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Two tankers explode after hitting naval mines south of Strait of Hormuz

TEHRAN – Two oil tankers caught fire and exploded after striking naval mines while attempting to secretly navigate an unauthorized route through the Strait of Hormuz, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy announced.

In a statement on Saturday night, the IRGC Navy said the two oil tankers had attempted to pass through the strategic waterway with their navigation and automatic identification systems switched off.

The vessels struck naval mines and suffered powerful explosions, triggering severe fires, the statement added.

Following the incident, two other tankers that had also intended to make a covert passage through the strait complied with warnings issued by the IRGC Navy's Strait of Hormuz vessel traffic control center and turned back toward the waters of the Persian Gulf, it added. ▶ **Page 2**

NYT investigation links Mossad to abduction and killing of Iranian general Alireza Asgari

TEHRAN – An investigation by The New York Times has revealed that Israel's Mossad abducted, interrogated, and killed Iranian General Alireza Asgari, a former deputy defense minister, in 2006 while seeking information about the disappearance of Israeli airman Ron Arad. ▶ Page **3**



©AFP

Trump walks with leaders to a meeting of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) at the Ritz-Carlton in the Saudi capital Riyadh on 14 May 2025.

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Criminals' Hosts Bill the Victim

From Saddam's billions to Resolution 3314, Iran turns compensation claim back on Persian Gulf hosts

Iran warns of forceful response to any new aggression, accuses IAEA of yielding to US pressure

TEHRAN – Iran has warned that any renewed military aggression against the country will be met with a forceful response, while criticizing the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for a 'biased approach' under US influence, saying the agency's conduct has undermined its credibility and further strained relations with Tehran.

Speaking at his weekly press conference on Sunday, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei stressed that Iran would not leave any military attack or act of aggression unanswered, emphasizing that the country relies on its own capabilities and does not place its hopes in other parties. ▶ **Page 2**

Qalibaf: Iran will not accept prolonged state of neither war nor peace

TEHRAN – Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has warned that Iran will not allow the current state of neither war nor peace to persist, stressing that an agreement with the United States remains possible if Washington accepts Tehran's seven reasonable conditions.

Addressing an open session of Parliament on Sunday, Qalibaf said Iran was prepared for either negotiations or confrontation, adding that the choice between the two made little difference to Tehran. ▶ Page **3**

The price of playing with fire: UAE's economic reckoning

By Ehsan Etesam

TEHRAN -- The economic consequences of the war against Iran are beginning to appear in figures that the Emirati leadership can hardly afford to ignore. For a country that has spent decades building its reputation as a regional hub for tourism, trade, investment and international business, the latest economic projections offer a sobering reminder: regional instability comes at a price, and those who help create it are not necessarily spared its consequences.

According to a recent assessment by international credit rating agency Fitch, Dubai's economy is expected to contract by nearly 5 percent in 2026 as a result of the repercussions of the war with Iran. The UAE's overall economic growth, meanwhile, is forecast to remain at just 0.5 percent. The agency has also reported a decline in the country's foreign-exchange reserves, from more than $300 billion in February to $265 billion in August.

The damage has been particularly pronounced in the non-oil economy, with disruptions to trade, transportation, manufacturing and tourism weighing heavily on economic activity. These are not peripheral sectors for the Emirates. They are central to the economic model that Abu Dhabi and Dubai have spent years promoting to the international community. ▶ **Page 3**

Iranian young experts win nine medals at BRICS Future Skills Contest in Russia

TEHRAN – A 12-member Iranian team of young technology experts has won nine medals, including two gold, three silver, and four bronze, at the 2026 BRICS Hi-Tech Future Skills Competition in Russia, securing the highest medal tally among participating teams.

Held in Yekaterinburg from November 9 to 13 under the theme "Hi-Tech: Skills of the Future," the competition brought together more than 1,000 competitors, experts, technology companies, educational institutions, and industry representatives from around the world.

The international event aimed to promote technological cooperation among BRICS countries, strengthen industrial human resource capabilities, and advance the application of emerging technologies in production.

Abouzar Masoudi in chemical engineering and Kheibar Dashtian in polymer and petrochemical engineering won the gold medals. Amir-Hossein Hashemi and Shervin Rastegar in Robotization and automation of technological processes, as well as Ali Yousefi and Hossein Seyyed Mohseni in cybersecurity, received the bronze medals. Amir-Hossein Khaniki in machine learning and big data, Amir-Hossein Abdullahi and Arezo Sabri in the innovation sector, and AI-based applications secured the bronze medals, Mehr News Agency reported. ▶ **Page 7**

Exclusive

MIT's rejection of a Palestine linguistics course reflects political pressure on academic freedom

Haitian-born linguist Michel DeGraff says the university's decision was not about his qualifications or the course content and structure, but about silencing knowledge about Palestine

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – Michel DeGraff, a Haitian-born linguist and professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), has spent three decades examining the relationship between language, power and social justice. His academic work focuses on how language can reinforce social hierarchies and systems of domination, as well as how mother tongues can become instruments of resistance and liberation. His latest book, Our Own Language: Harnessing the Power of Kreyòl and Other Mother Tongues for Education and Liberation, explores these themes through the experience of Haitian Creole and other minoritized languages.



DeGraff's work came under controversy after he proposed an MIT course examining the role of language and linguistics in decolonization and liberation struggles in Haiti, Palestine and Israel. The university rejected the proposal in July 2024. DeGraff argues that the decision reflected political pressure and restrictions on academic freedom rather than concerns about his academic qualifications or the course's content. He has also challenged what he describes as the marginalization of Palestinian perspectives in academic institutions and public debate.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, DeGraff discusses his experience at MIT, the political uses of language, the responsibilities of universities and the connections between linguistic hierarchies and struggles for liberation. He also reflects on how language shapes perceptions of the war on Iran and why the voices of Palestinians and other marginalized communities must be heard.

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Scan this QR code to watch the video.



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CITEX to showcase technology-driven urban solutions

TEHRAN – The Tehran Municipality is set to host the CITEX (Iran Pishro) event, bringing together more than 100 knowledge-based companies to showcase innovative technologies and solutions aimed at addressing the capital's urban challenges.

CITEX will be held from November 17 to 20 at Milad Tower's exhibition center in Tehran. The exhibition is open to the public.

The event will focus on three main areas: transportation, financial services and fintech, and citizen services. It seeks to strengthen cooperation between the municipal authorities, technology companies, researchers, and investors to promote innovation in urban management and improve the quality of life for residents. ▶ **Page 7**

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Regional developments under the shadow of political deadlock

Shargh examined recent regional developments and the growing risk of conflict. According to the paper, new developments in the Iran-US dispute point to rising military tensions and mutual threats. On one side, President Trump reportedly removed JD Vance from a negotiating role related to Iran. On the other, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu met with his political rival Gadi Eisenkot. Together with several recent developments, the meeting has fueled speculation about the possibility of renewed hostilities. Developments over the past 48 hours indicate growing distrust and an increased risk of confrontation. However, it remains impossible to identify a clear timeline for any return to war. Tehran continues to insist on its positions, Washington remains divided between pressure and diplomacy, and Tel Aviv is closely monitoring security developments. Under these conditions, military preparedness and the possibility of surprise operations remain among the most important factors that could influence events in the coming days.

Resalat: A war that created a new challenge for Washington

Resalat analyzed how another conflict could further complicate the position of the US. The paper wrote that Qatar's mediation efforts to end tensions are continuing, but Washington has not accepted Iran's ceasefire proposal. Regional and American actors have also expressed doubts about the prospects for a quick agreement. Current developments show that Washington has not succeeded in imposing its political objectives on Iran through military means. If the US seeks an agreement, it may have to discuss issues on which it previously expected no compromise. As a result, the strategic environment has changed. The paper argued that any future military action by the US and Israel against Iran would differ from previous confrontations because Washington can no longer claim ignorance of the costs and consequences of escalation. Having already experienced the impact of confrontation, American policymakers would enter another round of tensions with a clearer understanding of the risks involved.

Hamshahri: No limitations

Hamshahri focused on a directive attributed to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei calling for decisive responses to threats. According to the paper, every level and type of threat should be met with an immediate and effective response without geographical restrictions. The article described this as one of the most significant indications of change in the strategic and military thinking of the Islamic Republic since the end of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War. It pointed to developments over the past two years, including conflicts involving the US and Israel and continuing threats of future attacks, as factors that have created a different strategic environment. Within this context, the newspaper interpreted the emphasis on unrestricted responses as evidence of a reassessment of earlier limitations. The discussion is no longer confined to targets in Israeli-controlled territories. Instead, the potential geographical scope of threats and responses is being viewed more broadly.

Arman-e-Melli: War or agreement?

Arman-e-Melli interviewed political analyst Ali Bigdeli to examine possible scenarios in the tensions between Iran and the US. Bigdeli argued that Iran currently possesses a relatively favorable military and political position and should make effective use of it. At the same time, he stressed that growing economic pressure makes it necessary to pursue an agreement. In his view, the most practical approach is to reduce tensions on the ground while giving greater attention to diplomacy. He argued that the time has come for diplomatic efforts to play a more active role. Iran has achieved important successes and should avoid losing those gains. Nevertheless, policymakers must prepare for the possibility of additional pressure in the future. Measures affecting borders and regional trade routes, he suggested, could emerge as part of broader attempts to increase pressure on Iran. Such developments could create wider economic and political challenges, making active diplomacy increasingly important.

Ham Mihan: Neither war nor peace

According to Ham Mihan, Trump's strategy toward Iran appears focused on maintaining economic pressure, tightening sanctions, and increasing forms of containment. The newspaper argued that this approach effectively keeps Iran in a prolonged state of "neither war nor peace." At the same time, the paper suggested that Iran is waiting for changing circumstances and possible shifts in future political calculations. Yet the greatest burden of this situation falls on ordinary citizens. Economic pressures on society have become increasingly severe and produced wide-ranging consequences. Negotiation and mutual understanding can demonstrate political realism, responsibility, and concern for the country's future. Even if the US continues to rely on economic pressure, diplomatic efforts should not be abandoned. In its view, the most urgent priority is breaking the cycle of threats and pressure, revitalizing diplomacy, and finding a way out of prolonged uncertainty. The paper concluded that no political strategy should treat the ongoing hardships faced by Iranian society as a cost that can simply be ignored.

Iran prepares to commission first fully indigenous nuclear fusion system

TEHRAN – Iran is preparing to commission its first fully indigenous nuclear fusion system, marking a new development in the country's efforts to advance its capabilities in nuclear science and advanced technologies, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said on Sunday.

Speaking in a televised interview, AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami said Iranian scientists had made considerable progress in developing the system and expressed hope that it would be brought into operation in line with the project's schedule.

Eslami said the project would demonstrate Iran's scientific and technological capabilities, as well as its capacity to advance in fields at the forefront of global research.

Ali Nowrouzi, head of Iran's Advanced Technologies Company, outlined the scientific principles behind the project, explaining that nuclear fusion occurs when two light isotopes combine under specific physical conditions to produce a fusion reaction.

He said the radiation generated by the process could have applications in the production of radiopharmaceuticals and the development of advanced medical diagnostic systems.



Nowrouzi said the longer-term objective was to develop a system capable of generating high electrical currents without energy losses within the system, pointing to the potential of fusion technology for a range of scientific and energy-related applications.

Iran warns of forceful response to any new aggression, accuses IAEA of yielding to US pressure

From page 1 ▸ "We will not leave any military attack or aggression unanswered, and we have proven this in practice," Baqaei said, adding that Iran's continued use of diplomatic channels should not be interpreted as dependence on or reliance upon any other country.

Commenting on US statements regarding negotiations, he said Tehran was not concerned with internal disagreements among American officials but maintained that Washington had stripped diplomacy of its fundamental purpose.

