's aggression.

The team revealed the launch of a charity song titled "Lullaby," with cover art designed by artist Malak Mattar, to be a symbol of ongoing solidarity with the children of Gaza who are facing harsh conditions.

The initiative continues to mobilize international support through artistic events, emphasizing the role of art in conveying fair humanitarian and political messages to the international community.

In a related context, musician Brian Eno appeared in a new recording alongside actor Mahershala Ali and director Yorgos Lanthimos to support the "Noor" program affiliated with the Welfare Association. This program primarily aims to care for orphaned children who lost their parents due to the ongoing attacks launched by the occupation army on residential areas in the Gaza Strip.

For her part, American actress Angelina Jolie continued her humanitarian efforts by publishing satellite images showing the scale of the massive destruction inflicted on residential neighborhoods in Gaza. Jolie called on the international community to take urgent action to provide shelter and basic aid before the winter crisis worsens, especially with about 1.4 million displaced people living in temporary tents.

Sources indicated that Jolie had visited the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing earlier this year, where she met with relief teams and learned about the scale of the difficulties facing the entry of aid.

The global actress warned that the lack of proper shelter puts the lives of thousands of families at risk, especially in light of the destruction of infrastructure and residential buildings due to bombing.

Heavy rains recently caused the collapse of tents and damaged buildings in the five governorates of Gaza, leading to a humanitarian tragedy in the Deir al-Balah area.

Local sources reported that a sand collapse on the tents of displaced persons resulted in the martyrdom of three children and two women, in addition to the death of an infant by drowning in the floodwaters that swept through displacement centers.