Diplomacy, he noted, is intended to prevent tensions and resolve disputes, whereas the United States has turned it into an instrument for setting ambushes and launching surprise attacks.

"The world views US diplomatic claims with suspicion," Baqaei said, noting that Iran's bitter experience in dealing with Washington makes it imperative for the country to take past events into account.

US priorities under fire

Baqaei also criticized US officials over their handling of domestic infrastructure problems, including disruptions to the country's aviation system. He said American officials had attributed the flight disruptions to aging equipment and outdated infrastructure.

He questioned whether the American public would not ask why the government had failed



to modernize its navigation systems while allocating resources to purchasing weapons and carrying out attacks that killed people in Iran.

The spokesman further accused US officials of showing little concern for their own citizens, arguing that their primary preoccupation was supporting the Zionist regime, whose actions in the region, he said, have been characterized by killing and violence.

Baqaei's remarks came amid repeated warnings by senior Iranian military commanders that any renewed aggression against the country would trigger a decisive response.

On Friday, Commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), Major General Ahmad Vahidi, warned that even the slightest act of aggression against Iran would be met with devastating and painful strikes, urging adversaries to learn from their repeated defeats.

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Ali Abdollahi has also said that Iran's previous retaliatory strikes were only the beginning, stressing that the country possesses the capabilities to deliver far more devastating blows if aggression resumes.

Iran questions IAEA's credibility over its approach to nuclear issue

Turning to Iran's relations with the IAEA, Baqaei sharply criticized the agency's recent conduct and a report by its Director General, Rafael Grossi, accusing it of pursuing a one-sided approach under US influence.

He said the agency faced a structural problem in the way it prepares and publishes its reports, describing the shortcoming as one that must be addressed and suggesting that its continued persistence appeared deliberate.

According to Baqaei, the IAEA has continued along its previous course despite the influence of the United States and its biased approach. He warned that the agency's one-sided report against Iran had damaged its credibility and would entail consequences for which it must accept responsibility.

"Creating pretexts to intensify the atmosphere surrounding Iran's nuclear program has served no purpose," he said.

The spokesman also pointed to opposition from two permanent members of the UN Security Council, Russia and China, to the approach reflected in the report, saying the issue had exposed divisions within the Council.

He noted that one significant aspect of Grossi's report was its acknowledgment that military attacks against Iran had created an unprecedented situation. However, Baqaei argued that the agency should have explicitly identified US and Israeli military aggression as the principal cause of those circumstances.

"Unfortunately, following these attacks, the IAEA has ignored this bare fact," he said.

Baqaei stressed that no improvement in relations between Iran and the agency could be expected while the current circumstances and the IAEA's approach remained unchanged.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Two tankers explode after hitting naval mines south of Strait of Hormuz

From page 1 ▸ The UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said it had received a report from Indian shipping authorities concerning an attack on a tanker sailing eastbound through the Persian Gulf, before entering the Strait of Hormuz.

All crew members are reported safe and accounted for, while the extent of damage to the vessel and any environmental impact remain unknown.

UKMTO said the source of the report had been verified and advised vessels transiting the area to exercise caution and report any suspicious activity.

IRGC hits US air defense radar in Bahrain

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced that its Aerospace Force has targeted a US air defense radar installation at Al-Riffa helicopter base in Bahrain with six drones in the second phase of its retaliatory operations against US military aggression.



In a statement on Sunday, the IRGC said the radar at the US air defense site was struck by six drones belonging to the IRGC Aerospace Force.

The statement said the precise and successful strikes were heard in various parts of Bahrain, once again demonstrating the IRGC's operational capabilities.

The US, having suffered a complete failure in its purported plan to escort oil tankers --which was in fact an oil-smuggling operation-- in the Strait of Hormuz, is now seeking to divert global attention from the reality that this vital waterway is closed through small-scale and blind actions, the statement said.

The IRGC stressed that the Strait of Hormuz remains closed and warned that any aggression by the American enemy would be met with an even harsher and more forceful response.

It further stated that expensive American drones are being shot down one after another, adding that a larger number of IRGC drones has been deployed against US targets in this phase compared with the previous one.

The statement concluded that the enemy should bear in mind that every act of aggression would be followed by a harsh and calculated response.

MIT's rejection of a Palestine linguistics course reflects political pressure on academic freedom

Haitian-born linguist Michel DeGraff says the university's decision was not about his qualifications or the course content and structure, but about silencing knowledge about Palestine

From page 1 ▸ Below is the full text of the interview:

I've read quite a bit about your experience at MIT, especially the controversy surrounding the course you proposed. I'd like to hear your own perspective on it directly. You spent so many years at MIT as a linguist and educator. Could you tell us how your proposed course on language, decolonization, and Palestine came about, and why it became so controversial?

I was born in Haiti, so I grew up in a country where language plays a really crucial role in creating hierarchies of power. It's not only the choice of language in Haiti. There's Haitian Creole, which we call "Kreyòl", and French. Everybody speaks Kreyòl, while only a small percentage of the population speaks French. But French is the language used in all formal venues where power is created and transmitted.

Very early on, even before I knew about linguistics, I became very aware of the power of language to create hierarchies of humanity. That's really how I became a linguist. Even when I was studying computer science and working with linguists and researchers in AI back in the early 1980s, I discovered that, in Haiti, I had been lied to for the first 18 years of my life. I had been convinced that my native language, Kreyòl, was not a language but "broken French."

When I realized that this was a lie, I felt that I needed to understand what makes a language a language, and also how language can be used in such powerful ways to create hierarchies of power. That's really how I became a linguist. I became a linguist because of this deep question about the relationship between language and power.

My work at MIT over the past 30 years has always been about that question. I've taught classes called Creole Languages and Caribbean Identities. I have a co-taught course called Black Matters, and I've taught courses on linguistics and social justice. These were never controversial. My colleagues knew about them and never complained.

In fact, I've been invited to be a keynote speaker at major conferences, for example at the Linguistic Society of America (LSA). At one of these conferences, I was introduced by one of my colleagues, whose name is Norvin Richards.

That talk was titled "7/4/1776... 7/14/1789... 11/18/1803... 7/4/2017... Revolutions across space and time." You see, it had the word "revolutions" right in the title. "Revolutions" was part of the title of a major lecture at a summer institute organized by the Linguistic Society of America—the world's largest association of linguists.

I'm telling you all this to explain that my work has always been about language and power. My colleagues knew that. They supported it. One of them even introduced one of my talks on that topic.

So, when October 7, 2023, happened, it quickly became obvious to me, once again as a linguist, how language was being weaponized. "Weaponization of language" has become a very popular term, but we linguists have discussed this concept for decades. There's Dwight Bolinger's book called Language: The Loaded Weapon. The Use and Abuse of Language Today. This is one of my favorite books. There is also a book by a well-known linguist and philosopher, a former president of the Linguistic Society of America, about the politics of language. Her name is Sally McConnell-Ginet, and she has a book called Words Matter: Meaning and Power. Professor McConnell-Ginet was one of the guest speakers at my Fall 2024 People's Seminar which taught the same contents of the course that MIT Linguistics had rejected in July 2024— "Language and linguistics for decolonization and liberation in Haiti, Palestine and Israel."

Again, these books, on language as weapon, the importance of words, and the politics of language, are all about language and power.

After October 7, we quickly saw how journalists, politicians, presidents, including Trump in Washington D.C. and Netanyahu in Tel Aviv, were using language as a loaded weapon.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Criminals' hosts bill the victim

From Saddam's billions to Resolution 3314, Iran turns compensation claim back on Persian Gulf hosts

By Seyyed Mohammad Torabi

TEHRAN – The war imposed on Iran by the United States and Israel has now moved from the battlefield to the courtroom of diplomacy, with a new battle over history, responsibility and money unfolding at the United Nations Security Council.

On Friday, November 13, the Council convened at Bahrain's request to examine the consequences of the Persian Gulf conflict for regional security and international shipping. What was billed as a technical discussion on navigation quickly turned into a political trial over who started the war, who defended legitimately, and — ultimately — who should pay for it.

At the center of the session stood two radically opposed narratives: one presented by Persian Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary-General Jasem Mohammed Al-Budaiwi, demanding accountability and full reparations from Iran; the other advanced by Iran's Deputy Permanent Representative Gholamhossein Darzi, who described Iran as the victim of two rounds of unprovoked aggression and warned that any new attack would be met with an "immediate and decisive" response against its source.

A session requested by Bahrain

The fact that the meeting was convened at Bahrain's request was itself significant. Manama, which hosts the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet, has been among the most vocal Persian Gulf capitals in accusing Tehran, while Tehran accuses Manama of placing its territory, airspace and facilities at the disposal of American and Israeli forces for strikes on Iran that began on February 28, 2026.

Al-Budaiwi told the Council that more than 7,000 missiles and drones had been employed by the Iranian government in attacks on Council member states since February 28, striking airports, ports, energy installations and residential areas. He called on the Security Council to follow up the implementation of Resolution 2817, to hold the perpetrators accountable and to oblige the Islamic Republic to pay full compensation.

Resolution 2817, adopted after Iran's retaliatory operations against U.S. bases and assets in the region, has been portrayed by Persian Gulf states as the legal basis for condemnation and compensation. Tehran calls it a political product that ignores the origin of the crisis: the American-Israeli attacks themselves.

Iran's envoy rejected the GCC reading outright. Darzi traced the crisis to U.S. and Israeli strikes in June 2025 and, on a far larger scale, from February 28, 2026, which he said killed more than 5,000 people in Iran, including 254 children and 251 women.

He stressed that Iran's operations were carried out strictly within the framework of legitimate self-defense under Article



51 of the UN Charter and targeted U.S. bases and military equipment that had been used to attack Iran — not the sovereignty or territorial integrity of neighboring states.

Darzi described Resolution 2817 as "political," arguing that if Washington wants negotiations to advance, it must stop attacks and lift the naval blockade of Iranian ports and provide guarantees against repetition. He warned that any fresh attack by the U.S. or Israel would face an immediate and decisive response against its origin. He also named Bahrain and a number of regional countries as facilitators of the aggression and said Iran itself is entitled to compensation.

"More than 7,000 missiles and drones": The bill

The GCC secretary-general's figures were designed to dramatize scale: 7,000 projectiles, dozens of civilian and energy sites hit, shipping disrupted in one of the world's most critical waterways. The message was clear: Iran's response, not the initial attack, is presented as the threat to regional security and freedom of navigation.

This framing has been reinforced in recent weeks by economic assessments widely quoted in Persian Gulf and Western media. The commercial credit insurer Allianz Trade has estimated the economic losses of Arab Persian Gulf states resulting from Iranian attacks on those countries and on ships in regional waters at about 790 billion dollars through 2030. The same company put direct physical damage to more than 80 facilities in Arab regional states during the war at over 200 billion dollars, warning that "long-term costs will be much heavier."

For Persian Gulf capitals, these numbers are intended to build a compensation case: to quantify victimhood and to internationalize it through the Security Council, insurers, and courts. For Tehran, they prove the opposite: that hosting a foreign war against a neighbor inevitably brings war home, and that those who volunteered as launchpads cannot then present themselves as innocent bystanders entitled to payment from the country they helped attack.

Iran insists it took no action against the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighbors. Its strikes, officials say, were aimed exclusively at the origin and starting point of attacks on Iran — American bases and American military assets that were used to strike Iranian territory.

Iran's answer: Legitimate defense, not aggression

Tehran's legal and political rebuttal was delivered in two venues almost simultaneously: in New York by Darzi, and in Tehran by Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei.

Asked on the morning of November 15 about the compensation demands by some Arab states, Baghaei was dismissive and unsparing: "Do not take this claim too seriously; because they themselves know how baseless and lightweight this claim is."

He warned the GCC states and its secretary-general to be careful "not to lance old wounds," reminding them that "the memory of all-out support by regional countries for Saddam Hussein's regime has not been erased from Iranians' memory. That is an open file."

Baghaei said there is now no doubt that some regional countries provided several hundred billion dollars to Saddam's regime — arms assistance, political assistance and military assistance through the dispatch of forces and soldiers — all documented and constituting a historical claim of the Iranian people.

How, he asked, can countries that "actively participated in military aggression against a neighboring country and placed their airspace, soil and water at the disposal of aggressors against Iranian territory" speak of extracting compensation from Iran?

He pointed to explicit American admissions: "When American officials at the highest level, whether military or civilian, including the president, the secretary of state and the CENTCOM commander, explicitly declare that regional countries actively helped us and thank these countries, can they deny it? The evidence is very clear."

According to Baghaei, damage inflicted on Iran, directly and indirectly, originated in part from some regional countries. Under international law, states that in any way, directly or indirectly, played a role in U.S. and Zionist regime military aggression against Iran are considered, under paragraph (f) of the annex to UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, as accomplices of the aggressors and partners in the crimes committed. "Therefore, it is we who demand compensation," he said.

He added that all instances of regional countries' assistance to the United States and the Zionist regime in attacking Iran have been documented and communicated directly to those countries through diplomatic channels. "The Islamic Republic of Iran will certainly pursue this matter seriously. The responsibility of this group of regional countries for the consequences of U.S. and Zionist regime military aggression against Iran is established."

The point, he said, was so evident that even without American confessions and thanks it would have been clear to Tehran: "Missiles, drones and aircraft flown from military bases stationed in these countries, logistical and support assistance provided to the aggressor forces, and bases destroyed in these countries are all signs of their participation."

$790 billion to 2030: The cost of hosting war

The Allianz Trade estimate — 790 billion dollars in economic losses to 2030 and more than 200 billion in direct physical damage to over 80 installations — has given the compensation debate a concrete, if highly contested, price tag.

Iranian officials do not dispute that war is costly. They dispute who should bear that cost. In Tehran's view, Persian Gulf economic pain is the foreseeable consequence of a political choice: allowing national territory to be used as a forward operating base for a war of aggression against a neighbor of 90 million people, in a strait through which a fifth of the world's oil and a large share of its liquefied natural gas normally pass.

From February onward, shipping, insurance premiums, port operations, aviation, tourism and energy investment across the southern Persian Gulf were all hit, even before physical strikes damaged tanks, loading arms, runways and terminals. To project those disruptions to 2030, as Allianz does, is to acknowledge that investors now price in a permanent risk premium for a region that chose to become a battlefield.

Tehran argues that this premium cannot be transferred to the defender. If Persian Gulf states had refused to host offensive operations, Iranian retaliation against U.S. assets on their soil would not have occurred. The chain of causation, Iranian diplomats say, begins on June 2025 and February 28, 2026 — not with the defensive response that followed.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

The price of playing with fire: UAE's economic reckoning

From Page 1 ▶ For the Emirati leadership, these figures should prompt a serious examination of the relationship between its regional policies and its own economic interests.

The UAE has built much of its international standing on the promise of stability. Dubai, in particular, has marketed itself as a safe destination for tourists, a dependable hub for international companies, a financial centre and a gateway connecting Asia, Europe and Africa. Its airports, ports, hotels, real estate market and financial institutions have all benefited from the perception that the Emirates offer an environment insulated from the political and military turbulence surrounding them.

Yet that reputation cannot be maintained independently of the security environment in which the country operates.

A state whose prosperity depends so heavily on international confidence cannot expect to remain unaffected when it becomes involved in military confrontation with a major neighbouring country. The contradiction is difficult to overlook: the very regional stability that makes the UAE attractive to investors and visitors is undermined when its territory and military capabilities become part of a campaign against Iran.

From economic partner to military participant

The UAE's role in the war has gone beyond diplomatic alignment or the provision of logistical facilities. A report published by The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the operations, alleged that Emirati forces conducted dozens of airstrikes against Iranian military and energy facilities during the conflict, in coordination with the United States and Israel. The reported targets included facilities on Qeshm and Abu Musa islands, Bandar Abbas, Lavan Island and the Asaluyeh petrochemical complex.

If the reported operations are considered alongside the broader military and security cooperation between Abu Dhabi, Washington and Tel Aviv, they point to a substantial level of Emirati involvement in the confrontation.

This is particularly consequential given the UAE's geographical position. Iran is not a distant adversary whose actions can be treated as an external security matter. It is a neighbouring country across the Persian Gulf, with an extensive coastline, considerable military capabilities and a strategic position along some of the world's most important energy and maritime routes.

Turning the territory of the Emirates into a platform for operations against Iran carries consequences that extend far beyond the battlefield. It exposes the UAE's own infrastructure, commercial interests and economic reputation to the risks of a prolonged regional conflict.

It also raises questions about the extent to which Emirati foreign policy has become



intertwined with Israeli strategic objectives.

The deepening security relationship between the UAE and Israel, particularly following the normalization agreements, has created a framework for military and intelligence cooperation that has implications for the entire region. From Tehran's perspective, Abu Dhabi's participation in military planning and operations directed against Iran represents more than an ordinary bilateral partnership. It raises the question of whether the Emirates are increasingly allowing their territory and strategic position to serve Israeli interests in the region.

For a country whose economic prosperity depends on maintaining productive relations with its neighbours, the implications of such an alignment deserve careful consideration.

The vulnerability behind the glitter

The economic consequences are particularly significant because of the structure of the Emirati economy.

Although the UAE possesses substantial oil and gas resources, its international economic identity, especially in Dubai, rests heavily on sectors that are highly sensitive to perceptions of security and stability. Tourism, aviation, hospitality, international trade, logistics, finance and real estate are all dependent on the continued confidence of foreign visitors, investors, businesses and residents.

These sectors cannot be protected by financial reserves alone.

A tourist deciding whether to spend a holiday in Dubai, a multinational company considering where to establish its regional headquarters, or an investor evaluating the Emirati property market all take regional security into account. Even without direct damage to hotels, airports or commercial buildings, the perception of sustained insecurity can influence decisions, redirect capital and reduce demand.

The Fitch projections illustrate this vulnerability. The nearly 5 percent contraction expected in Dubai's economy is especially noteworthy because it concerns an emirate whose international reputation has been built around economic diversification and global connectivity.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Qalibaf: Iran will not accept prolonged state of neither war nor peace

From Page 1 ▶ He emphasized that accepting Iran's seven conditions, which he described as the outcome of the Iranian nation's sacrifices and perseverance, would pave the way for an agreement.

Qalibaf warned that any further miscalculation by Washington would have serious consequences, saying the capabilities and resolve of Iran's Armed Forces, rather than US preferences, would determine the scope and geography of any potential battlefield. He cautioned that another war would have far-reaching consequences for multiple parties.

The speaker also criticized US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent over his recent remarks, describing his language as vulgar and unethical and saying it reflected Washington's frustration in confronting the strength of the Islamic Republic.

Qalibaf added that Bessent, who had reportedly sought refuge in military shelters out of fear of potential threats, would be better advised to reflect on the United States' strategic setbacks in the Persian Gulf rather than resort to insulting other nations.

Qalibaf's remarks came after President Masoud Pezeshkian said Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei had instructed officials to bring the neither war nor peace situation to an end.

Pezeshkian stressed that Iran remained ready for negotiations based on dignity, justice and equal footing, but would not yield to coercion, threats or bullying.

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei has also called on Washington to abandon 'fabricated accounts of negotiations with Tehran and accept Iran's seven conditions.'

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, for his part, has emphasized that Washington must choose between accepting Iran's conditions and continuing the war, underscoring that the country's Armed Forces are fully prepared for either scenario.

NYT investigation links Mossad to abduction and killing of Iranian general Alireza Asgari



From Page 1 ▶ Citing three former American officials familiar with Israel's intelligence operations, the report said Mossad agents kidnapped Asgari in Istanbul in December 2006, questioned him for several weeks and eventually killed him. He was reportedly interrogated aboard a vessel before being dumped into the Black Sea.

The investigation said Asgari was targeted because of his longstanding ties with Hezbollah and his knowledge of Lebanon, as Israeli intelligence suspected Iran was involved in Arad's disappearance in 1986. However, interrogators found no evidence linking the Iranian general to the case.

Asgari's wife, Ziba Ahmadi, told the newspaper that Iranian investigators had concluded Israeli agents had drugged and abducted her husband from his Istanbul hotel room.

The NYT investigation also challenged Israel's longstanding allegations against Iran, revealing that several Israeli intelligence assessments had found no conclusive evidence of Tehran's involvement in Arad's disappearance. A 2006 Shin Bet review and a separate 2016 military assessment both pointed instead to the Lebanese village of Nabi Chit as the likely location where the airman had been held and possibly buried.

The report further said Israeli intelligence abducted another Iranian commander, Abdullah Saberi, in Damascus in 2021 and interrogated him about Arad, but the operation also failed to produce any useful information.

The newspaper concluded that Israeli intelligence had remained committed to its Iran theory despite repeated assessments contradicting it, and has now shifted its search for Arad's remains back to Lebanon.

Oman: Iran's important trade partner, gateway to regional markets

TEHRAN- Iran-Oman trade has been on an upward trajectory in recent years, and trade agreements between the two countries have opened new prospects for economic actors; however, banking and logistical obstacles remain.



According to a Mehr News Agency reporter, Iran-Oman trade in the current Iranian calendar year 1405 (started on March 21, 2026) has seen an upward trend in Iran's exports despite regional developments and transportation difficulties on maritime routes. According to the Iran Trade Promotion Organization, the value of Iran's exports to Oman in the first six months of the current year reached $1.164 billion, a 23% increase compared to $948 million in the same period last year.

These statistics indicate the continued capacity of the Omani market for Iranian goods. However, it should be noted that the announced figure relates to Iran's exports to Oman and does not by itself show the total value of bilateral trade, including Iran's imports from Oman.

Oman: export market and re-export route

Oman's importance for Iran's trade is not limited to the direct purchase of Iranian goods. The country's geographical position south of the Strait of Hormuz, access to open waters, and possession of important ports have made it one of the key routes for regional trade.

Statistics from Oman's National Center for Statistics and Information show that Iran was the largest destination for goods re-exported from Oman in the first eight months of 2026. The value of these re-exports reached 342 million Omani Rials by the end of August, a 69.6% increase compared to the same period last year.

Re-export means the sale of goods that are not necessarily produced in Oman and are sent to another destination after entering the country. Therefore, the figure of 342 million Omani Rials should not be equated with Oman's exports of its own products to Iran or Iran's direct exports to Oman. Nevertheless, these statistics show that Iran holds an important position in Oman's distribution and re-export network.

During the same period, Oman's total commodity exports reached more than 18.3 billion Omani Rials, which was 19.7% higher than the same period in 2025. The country's commodity imports also grew by 4.4% to about 11.9 billion Omani Rials. Oman's oil and gas exports were reported at 12.1 billion Rials, and its non-oil exports at about 4.9 billion Omani Rials.

Increased exchanges alongside trade agreements

The growing trend of Iran-Oman trade is being pursued while the two countries have taken steps in recent years to establish legal frameworks and facilitate economic exchanges.

According to information published by Oman's Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries in 2024 reached 512.1 million Omani Rials, equivalent to about $1.33 billion. This figure represents a 52% increase compared to 335.8 million Omani Rials in 2023.

Also, Oman's trade balance with Iran in 2024 was recorded at about 210.3 million Omani Rials in favor of Oman. Oman's exports and re-exports to Iran that year reached 361.2 million Omani Rials, and the country's imports from Iran were reported at 150.9 million Omani Rials.

One of the important legal developments in the economic relations between the two countries was the signing of a preferential trade agreement on May 27, 2025, in Muscat. This agreement was ratified by royal decree in Oman in September of the same year. Under the terms of the agreement, reciprocal tariff concessions are envisaged for a group of goods originating in Iran and Oman, and specific rules for determining the origin of goods have been established. Effective implementation of this agreement can reduce the cost of entry for certain goods into the counterpart market and provide the ground for increasing exporters' competitiveness.

The two countries also signed an agreement in May 2025 on mutual administrative cooperation and assistance in customs affairs, which was ratified by Oman in September of the same year. Facilitating the exchange of customs information and cooperation in clearance affairs are among the areas that can help reduce executive barriers to trade.

The structure of Iran-Oman trade, along with geographical proximity and transportation links, provides opportunities for developing exports of Iranian products. Food and agricultural products, construction materials and products, minerals, petrochemical and chemical products, medicine and medical equipment, machinery, and technical and engineering services are among the areas that can be considered in the program for developing trade cooperation between the two countries.

On the other hand, the Omani market is not merely a consumer destination for Iran; it can also play the role of a regional distribution center in certain activities. The high volume of re-exports from Oman to Iran indicates the existence of a significant trade flow between the two countries. However, using Oman's capacity as a re-export platform to other markets requires a careful examination of rules of origin, customs regulations, and destination restrictions.

In the transportation sector, connecting the ports of the two countries and developing regular maritime lines can affect the cost and time of goods transfer. In the meeting of Iran's President with traders of the two countries in Muscat in May 2025, the connection of economic corridors and ports and the facilitation of financial transfers were among the emphasized axes. At the same meeting, a target of increasing the trade volume between the two countries to $30 billion over three years was proposed—a goal whose realization depends on investment, removing executive barriers, and increasing private sector participation.

Mehr News Agency's conversation with traders shows that banking restrictions and difficulties in money transfers remain among the most important obstacles to the development of Iran-Oman trade. Problems related to currency transfers, the lack of extensive banking correspondent relations, and the costs of using indirect payment routes can increase the settlement time of transactions and raise the final cost of exports. On the other hand, exchange rate fluctuations and changes in transportation and insurance costs also make long-term planning difficult for exporters and in some cases reduce the competitiveness of Iranian goods in the Omani market.

Alongside these issues, Iranian exporters face competition from companies from other countries that in some cases, due to easier access to banking networks, logistical infrastructure, and financing mechanisms, are able to offer goods at lower cost and with more suitable payment terms. Also, sustainable presence in the Omani market requires precise knowledge of import regulations, technical and health standards, packaging and labeling requirements, and having an appropriate distribution and after-sales service network.

Those active in economy sector believe that removing these barriers, facilitating financial exchanges, strengthening transportation infrastructure, and providing consulting and marketing services to exporters can help consolidate the position of Iranian goods and make greater use of Oman's trade capacities.

Accordingly, Iran's exports to Oman grew in the first half of the current year, and on the other hand, Oman's official statistics also indicate an increasing role for Iran as a destination for the country's re-exports. These two indicators, although not statistically identical, along with the preferential trade agreement and customs cooperation, are considered signs of the capacity to expand economic relations between the two countries.

To turn this capacity into sustainable growth, it is essential to focus on identifying the real needs of the Omani market, targeted introduction of Iranian goods, developing regular transportation lines, facilitating payments, and practically using the benefits of the preferential trade agreement. In such conditions, Oman can, in addition to maintaining its position as one of Iran's export markets, also be a gateway for Iranian traders to access part of regional markets.

Iran Chamber offers 3 proposals to safeguard private sector capacity in next year's budget

TEHRAN- The President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) discussed three proposals submitted by the Iran Chamber to the government to preserve private-sector capacity in 1406 (next Iranian year) and said: "These proposals rely less on new spending and more on reforming the composition of resources and expenditures."



Samad Hassanzadeh, President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, on Sunday, at the meeting of the Board of Representatives of the Iran Chamber, expressed appreciation for the President's directive on the distribution of banking resources and balanced financing of the provinces. He said: "One of the issues that chambers of commerce have seriously pursued over the past months has been preventing the concentration of resources from the provinces' economic activities in the banking network based in Tehran."

The President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture added: "The President's directive in this regard showed that coherent, documented follow-up by the private sector can elevate structural economic issues to the level of national decision-making and pave the way for correcting unfair procedures."

Hassanzadeh, stating that "criticism of the concentration of provincial credits in the capital was emphasized by all chamber presidents in all meetings, and in particular Mr. Zhaeleh, President of the Tabriz Chamber, raised this concern in all meetings with officials," noted: "The Central Bank's circular requiring the allocation of at least 70 percent of provincial deposits to facilities in the same province is also an important step toward strengthening economic justice and regional financing."

The President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture emphasized: "Of course, the importance of this decision will become clear through its precise implementation, oversight of banks' performance, and direction of resources toward productive firms, development projects, and job-creating investments."

He then emphasized safeguarding private-sector capacity in the 1406 budget and said: "The attention paid by the honorable President in the 1406 budget circular to priorities such as 'maintaining economic stability' and 'preventing the erosion of production capacity and supporting the private sector' is especially important, and we hope its result will be fruitful for the country's economy."

Samad Hassanzadeh added: "At a time when economic firms face liquidity constraints, policy uncertainty, and rising production costs, placing these priorities at the center of budget policymaking should be welcomed as a good omen—provided that we also see their reflection in executive provisions and resource allocation."

The President of the Iran Chamber then discussed the Iran Chamber's three proposals to the government for preserving private-sector capacity in 1406 and named as their main outlines: "replacing part of scattered exemptions and supports with tax incentives, conditional on reinvestment and increased productivity"; "targeted settlement and offsetting of the government's confirmed debts to firms through mutual claims and debts"; and "prioritizing construction expenditures in favor of unfinished projects involving private-sector participation and investment." He said: "These proposals rely less on new spending and more on reforming the composition of resources and expenditures."

Iran, Afghanistan to expand agricultural, livestock cooperation

TEHRAN- Iranian Minister of Agriculture said: "Iran is ready to cooperate with Afghanistan in the fields of mechanization, livestock husbandry, agriculture, plant breeding, and livestock breeding."

According to the portal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Gholamreza Nouri, on the evening of November 14, in a meeting with Mawlawi Mohammad Hassan Akhund, Afghanistan's Minister of Finance and head of the Afghan side of the two countries' Joint Economic Cooperation Committee, referred to Iran's transit capacities and said: "Iran's capacities for Afghanistan's access to the Persian Gulf and open waters can serve the development of trade between the two countries."

Referring to the transfer of part of Afghanistan's goods to neighboring countries through Iran, he added: "These exchanges can increase. Capable investors are present in Afghanistan and can invest, especially in the Chabahar region, to establish terminals and port facilities so that the volume of Afghanistan's commercial exchanges with the world in the fields of imports and exports increases."

The Minister of Agriculture, emphasizing the necessity of strengthening economic cooperation between the two countries, said: "In the government, a special working group on relations with Afghanistan has been formed under the chairmanship of the First Vice President, and a number of relevant ministers are also members of it. Investment in various sectors of Afghanistan is among the issues that this working group is pursuing specially."

Nouri, referring to the two countries' shared capacities in the agricultural sector, considered mechanization, livestock husbandry, and agriculture to be among the fields susceptible to joint cooperation and stated: "We are ready to place whatever is produced in Afghanistan and needed by Iran on the priority purchase list, and to meet Afghanistan's needs from our country's production capacities."

Referring to the fields of technical and specialized cooperation between the two countries, he continued: "In the fields of plant breeding, livestock breeding, supply of veterinary medicines and vaccines, and day-old chicks, we are ready to have the necessary cooperation with Afghanistan."

The Minister of Agriculture also announced the readiness of Iran's research centers to train Afghan experts and said: "Recently, a number of Afghan experts attended the country's agricultural research centers and completed 10- to 15-day training courses. Our research centers are ready to accept experts from that country in accordance with Afghanistan's needs and provide the necessary specialized training."

Referring to the ban on poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, he listed cooperation in developing alternative crops as another important field of cooperation between the two countries and announced: "Iran is ready to help with the production of alternative products."

Facilitating trade and removing border obstacles

Nouri considered facilitating traffic at shared borders and removing customs obstacles to be among the requirements for increasing trade exchanges and emphasized the necessity of round-the-clock customs activity, simplification of border formalities, increased transit traffic, and joint cooperation to combat smuggling.

Referring to the problems raised at the two countries' border crossings during his trip to Kabul, he said: "After this trip, one of the deputies of the Ministry of Agriculture, along with representatives of executive bodies, visited the two countries' borders, and continuous follow-ups are continuing to remove obstacles and increase the volume of border exchanges."

The Minister of Agriculture announced Iran's readiness to reopen the Yazdan border crossing and cooperate in activating border markets.

Emphasizing the necessity of making the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Economic Cooperation Committee more active, he said: "Good documents have been prepared for cooperation between the two countries, and their finalization and exchange can help increase exchanges. We hope that, with the follow-ups carried out, the seventh meeting of the two countries' Joint Commission will be held in Kabul as soon as possible."

Joint Iran-Afghanistan fight against smuggling will strengthen legal trade

Mawlawi Mohammad Hassan Akhund, Afghanistan's Minister of Finance, also in this meeting, emphasizing the extensive capacities of Iran and Afghanistan for expanding economic exchanges and jointly combating smuggling, said: "The two countries' joint fight against smuggling will strengthen legal trade."

Stating that Afghanistan and Iran have numerous fields for cooperation and joint investment, he added: "In the sectors of agriculture, investment, mines, transportation, banking and financial cooperation, energy, and other economic areas, there are considerable capacities for cooperation that can be utilized through joint efforts."

The head of the Afghan side of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Economic Cooperation Committee considered investment in various economic sectors to be among other areas that can be pursued between the two countries and said: "Afghanistan has extensive and valuable capacities for investment in the sectors of mineral extraction, agriculture, production, energy, and economic infrastructure."

According to the portal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Gholamreza Nouri, on the evening of November 14, in explaining the main points of the meeting with Mawlawi Mohammad Hassan Akhund, Afghanistan's Minister of Finance and head of the Afghan side of the two countries' Joint Economic Cooperation Committee, stated: "Today we hosted Afghanistan's Finance Minister. Given that he heads the Joint Committee on behalf of Afghanistan and the Minister of Agriculture heads this commission on behalf of Iran, this meeting was held with the aim of providing the ground for holding the Joint Committee in Tehran."

Referring to the review of current issues in the two countries' economic relations, he added: "Border exchanges, customs activities, accelerating border traffic, and increasing the volume of exchanges with Afghanistan, both in imports and exports, were among the issues discussed and reviewed in this meeting."

The Minister of Agriculture, stating that the Afghan side is interested in using Iran's transit capacities to access the markets of other countries, said: "The Afghan side was also interested in playing a greater role in importing goods into Iran and exporting goods through our country. We also welcomed this and are ready to increase the level of cooperation and exchanges between the two countries."

He announced the volume of trade exchanges between Iran and Afghanistan as about $2.7 billion and added: "Approximately one quarter of these exchanges is allocated to the agricultural sector. Given the trend underway in relations between the two countries and the numerous trips by officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan and vice versa, it is predicted that this trend will soon accelerate and the volume of exchanges will increase."

Iranian companies' readiness to invest in agriculture in Afghanistan

Nouri, referring to Afghanistan's climatic capacities for developing agricultural activities, announced Iran's readiness for cooperation in training and investment and stated: "Given the potentials that exist in Afghanistan's climate, activity in the agricultural sector can develop, and suitable grounds for cooperation between the two countries are available."

He continued: "We announced readiness to help in the fields of training and investment. Some Iranian companies have also announced readiness for a deeper presence in Afghanistan's domestic production chains and for carrying out part of production activities in that country."

The Minister of Agriculture, stating that this cooperation can, in addition to meeting the needs of the Afghan market, lead to the production of goods for consumption in Iran or for re-export, said: "This type of cooperation is both a transfer of technology and technical knowledge and leads to investment in the field of technical and engineering services."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Trump family took billions from Arab monarchies, and Democrats now want the records

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Democrats who won both chambers of Congress on Nov. 3 have told Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar to expect investigations into the money their governments and state-linked investors have sent the Trump family.

The warning carried a threat, The Washington Post reported. Governments that stonewall risk their standing in Washington.

They are expected to stonewall anyway. Diplomats told the Post that the documents lawmakers want most, private messages between royal courts, Trump family executives and administration officials, are the ones the Arab monarchies least want public.



An Emirati stake and a chip deal

Four days before Trump's second inauguration, Aryam Investment 1, an Abu Dhabi vehicle backed by Tahnoon bin Zayed al-Nahyan, agreed to pay $500 million for 49 percent of World Liberty Financial, the crypto firm run by Trump's sons and Zach Witkoff, son of envoy Steve Witkoff.

The Wall Street Journal reported that Eric Trump signed the agreement. Half the price was due upfront, and about $187 million of that went to Trump family entities, at least $31 million to Witkoff-linked ones.

Tahnoon is the UAE's national security adviser, the president's brother, and chairman of G42, an AI company that wanted American chips.

It got them. Weeks before the administration announced a framework allowing up to 500,000 advanced chips a year, Tahnoon's MGX used World Liberty's USD1 stablecoin to close a $2 billion investment in Binance.

The New York Times reported that Steve Witkoff pushed for chip access while the two families were landing the crypto money.

Senate Banking Committee Democrats, led by Elizabeth Warren, counted at least 10 favorable U.S. actions after the investment in a June report.

Democrats cited $1.4 billion in arms sales and approval of 35,000 advanced chips for G42. Warren calls the whole arrangement "corruption, plain and simple." Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut calls it "brazen, open corruption."

A $400 million jet

Qatar's Boeing 747-8, valued at about $400 million, went to the Pentagon, and "War" Secretary Pete Hegseth accepted it in May 2025.

After a rushed, taxpayer-funded refit by L3Harris in Texas, it flew as Air Force One for the first time in early Jul. 2026.

Yet the rollout quickly turned humiliating. After a Jul. 8 NATO summit in Ankara, supposed security concerns over the aircraft's lack of standard military defenses forced the Secret Service to sideline the Qatari jet.

Trump had to board the older Air Force One for the television cameras, then slip out inside an airport catering truck to reach a smaller military transport. He flew covertly to England on that smaller plane, while the gifted jumbo jet was bypassed and later pulled offline for further upgrades.

Democrats called the transfer bribery and introduced legislation to block $1.9 billion in arms sales to Doha.

Trump has said for more than a year that the plane will end up at his presidential library. ABC reported that ownership would pass to the library foundation shortly before he leaves office.

Sen. Chuck Schumer has pointed to a $5.5 billion resort and golf project Eric Trump signed in Qatar, and to Attorney General Pam Bondi's earlier lobbying for Doha. A federal ethics filing lists a $5.25 million license fee from a planned Doha golf resort.

From Kushner to Riyadh

Saudi Arabia's "Public Investment Fund" gave Jared Kushner's Affinity Partners $2 billion in 2021, six months after he left the White House and over objections from the fund's own advisers about his inexperience.

The relationship has paid. A March letter from Rep. Robert Garcia and Sen. Ron Wyden estimated that Affinity collected more than $60 million in foreign fees in 2025, $39 million of it from Saudi Arabia, and that Kushner has earned more than $110 million in Saudi fees since 2021.

Affinity also sits inside the $55 billion Electronic Arts buyout that closed Aug. 4. The Saudi fund holds about 93 percent of the company, Affinity about 1 percent.

Kushner is also "an unpaid envoy," which spared him the financial disclosure an official role requires. CNN reported that Affinity was the largest shareholder in Israel's Phoenix Financial, a 7.4 percent stake worth more than $1 billion, while he negotiated over Gaza.

Phoenix held at least $265 million in the arms maker Elbit Systems.

The Trump Organization's latest ethics filing reports about $38 million in licensing fees from Persian Gulf developers, including roughly $21.9 million from Saudi-based Dar Al Arkan and $12.5 million from Dubai's Damac.

Projects include a Trump tower, a $1 billion Trump Plaza in Jeddah, and two residential communities near Riyadh.

Policy is in the mix too. The administration signed a civil nuclear agreement with Riyadh in July and sent it to Congress Aug. 24.

It supposedly allows enrichment up to 5 percent after joint studies, potentially 20 percent after more, and does not require Saudi Arabia to accept the stricter IAEA inspection protocol.

After congressional objections, Trump posted that approval depends on Saudi Arabia joining the so-called Abraham Accords. That condition appears nowhere in the text.

What Congress can do

Subpoenas cannot reach foreign governments. They reach bankers, lawyers, Trump Organization executives, and federal agencies.

One Democratic aide told the Post that lawmakers will be "less likely to want to be full partners with a country that we believe is involved in corrupting our system."

Donald Sherman of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington said investigators want messages that tie the money to decisions. "It's one thing to intuit, it's another thing to know," he said.

Murphy, who visited the Persian Gulf in October, said he told Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) and Qatar's emir that "our foreign policy has been corrupted."

The Intercept reported in March 2018 that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman boasted to confidants that Jared Kushner was "in his pocket" after Kushner reportedly shared sensitive intelligence on Saudis disloyal to the prince.

A Democratic-led House committee opened an Affinity inquiry in 2022, before Republicans took the chamber.

The timing is awkward for Arab capitals in the Persian Gulf. The war on Iran is in its ninth month, and the Pentagon is rethinking its regional footprint.

Allison Minor, a former National Security Council official, says the Persian Gulf states face "an uphill battle" with Democrats, who also hold grievances over Sudan and Yemen.

The Arab monarchies may refuse to cooperate. Their ruling families have little interest in releasing communications that could expose how favors are requested, granted, or priced.

But refusal carries consequences. Congress can slow arms sales, restrict security assistance, scrutinize export licenses, and make future agreements harder to approve.

UAE turns Sudan's bloodshed into gold



TEHRAN – It is widely known that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is profiting from the bloodshed and suffering of people caught up in conflicts across Africa, particularly in Sudan, as well as in Yemen.

By backing the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), whose members have been accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sudan, the UAE is reaping billions of dollars by facilitating the transfer of gold extracted in the war-torn country to the sheikhdom.

The UAE is also directly involved in the war against the impoverished people of Yemen.

The UAE-backed RSF operates across several major regions of Sudan, with Darfur serving as its principal stronghold, alongside Kordofan and parts of central Sudan.

Beyond access to agricultural land, mercenaries, and the Red Sea, gold is considered one of the key factors driving the UAE's interest in Sudan and Africa more broadly.

This small, avaricious country on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf has emerged as an extremely destabilizing force in both Africa and West Asia. Its backing for Somaliland's separation from Somalia and its support for Khalifa Haftar's forces in Libya, in defiance of that country's sovereignty, further demonstrate the UAE's destructive role in the region.

A new report from Switzerland's Swissaid foundation has found that the UAE remains the key trading hub for smuggled gold and conflict gold.

Despite the introduction in 2023 of legislation intended to curb illegal flows, the UAE, which is now the world's second largest gold trading hub after Switzerland, imported at least 591 tons of illicit gold into the country in 2024.

Illicit gold refers to that which was either smuggled to the UAE - most often to the gold markets of Dubai, the second largest Emirate - without being able to be traced, or that comes from countries at war, including Yemen, Sudan and Russia.

The UAE remains by far the main destination for gold linked to armed conflicts in Africa, according to Swissaid. It also continues to be a major destination for gold exports from countries subject to international sanctions.

"The findings of this study are deeply concerning. They show that the United Arab Emirates remains a hub for smuggled and conflict gold," said Marc Ummel, head of Swissaid's commodities unit and co-author of the study.

In 2024, the UAE imported at least 174.5 tons of gold from Russia (directly and indirectly via Armenia), Yemen and Sudan (directly and indirectly), Swissaid found.

The entire volume from these three countries can, the organization said, "be considered as conflict gold".

The family of Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the RSF chief better known as Hemedti, profits from gold mines in Darfur, the vast western region of Sudan under its control.

The RSF's own gold trading company, al-Junaid, accumulated considerable wealth by smuggling gold from areas of Sudan under its control into Dubai.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Israel kills Palestinian commander in al-Mawasi, an area it once called a 'humanitarian zone'

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Hamas confirmed on Sunday that Samir Abu Younis, commander of the al-Qassam Brigades' Rafah Brigade, was killed in an Israeli drone strike on a tent in al-Mawasi, west of Khan Younis.

He was martyred in a coastal strip where displaced families have lived in tents for months, more than a year into a ceasefire that Israel treats as optional.

The al-Qassam Brigades described Abu Younis, known as Abu Mahmoud, as a member of their general military council who joined in 1991, served time in Israeli prisons, fought through the Second Intifada, and rose from the Western Battalion to lead Rafah, succeeding Nael Abu Obeid.

They said he helped plan and supervise Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on October 7, 2023. Calling the killing a cowardly assassination, the group promised that "the blood will not be lost and resolve will not weaken."

The strike also wounded two people, who were taken to Nasser Medical Complex, medical staff told Al Jazeera. Footage shows ambulances inside the hospital grounds and stretchers stained with blood.

Israel once designated al-Mawasi a "humanitarian zone" and pushed civilians toward it. It has bombed the area repeatedly since.

The numbers show how little the U.S.-backed "ceasefire" has meant. Since it took effect on October 11, 2025, Israeli attacks have killed at least 1,643 Palestinians and wounded 5,964, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

That is more than four deaths a day for over a year. In the past 48 hours alone, 16 people were killed and 68 injured.

Since October 2023, the toll stands at over 74,600 dead and over 176,000 wounded, a war that many Palestinians, rights groups and legal scholars call genocide.

70 bodies unearthed are honored

The same evening, dozens of mourners gathered in northern Gaza for a vigil honoring 70 people killed during the war. They came from more than a dozen families that had been waiting for the remains of their loved ones.

Rescuers had recovered the bodies in recent weeks from buildings Israeli strikes destroyed. Each was wrapped in a white body bag and draped in a Palestinian flag, with a candle on the chest.

More than 10,000 people remain under the rubble, Palestinian authorities say, citing the UN. Only 850 bodies have been recovered since the ceasefire began. At that rate, clearing the backlog would take about 12 years.

Israel has not allowed heavy machinery into Gaza, so Civil Defense crews dig with a few working excavators and a shrinking fuel supply. Mass funerals are now routine.

The living is not spared. Cold-related deaths have reached 11 after a nine-month-old baby died of hypothermia, the first this winter. Families in tents and damaged buildings are coping with water damage from heavy rains.

Will the "Framework Agreement" replace UN Resolution 1701?

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 in 2006, relative stability in southern Lebanon rested on a three-part formula.

This included the expansion of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), deployment of the Lebanese Army backed by Hezbollah's armed resistance alongside regional and international understandings aimed at preventing a slide into all-out confrontation.

But with UNIFIL's mandate set to expire on December 31, 2026, reports have emerged suggesting that the U.S., along with some Lebanese parties, wants to turn the "Framework Agreement" into a UN Security Council resolution that would replace Resolution 1701.

The "Framework Agreement" is a U.S.-brokered deal signed by Lebanese authorities and the occupying Israeli regime in June 2026. It sets out a phased process: the Lebanese army takes control of two "pilot zones" in the south, Hezbollah is disarmed, and Israeli occupation forces withdraw gradually. Implementation has stalled, with Hezbollah rejecting the deal and the occupying regime refusing to withdraw.

Could the agreement become the new security framework governing southern Lebanon?

The U.S. position: Emphasis on "verification"

Following his meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said: "The goal is to have a credible party on the ground capable of verifying the parties' compliance (with the provisions of the framework agreement) in the pilot areas."

He added that this "does not necessarily require a military mission like that of UNIFIL, but could be civilian".

Rubio's approach indicates the Americans are now seeking a 'credible party' tasked with 'verification' of the Framework Agreement's implementation, knowing that it practically imposes obligations on the Lebanese state without imposing parallel obligations on the occupying Israeli regime.

The shift from Resolution 1701 to the Framework Agreement as the governing reference would therefore entail more than simply changing the international mechanism. It would shift the focus from monitoring a cessation of hostilities between two parties (under Resolution 1701) to an asymmetrical compliance regime where Lebanon alone is the subject of verification, and the international presence becomes a monitoring tool aimed at one side.

France: The penholder

In practice, France has been sidelined and marginalized by the Americans in Lebanon. It was not invited to participate in the more recent Lebanese-Zionist understandings under American sponsorship, even though it had co-brokered the November 2024 ceasefire.

Yet France is still considered the penholder for Beirut at the Security Council: the party traditionally tasked with preparing and drafting resolutions related to Lebanon. Historically, Paris has not used this role to break with existing legal frameworks. Rather, it has sought to develop and adapt them to evolving realities, while taking the American position into account above all.

That is what it attempted in the draft it presented on August 5, 2006, which was later adopted as Resolution 1701.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Araghchi: Provincial diplomacy can boost intl. arrivals and handicraft exports



TEHRAN – Iran's provincial diplomacy could help attract more foreign tourists, expand medical tourism and boost handicraft exports through stronger cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said.

Speaking to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts' news outlet, Miras Aria, Araghchi highlighted the potential for closer cooperation between his ministry and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, particularly amid the economic challenges facing the country.

He said cooperation between the two ministries already covered several areas, including tourism, handicrafts and cultural heritage. The Foreign Ministry also supports efforts to attract international visitors through visa-related services and international marketing, drawing on Iran's diplomatic missions abroad.

In the handicrafts sector, the ministry's economic diplomacy division helps promote exports and expand trade relations, while the two ministries also cooperate in introducing and help registering Iran's cultural heritage internationally, he added.

Araghchi said the ministries' international affairs departments maintain close working relations, noting that a joint meeting of their deputy ministers had recently been held to explore opportunities for further cooperation.

He said a recent meeting with managers of the cultural heritage and tourism ministry had focused on ways to support the national economy through tourism development and handicraft exports amid the country's wartime conditions and the uncertainty of the current situation.

One of the key approaches discussed was provincial diplomacy, which he described as an effective means of strengthening regional economic and cultural ties.

Direct cooperation between Iranian provinces and neighboring regions across international borders could create new opportunities for tourism and trade, Araghchi said.

He noted that many Iranian provinces are located far from areas affected by the war and have suitable conditions and capacities for tourism development. Strengthening links between border provinces and neighboring regions could help generate new flows of international visitors and expand economic and cultural exchanges.

Some of these cross-border connections are already in place, he said, adding that further support could help activate underused tourism potential and strengthen people-to-people relations.

The foreign minister also identified medical tourism as an important area for international cooperation, saying foreign patients continue to choose Iran for medical treatment despite the country's wartime circumstances.

"Even under wartime conditions, hospitals in the country have been booked for the coming months by foreign tourists traveling to Iran for treatment," he said.

Medical centers, particularly in border areas, continue to receive considerable demand from international health tourists despite the prevailing circumstances, Araghchi added.

Concluding his remarks, he called for national solidarity and closer coordination among government institutions to overcome the challenges facing the country.

He also praised the public's resilience and the efforts and sacrifices of the armed forces, saying national unity and collective action were essential to navigating the current situation.

Iranian ambassador, foreign diplomats visit tourism attractions in Iraq's Dhi Qar



TEHRAN – Iran's ambassador to Iraq, Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadegh, joined a delegation of around 70 Arab and foreign ambassadors and diplomats on a visit to the historical and tourism attractions of Iraq's southern Dhi Qar province on Saturday.

The visit was organized by the provincial government to showcase Dhi Qar's cultural heritage and tourism potential and encourage investment in the region.

The delegation was welcomed at the ancient city of Ur by Dhi Qar Governor Haider al-Hussinawi and Iraq's Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Ali al-Dakhili.

Held under the supervision of Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi, the program aimed to highlight the province's historical and cultural significance and present it as a safe destination for diplomatic missions, tourists and potential investors.

The itinerary included visits to the ancient city of Ur, the Ziggurat of Ur, a Roman theatre venue and the Al-Chibayish wetlands, part of the Mesopotamian Marshes.

The visit to Al-Chibayish was also intended to introduce diplomats to the area's distinctive natural environment and its potential for ecotourism.

Speaking at a press conference in Dhi Qar, al-Dakhili described the province as safe and ready to welcome diplomatic delegations, tourists and investors.

"Today is a day that inspires hope and optimism. We are here in Dhi Qar, the city where the first script was born," he said, according to the Iraqi News Agency.

He expressed appreciation for the support of the prime minister, the provincial governor, the local government and the Foreign Ministry in organizing the visit.

Al-Dakhili also called on the visiting ambassadors to convey a positive image of Dhi Qar to their respective countries, saying the province was ready to welcome visitors and extend its hand in friendship.

Meanwhile, al-Hussinawi described the reception of diplomatic missions as a message of recovery and openness to the international community.

Located in southern Iraq, Dhi Qar is one of the principal centers of the ancient Sumerian civilization. Its archaeological heritage includes the remains of Ur, Eridu, Lagash, Larsa, Girsu and other ancient cities. Its southern areas also encompass parts of the Mesopotamian Marshes, a landscape of international ecological and cultural significance.

Semnan handicrafts exhibition showcases Iran's tribal arts and traditions



TEHRAN – A major handicrafts exhibition in Semnan is showcasing the traditional crafts, local products and cultural heritage of artisans from across Iran, with more than 150 booths and nine Siah-Chadors -- traditional nomadic tents -- set up as part of the event.

The exhibition, which was inaugurated on Sunday in the presence of Barzin Zarrghami, deputy minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, will run until November 20 at the Ghadir Exhibition Hall in Semnan.

Samaneh Soltanipour, deputy director of handicrafts and traditional arts at the Semnan provincial department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, told IRNA that 120 booths have been allocated to handicraft products made by artisans from different provinces.

Another 20 booths are dedicated to regional souvenirs, traditional foods and locally produced goods, offering visitors an opportunity to explore the culinary traditions and cultural diversity of participating regions.

The exhibition also features nine traditional nomadic tents in its outdoor area, representing the provinces of Semnan, Kohgiluyeh-Boyer-Ahmad, South Khorasan, Golestan, Tehran and Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari.

According to Soltanipour, the tents offer visitors an insight into nomadic culture, including traditional lifestyles, customs, local products and the cultural and tourism potential of different regions.

She said the presence of the nomadic tents alongside handicraft and local-product booths has expanded the event beyond a conventional marketplace, turning it into a platform for introducing aspects of Iran's intangible cultural heritage and regional diversity.

Live demonstrations highlight traditional skills

The exhibition also includes live demonstrations of around five handicraft disciplines, allowing visitors to observe artisans at work and learn about production techniques, tools and the skills involved in making traditional products.

Soltanipour said such demonstrations provide an opportunity, particularly for younger generations, to better understand the craftsmanship and cultural value behind handmade works. They can also help introduce lesser-known traditional crafts and encourage more people to learn these skills.

Direct sales and new market opportunities

The event aims to strengthen the market for Iranian handicrafts by establishing direct links between artisans and consumers, providing opportunities for sales without intermediaries and helping producers better understand customer preferences, Soltani-Pour said.

She added that bringing artisans from different provinces together also creates opportunities for exchanging expertise, transferring traditional knowledge, building professional networks and developing cooperation among craftspeople.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

SPORTS

My goal is to compete at 2028 Olympics: Shahshahani

TEHRAN - Young Iranian swimmer Parsa Shahshahani has described winning a silver medal at the Youth Olympic Games as a major achievement, while setting his sights on qualifying for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.

Shahshahani made history at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games by winning silver in the men's 200m backstroke, securing Iran's first-ever swimming medal at the Youth Olympic Games.

The Iranian swimmer qualified for the final after clocking 2:03.68 in the heats, breaking the national junior record. He produced an even stronger performance in the final, touching the wall in 2:02.74 to improve his own national junior record and claim second place.

The medal was also Iran's first silver at the fourth edition of the Youth Olympic Games.

Speaking to Tehran Times about his performance in Dakar, Shahshahani said: "I won the silver medal in the 200m backstroke at the Youth Olympic Games. Unfortunately, the gold medalist was well ahead of me, but I had a close battle with the swimmers who finished third and fourth. In the end, I managed to secure the silver medal. This achievement means a great deal to me."

Asked about his ambitions for the future, the young swimmer highlighted his Olympic dream.

"My first goal is to qualify for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games. My second and bigger ambition is to reach the Olympic final and try to become the first Iranian swimmer to win an Olympic medal," he said.

Shahshahani added that he has approximately 18 months to prepare for the qualification process and secure his place at the Games.

"I have around a year and a half to compete in the qualifying events, achieve the required results and earn my ticket to the Olympic Games," he concluded.

Iran's youthful reset needs a bigger test

TEHRAN - Iran's 2-0 victory over Palestine in Basra offered encouraging signs of a generational transition, but it also exposed a familiar weakness: the national team still need greater attacking variety and, more importantly, stronger opposition to measure their progress.

With an average age four years lower than the side that lost to Russia in the previous international break, Amir Ghalenoei's team used the opening game of the Basra tournament to give younger players a chance. Five of them – goalkeeper Mohammad Khalifeh, Mohammad Farabasi, Ali Gholizadeh, Hossein Goudarzi and Afshin Sadehgi – made their international debuts, while the coach gave playing time to 22 of his 29 squad members.

There were positives. Hosseinnejad and Goudarzi showed promise, and the latter made a decisive contribution after coming off the bench. His two excellent crosses led to goals from Sardar Azmoun and Saleh Hardani, securing the win in the closing stages.

Yet the result should not disguise the limitations of Iran's performance. Palestine were reduced to 10 men in the 66th minute, and Iran had struggled to break through their defensive organization before that. The two goals came after the dismissal, with crosses from wide areas once again proving the most effective attacking route.

Iran created chances and might have scored more, but their reliance on crosses highlighted a lack of alternative solutions in the final third. Against more organized and physically stronger opponents, that predictability could become a serious problem.

Amir Ghalenoei acknowledged that the victory was only part of the bigger picture. He said the priority in this international window was to give younger players opportunities, adding that Iran needed to face bigger teams to assess their readiness. He also stressed the importance of playing in front of large crowds and under greater pressure, pointing to the need for high-level friendlies before the 2027 Asian Cup.

That makes Tuesday's meeting with Iraq particularly important. Unlike Palestine, Iraq should provide a more demanding test, both tactically and emotionally, especially in front of its home supporters.

Iran's rebuilding process has begun with some encouraging individual performances. But introducing young players is only the first step.

They need challenging matches, while Team Melli must develop more ways to create and convert chances. The victory in Basra was a useful start, not proof that the transition is complete.

Mehrzad: "Sitting volleyball completely saved my life"

TEHRAN - With eight Paralympic gold medals, Iran's men's sitting volleyball team have dominated the sport. For Morteza Mehrzad, it is a life-changing game.

Iran have dominated sitting volleyball at the Paralympic Games for nearly four decades, but for three-time Paralympic champion Morteza Mehrzad, the sport's biggest impact cannot be measured in gold medals.

"My life is basically split into two chapters, before sitting volleyball and after it," Mehrzad said after leading Iran to their fifth straight Asian Para Games title in October.

Mehrzad, who at 2.46 meters is the tallest athlete ever to compete at the Paralympic Games, is known for his aggressive attacks and flawless blocks. But off the court, he is equally known for his humble character.

After helping his team finish at the top of the podium once again, he shared how discovering the sport had changed his life. Born with a condition called acromegaly, he spent years isolated at home in a remote village in northern Iran before making a TV appearance that led to an invitation to try sitting volleyball.

"Because of my physical appearance, I felt (so) self-conscious that I shut myself inside for years and couldn't even bring myself to step outside.

"But sitting volleyball completely saved my life. It helped me shed that shame and step back out into the world through sports."

From there, his rise in the sport was rapid. In a sport where the net hangs 1.15 meters above the floor, Mehrzad's reach and power have been fundamental to the team.

A few years after he tried out the sport for the first time, he made his Paralympic debut at Rio 2016, where he helped Iran beat defending champions Bosnia and Herzegovina in the gold medal match. He was named Most Valuable Player at Tokyo 2020, where Iran defended their title, and Best Attacker at Paris 2024 after finishing as Iran's top scorer in their win over Bosnia and Herzegovina in the final, paralympic.org reported.

Mehrzad said sitting volleyball is not just a special sport for him, but also for the Paralympic Movement in his country.

"Sitting volleyball in our country is the first sport for people with impairments, and we have an advantage in sitting volleyball; we have more ability in sitting volleyball," he said.

The team have competed at every Paralympic Games since the country made their Paralympic debut at Seoul 1988. Now Iran are the most successful men's team in the history of the sport, having won gold in eight of their 10 Paralympic appearances and silver in the other two. The team have been unstoppable this year. In July, Iran defeated Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-1 to secure a record-extending ninth title at the 2026 Sitting Volleyball World Championships in Hangzhou, China. Three months later, the team won the men's tournament at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games. Iran have won every men's sitting volleyball gold medal at the Asian Para Games since the sport was introduced to the program at Guangzhou 2010. "More than for me, all of the Iranian people are happy about this win and becoming champions in this tournament," Mehrzad said.

Iran proposes establishing Avicenna consortium in co-op with Tajikistan, Afghanistan



TEHRAN – The Iranian headquarters for developing traditional medicine and medicinal herbs has proposed the establishment of a trilateral consortium named after Abu Ali Sina (Avicenna), in cooperation with Tajikistan and Afghanistan, to foster scientific, technological, and innovative collaborations in the health sector.

Referring to the shared scientific, cultural, and historical capacities of the three countries, Hossein Rezaeizadeh, the chief of the headquarters, underlined the necessity of benefiting from the scientific and pharmacological legacy of Avicenna to expand regional scientific and technological cooperation, IRNA reported.

The official made the remarks while addressing the International Scientific Conference entitled "Abu Ali Sina and His Contribution to the Formation of a New Scientific Worldview", which was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on November 12.

The initiative aims to lay the basis for targeted regional cooperation in the health sector and transform scientific and historical commonalities into technological achievements utilizing the capacities and capabilities of universities, scientific research centers, and knowledge-based companies in Iran, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan,

Expanding joint research, documenting and re-examining medical and pharmacological sources, standardizing natural products, and enhancing cooperation in harnessing the potential of medicinal plants were among key focuses of the proposal.

Accordingly, 'Avicenna consortium for science, health, and innovation' could serve as a collaborative platform for the organization of scientific capacities of the three nations, development of joint projects and programs in the health sector, particularly traditional medicine, medicinal plants, and pharmacological heritage.

To implement the proposal, Rezaeizadeh suggested establishing a working group to develop a three-year roadmap to clarify priorities, course of cooperation, and the implementation of a flagship joint project in the field of medicinal plants and pharmacological heritage.

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

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

Addressing the event, Ali Bahreini, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to Geneva, said: "The world today is grappling with self-centeredness, extremism, and division, and needs wisdom, scientific curiosity, and freedom from prejudice more than ever."

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

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

Persian medicine

Persian medicine, one of the world's oldest traditional medical systems, has a long history of scholarship associated with prominent physicians such as Rhazes and Avicenna. Its traditional framework places considerable emphasis on maintaining health, preventing disease, and adopting appropriate lifestyles.

According to figures previously reported by the health ministry, the country ranks third globally in traditional medicine clinical trials registered on the World Health Organization's International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP), following China and India.

The share of clinical trials in traditional and complementary medicine in Iran makes up about three percent of all clinical trials registered in the country, while just about 0.3 percent of the healthcare staff are experts in traditional and complementary medicine. The report shows the high capacity of Iranian researchers to move towards evidence-based medicine.

Persian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

It is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in the concept of four senses of humor: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra'), and black bile (Sauda'). The concept of the four senses of humor is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna in an elaborate medical system.

So far, about 30,000 plant species have been identified in the world, with Iran's share of about 8,000 species, which is more than the whole of the species found in Europe.

Around 500 Persian medicine experts are providing health and medical treatment services across the country. More than 1,000 general practitioners who have passed the Persian medicine courses approved by the health ministry are also offering services.

Training Persian medicine experts has always been at the top of the Persian medicine office's agenda. Therefore, different skill courses have been developed and held under the supervision of the health ministry.

MOP38: Iran urges stronger global efforts to safeguard ozone layer



TEHRAN – Iran has called for continued international cooperation to protect the ozone layer, with Hossein Shahbaz, head of the country's Ozone Layer Protection Unit, highlighting Iran's active role in phasing out ozone-depleting substances.

Shahbaz made the remarks at the 38th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP38), held in Kigali, Rwanda, from November 2 to 6.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining global cooperation and collective efforts to safeguard the ozone layer and advance the objectives of the Montreal Protocol.

Outlining Iran's measures and programs to protect the ozone layer, Shahbaz presented an account of the achievements, the latest status of the Kigali Amendment ratification, and the future initiatives of the Department of Environment (DOE) to meet the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

He also elaborated on the impacts of US-Israeli attacks on the country's infrastructure, highlighting that these assaults have delayed the ratification of the Kigali Amendment.

The MOP 38 reviewed issues related to the implementation of the Protocol, commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Kigali Amendment, and adopted the 2027-2029 replenishment of the multilateral fund.

The Meeting of the Parties celebrated the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol adopted in 2016 that extended the regulation under the Protocol to HFC compounds (hydrofluorocarbons).

Through the Kigali Amendment, the Protocol has also become an important part of global climate action. By 2100, the Kigali Amendment is estimated to reduce global warming by about 0.4–0.5°C. Almost all countries of the world have ratified the Amendment.

In September, Shina Ansari, the head of the DOE, called for stronger international cooperation to address the harmful effects of ozone-layer depletion and climate change, saying that global participation, strong commitment to obligations, and dedicated financial resources can produce real, tangible, measurable results.

Speaking at a ceremony marking World Ozone Day, she said, "We have gathered today to reaffirm our commitment to fully restoring and rebuilding the Earth's protective shield and safeguarding life against harmful solar radiation. We must take more effective steps toward our shared goals of addressing global environmental challenges, both in protecting the ozone layer and in mitigating global warming."

Referring to the Montreal Protocol, Ansari said it is a global agreement aimed at controlling the production, trade, and consumption of chemicals that deplete the ozone layer, with the ultimate goal of protecting life on Earth through the gradual phase-out of ozone-depleting substances.

The official added that the landmark agreement, adopted in 1987 and entering into force in 1989, is now regarded as one of the world's most successful environmental agreements and an inspiring model for environmental cooperation.

"Thanks to the joint efforts of countries around the world, the ozone layer is currently on a path toward recovery and restoration, and significant progress has been made in this regard," she said.

The protocol has demonstrated that science-based policymaking, global participation, effective international cooperation, strong commitment to obligations, and dedicated financial resources can produce real, tangible, measurable, and monitorable results, Ansari noted.

She added that this process has not only made ozone-layer protection possible but has also enabled countries and industries to move toward safer, more environmentally friendly alternatives while supporting economic development.

(See full text at tehrantimescom)

Iranian young experts win nine medals at BRICS Future Skills Contest in Russia

TEHRAN – A 12-member Iranian team of young technology experts has won nine medals, including two gold, three silver, and four bronze, at the 2026 BRICS Hi-Tech Future Skills Competition in Russia, securing the highest medal tally among participating teams.

Held in Yekaterinburg from November 9 to 13 under the theme "Hi-Tech: Skills of the Future," the competition brought together more than 1,000 competitors, experts, technology companies, educational institutions, and industry representatives from around the world.

The international event aimed to promote technological cooperation among BRICS countries, strengthen industrial human resource capabilities, and advance the application of emerging technologies in production.

Abouzar Masoudi in chemical engineering and Kheibar Dashtian in polymer and petrochemical engineering won the gold medals. Amir-Hossein Hashemi and Shervin Rastegar in Robotization and automation of technological processes, as well as Ali Yousefi and Hossein Seyyed Mohseni in cybersecurity, received the bronze medals. Amir-Hossein Khaniki in machine learning and big data, Amir-Hossein Abdullahi and Arezo Sabri in the innovation sector, and AI-based applications secured the bronze medals, Mehr News Agency reported.

This year's competition featured 49 professional disciplines, covering a wide range of fields including data mining and artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data processing, and the development of industrial algorithms, AI in Unmanned Systems (UAS), UAS operation, cybersecurity (protecting critical infrastructure, such as refineries and power plants against network-based attacks); robotics and drones (industrial robotics, aerial robotics, and the design of drone control systems for equipment monitoring); and smart manufacturing (process automation, additive manufacturing or 3D printing, and digital engineering).

It also provided a platform for exchanging technical expertise, developing professional skills, improving production processes, and identifying innovative solutions to industrial challenges.

Iranian delegation attends BRICS Tech Policy training program

In June, the first group of young Iranian professionals in the innovation sector participated in a BRICS training program titled 'BRICS + Tech Policy Camp', which was held in Beijing, China.

It is an international training program that focuses on science, technology park governance, and the expansion of cross-border innovation; the program targets participants from BRICS member states and other countries.

About 40 managers, policymakers, and experts in fields of science and technology from 10 countries, namely China, Iran, India, South Africa, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia, attended the training program.

Supported by the deputy science minister of innovation and technology, and UNESCO regional center for the Development of Science Parks and Technology Incubators, the Iranian delegation consists of young managers of science and technology parks, and young faculty members of the universities took part in the event.

The event served as a great platform to develop technological diplomacy, strengthen international interactions, and empower future managers in science, technology, and innovation sectors.

The delegation visited science and technology parks, innovation centers, accelerators, and leading technology clusters in China, and explore potential for the enhancement of scientific and technological collaborations.

The program included 10 specialized courses and multiple site visits, offering rich and well-structured content designed to enhance participants' theoretical knowledge and practical skills, while fostering a platform for mutual learning, exchange, and collaborative development.

Themed 'Entrepreneurship Inspires Youth Power, Innovation Leads BRICS Development', the program aimed to enhance operational capabilities while fostering policy synergy and collaborative mechanisms, ultimately contributing the perspectives and experience of developing countries to the improvement of global sci-tech governance.

It was centered around science, technology, and innovation trends among BRICS member states, science and technology parks development, China's innovation ecosystem, emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, commercialization of scientific and technological achievements, mechanisms for cooperation, and technology and resource sharing at the international level.

Iran proposes expanding joint scientific infrastructures

Hosting the 7th meeting of BRICS working groups on research infrastructures and mega-science projects, Iran proposed the development of joint scientific infrastructures.

The three-day event was held from December 8 to 10, 2025, at the Azadi Hotel in Tehran.

The first proposal was focused on boosting collaborative efforts in large-scale research projects. The country announced its readiness to cooperate with member states in large projects such as developing synchrotrons (particle accelerators) and expanding the Iranian National Observatory, IRNA reported.

The country's second proposal was to join and connect Iran's laboratory network to the BRICS laboratory networks to facilitate mutual access to advanced equipment and expertise.

Organized by the Center for Progress and Development Cooperation of the Presidency, serving as the national BRICS focal point for technology and innovation, in collaboration with the Organization for the Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology, Tehran meeting brought together scientific delegations of BRICS member states including Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Russia, India and the UAE, IRNA reported.

The key focus areas of the Tehran meeting included advancing joint research cooperation among BRICS member states, supporting the development of mechanisms for defining and financing mega-science projects, and strengthening the role of research infrastructures as drivers of innovation, sustainable development, and science diplomacy.

CITEX to showcase technology-driven urban solutions

TEHRAN – The Tehran Municipality is set to host the CITEX (Iran Pishro) event, bringing together more than 100 knowledge-based companies to showcase innovative technologies and solutions aimed at addressing the capital's urban challenges.

CITEX will be held from November 17 to 20 at Milad Tower's exhibition center in Tehran. The exhibition is open to the public.

The event will focus on three main areas: transportation, financial services and fintech, and citizen services. It seeks to strengthen cooperation between the municipal authorities, technology companies, researchers, and investors to promote innovation in urban management and improve the quality of life for residents.

Key topics on the agenda include smart transportation, integrated energy management and solutions to energy imbalances, circular economy development, urban waste management, the application of digital economy solutions in municipal administration, and sustainable urban financing.

By connecting technological capabilities with the municipality's practical needs, CITEX aims to provide a platform for identifying innovative solutions and facilitating their implementation in various urban sectors.

According to the organizers, nearly 1,000 companies registered for the event, with around 220 companies advancing to specialized evaluation stages. More than 100 knowledge-based companies are expected to participate, presenting their products, technologies, and proposed solutions to urban challenges.

The event will also provide opportunities for investors and major economic institutions to explore investment prospects and support the commercialization of innovative products. Selected companies will be eligible for financial prizes and banking facilities, with the aim of helping them bring their solutions to market and establish cooperation with the municipality.

A complementary initiative, titled Golden Seed, will also introduce young students and university participants to technology and innovation, providing an opportunity to present creative ideas and promising projects.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

There is no greater wealth than wisdom, no greater poverty than ignorance; no greater heritage than culture and no greater support than consultation.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:49 Evening: 17:16 Dawn: 5:15 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:42 (tomorrow)

Iran's 'Grandpa's Lullaby' wins award at Indonesian festival

TEHRAN- Iranian short film "Grandpa's Lullaby" has won the Best Screenplay award at the 2026 International Photography and Short Movie Festival (IPSMF) in Indonesia.

Written and directed by Bahman Rezai, the fantasy and live-action animation film is a production of the Soureh Young Film Center. It received the award in the short film competition section of the festival, whose main event and awards ceremony took place on November 12 at Telkom University in Bandung, Indonesia, Mehr reported on Sunday.

"Grandpa's Lullaby" tells the story of one of the children martyred in Minab, using a child-centered narrative to explore the boundaries between memory, imagination and reality.

According to the film's synopsis, on a rainy night, the telling of a children's story takes a grandfather and his grandchild on a journey between fantasy, memory and reality.

Actors Reza Fayyazi and Ali Salimi star in the production.

On February 28, the Shajareh Tayyebeh elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan province, was struck during US-Israeli attacks on Iran, killing 168 people, including children aged 7 to 12, and injuring at least 95 others.

Investigations by Al Jazeera, The New York Times, BBC Verify, CBC and NPR, drawing on satellite imagery, video footage and witness accounts, identified the school as a distinct civilian facility and concluded that the United States was responsible for the strike. Evidence also indicated that the site was hit three times, raising serious questions about the targeting decisions and the use of intelligence in the attack, while intensifying calls for international accountability.

The IPSMF is an annual international event organized by the Faculty of Communication and Social Sciences at Telkom University. It brings together filmmakers and photographers from different countries, providing a platform for short films and photography that explore social realities and encourage creative expression.

The 2026 edition was held under the theme "Framing Social Change," highlighting the role of visual storytelling in raising awareness and encouraging reflection on social issues.

Cartoon of Day



Hunger in Gaza

Cartoonist: Jorge Gonzalez from Mexico

33rd Iranian Youth Visual Arts Festival opens in Kermanshah



TEHRAN – The 33rd Iranian Youth Visual Arts Festival opened on Sunday at the ancient Taq-e Bostan historical site in Kermanshah, bringing together 173 young artists, 11 workshop instructors and participants from Iraq and Oman under the slogan "Let's Not Muddy the Water."

The opening ceremony was attended by festival officials, provincial authorities, cultural figures and international guests. Among those present were Reza Sadeqzadeh, the festival secretary; Aydin Mehdizadeh, head of the festival's policy-making council; Jafar Vahedi, executive secretary; and Mozaffar Teymouri, head of the provincial organizing committee.

Kermanshah Governor Manouchehr Habibi, Deputy Governor for Political and Security Affairs Bahram Soleimani, Kermanshah Mayor Bijan Moradi, and other provincial and cultural officials also attended the event.

The ceremony featured speeches by festival organizers and provincial officials, along with a performance of traditional music from Kermanshah. Following a visit to the historic Taq-e Bostan complex, the festival's workshops began at the Kermanshah Girls' Fine Arts High School.

In a message to the festival, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi emphasized the importance of identifying and supporting young artistic talent across the country, highlighting the role of regional cultural events in promoting cultural justice and decentralizing national programs.

Salehi described Iran's young artists as inheritors of the country's rich cultural and artistic heritage and stressed that providing equal opportunities for visibility, education and professional development is essential to nurturing their potential.

He noted that hosting this year's festival in Kermanshah, a region whose enduring historical monuments testify to the long-standing relationship between art and Iranian identity, represents more than a change of venue. It also reflects the need to expand national cultural events beyond major urban centers and create greater opportunities for young talents throughout the country.

The minister further expressed hope that the festival would go beyond a few days of competition and exhibitions to become an effective platform for discovering emerging artists, connecting them with established masters and providing sustained support for their artistic development.

The 11 instructors leading this year's workshops represent a range of visual arts disciplines. They include Maryam Kahvand in graphic design, Maneli Manouchehri in illustration, Marzieh Taqikhani in ceramics, Zeinab Shahi in miniature painting, Jamshid Haqiqatshenas in painting, Jamal Arabzadeh in design, Behnam Seddiqi in photography, Mohammad Ali Ghorbani in calligraphy, Jamal Rahmati in caricature, Mohammad Hossein Emad in sculpture, and Behnam Kamrani in new media art.

The workshops are scheduled to run from Sunday noon through Tuesday afternoon, November 17. At the end of the sessions, participants will submit their works for evaluation by the festival jury.

The closing ceremony and award presentation will take place on Wednesday afternoon, November 18, at the Entezar Cultural and Artistic Complex in Kermanshah.

The annual festival aims to identify and encourage emerging talents in various fields of visual arts while providing opportunities for young artists to learn from experienced professionals and exchange creative ideas. Its 33rd edition also highlights the cultural and artistic capacities of Iran's provinces by bringing a major national art event to the country's western region.

Iranian Cultural Week held at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in South Korea



TEHRAN – The Iranian Cultural Week, marking 50 years of Persian and Iranian studies at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, South Korea, was held at the university from November 9 to 13 with a variety of academic, cultural, and student-focused programs, including a speech contest this week, highlighting cultural ties and longstanding friendship between Iran and South Korea.

The judging panel of the contest included Iran's Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, Ahmad Erfanian, who encouraged contestants as they expressed their enthusiasm for learning more about Iran's language and culture and highlighted the shared interests and longstanding friendship between the two peoples.

Erfanian highlighted the role of the Persian language in introducing Iran's culture, literature, and civilization. He expressed his gratitude to the professors and students of Hankuk University for their efforts in teaching and expanding the language within South Korea, IRNA reported on Sunday.

The cultural week's agenda also included seminars with alumni, a translation competition, and a gathering of graduates from the department of Persian and Iranian Studies.

In the inaugural session, participating students delivered speeches in Persian regarding their motivations for learning the language, their interests in Iranian culture and literature, and their personal experiences in this field.

Following this, seminars were held featuring alumni from the department of Persian and Iranian Studies, who are currently active in the media and financial sectors. Additionally, students participated in a Persian translation competition.

The closing ceremony of the Iranian Cultural Week took place on November 13 at the Korea Press Foundation, attended by the Iranian Ambassador, university officials, professors, students, and alumni. Ambassador Erfanian emphasized the role of language teaching and cultural studies in strengthening mutual understanding and consolidating ties between the peoples of Iran and South Korea. A video message from Kim Joon-pyo, the South Korean Ambassador to Tehran, was also screened.

At the conclusion of the gathering, three students were honored for their achievements in translation. Furthermore, an exhibition of Iranian handicrafts and programs showcasing Iranian culture and cuisine were held on the sidelines of the event.

The Persian and Iranian Studies department at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies began its activities in 1976 and has played a key role over the past five decades in training graduates and expanding the knowledge of Iran's language, literature, and culture in South Korea.

Winners of Palestine Book Awards 2026 announced in London ceremony

The winners of the 15th annual Palestine Book Awards were announced at a ceremony in London on November 13, with honors going to works on the genocide in Gaza, the colonial violence of the West, Palestinian land struggles, and the mapping of Palestine. Historian Professor Nur Masalha received this year's Lifetime Achievement Award.

The ceremony, organized by Middle East Monitor (MEMO), was hosted by British-Palestinian activist and spoken word poet Leanne Mohamad. It brought together authors, publishers, academics, journalists and politicians/diplomats to celebrate the best new books in English on Palestine.

This year's awards drew more than 80 submissions, the largest number in their history, from which ten titles were shortlisted, MEMO reported.

The keynote address was delivered by Mohannad Mustafa, a senior lecturer and political science researcher who specializes in politics and political discourse analysis.

Guests were also treated to a performance of traditional Palestinian songs by Mohammed Shoman, a singer, guitarist, and music producer from Gaza and a co-founder of Sol Band.

The Academic Award went to Paul Kohlbry for "Plots and Deeds: Agrarian Annihilation and the Fight for Land Justice in Palestine," which examines how Palestinian farmers in the occupied West Bank defend their land against settler violence and dispossession.

Thomas Suárez won the Counter-Current Award for "Palestine Mapped: From the River to the Sea in Early Geographic Thought," which traces centuries of mapmaking and its role in the colonization of Palestine.

The Global Impact Award was presented to Hamid Dabashi for "After Savagery: Gaza, Genocide, and the Illusion of Western Civilization," which places the genocide in Gaza within the longer history of European colonial violence. The award was collected on his behalf by Brekhna Aftab, his editor at Haymarket Books.

The Edited Books and Anthologies Award went to Susan Abulhawa for "Every Moment Is a Life: Gaza in the Time of Genocide," a collection of stories by eighteen young writers from Gaza trying to survive Israel's brutal onslaught.

UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories Francesca Albanese won the Memoir Award for "When the World Sleeps: Stories, Words, and Wounds of Palestine," which tells the story of Palestine through ten people she has met.

The evening closed with the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award to Professor Nur Masalha in recognition of his research on the history of Palestine, the Nakba, and Zionism.