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Repressive measures against Bahrain's Shia scholars

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — Bahrain has witnessed a major escalation in its campaign against Shiite religious authorities, as the ruling Al Khalifa regime handed life imprisonment sentences to the majority of Shiite scholars prosecuted in a mass trial on November 16, including those tried in absentia and those who appeared before the court.

Some other defendants received 15-year prison sentences.

The verdicts against Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim, Bahrain's foremost Shiite religious authority, and dozens of prominent scholars and activists mark a grave escalation in a campaign that opposition groups describe as systematic sectarian persecution. ▸ Page 5

Ansarallah's advances in Yemen throw Saudi Arabia into disarray

By Matin Jamshidi

TEHRAN – Facing advances by Yemen's Ansarallah forces toward Aden and other strategic areas held by the Riyadh-backed government, Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz issued a royal decree on Monday dismissing Fahd Al-Salman as commander of the forces fighting Ansarallah, also known as the Yemeni Armed Forces (YAF).

The decree was issued on the recommendation of Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman, following a review of regulations governing military officers' service and relevant royal orders, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported. ▸ Page 5

October 7 and the awakening of global conscience

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Contemporary Palestinian history should be read in two chapters: before October 7, 2023, and after it.

That date not only shook the geography of the conflict; it upended the balance of power, the media landscape, and global public opinion, transforming Palestine into an unmistakably humanitarian cause that transcends borders, identities, and affiliations.

The international community has not forgotten the days when the Israeli regime's narrative dominated Western media, while other accounts were sidelined and pushed to the margins.

Close ties with to Tel Aviv was considered a valuable political asset for many candidates in Western elections. ▸ Page 5

Herbert Karim-Masihi looks beyond monuments to capture Iran's cultural heritage

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – For photographer Herbert Karim-Masihi, Iran's heritage is not just a collection of historical buildings and monuments. It is also the story of the people, cultures and beliefs that have shaped the country over thousands of years.

"Iran is a living land that has embraced thousands of years of the lives, cultures, beliefs and experiences of different peoples," Karim-Masihi told the Tehran Times in a recent interview.

"Everything that has taken shape on this soil, from mosques, churches and temples to palaces, villages and ordinary people's homes, is part of the identity of this land." ▸ Page 6



Group photo of the foreign ministers of ECO member states and senior officials of the organization at the Islamabad summit, Monday, November 16, 2026

ECO Backs Iran Plan to End Imposed War

Islamabad declaration endorses Tehran's two-day initiative, urges diplomacy

Insecurity in the Persian Gulf and developments around the Strait of Hormuz, Araghchi stressed, are the direct result of joint hostile policies and aggressive actions by the United States and the Israeli regime against Iran, a fact that he said cannot be distorted.

By staff writer

ISLAMABAD – Foreign ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) have expressed support for Iran's latest initiative to bring the US-Israeli imposed war to a complete and permanent end, underlining diplomacy and regional solidarity as the only path to lasting stability.

The backing was announced in the final declaration of the 30th meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers, which concluded in Islamabad, Pakistan, on Monday after a day of intensive deliberations on regional security, trade, connectivity and energy.

Islamabad declaration: concern over aggression, vote for diplomacy

In one of the most political paragraphs of the communiqué, the ministers voiced deep concern over the regional security situation following what they described as US-Israeli military aggression against Iran.

According to a Tehran Times correspondent in Islamabad, the member states welcomed Iran's recent initiative for a full, complete and permanent end to the imposed war. The statement stressed the importance of diplomatic engagement and expressed explicit support for good offices and mediation efforts by Pakistan and Qatar aimed at defusing tensions and reviving talks.

The ministers also underlined the status of the Islamic Republic of Iran as one of the founding members of ECO, stressing Tehran's significant and effective role in advancing the organization's objectives and regional cooperation.

The declaration comes at a highly sensitive moment, as indirect contacts continue over a ceasefire, reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and a possible resumption of Iran-US diplomacy, which remains stalled amid what Tehran calls frequent shifts in Washington's positions. ▸ Page 3



Sheikh Isa Qassim, center, at a protest at a mosque in the capital of Bahrain, Manama, in 2014.

Bahrain sentences Sheikh Isa Qassim and 63 others to life imprisonment in sham trial

TEHRAN — A Bahraini court on Monday sentenced 64 people, most of them Shia scholars, to life in prison, among them Sheikh Isa Qassim, the country's senior religious authority. Five others got 15 years.

The High Criminal Court ended the largest trial of religious figures the kingdom has held. Of 69 defendants, 60 were clerics, and nine were affiliates such as religious reciters.

13 clerics were tried in absentia, Sheikh Qassim among them. He has lived in Qom since 2018, two years after the monarchy stripped him of his citizenship. ▸ Page 5

Iran rejects allegations of plot to assassinate US officials, cites Israeli disinformation campaign

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson has rejected allegations that the Islamic Republic is plotting to assassinate US officials, describing them as part of a coordinated Israeli disinformation campaign designed to portray Iran as a threat to Western societies, manufacture public fear, and create justification for further escalation of the war.

In a post on his X account on Monday, Esmaeil Baqaei said the campaign was aimed at manipulating public opinion in the United States and Europe and securing popular support for their governments' increasingly aggressive policies toward Iran. ▸ Page 2

Iran prepared for diplomacy, economic blockade and military confrontation: deputy FM

TEHRAN – Iran is prepared for three possible scenarios in its dealings with the United States: diplomacy, an economic blockade, and military confrontation, Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi has said.

Speaking in a televised interview on Sunday evening, Gharibabadi said, "The United States has shown its bad faith at least three times over the past year and a half. This demonstrates that it cannot be trusted at the negotiating table." ▸ Page 2

National Cancer Institute plans to become nano-oncology hub in Islamic world

TEHRAN – The National Cancer Institute, affiliated with the Academic Center for Education, Culture, and Research (ACECR), aims to establish a cohesive international structure that links the research, technological, clinical, educational, and economic capacities of Islamic nations in the fields of nano-medicine and cancer so that it turns into a leading reference hub in nano-oncology in the Islamic world.

Referring to the scientific, research, and technological capacities of the institute and its interactions with the INN, Zahra Sheikhi, the ACECR Deputy for Research and Technology, said the establishment of Islamic countries' nano-oncology innovation center in collaboration with the National Cancer Research Institute and the nanotechnology network is one of the main focuses of the initiative. ▸ Page 7

Iran hit 31 US sites in eight countries while troops were left exposed, 60 Minutes finds

By staff writer

TEHRAN — A U.S. Army officer says he warned senior commanders that Iranian drones could hit their makeshift outpost in Kuwait, and on the second day of the war on Iran that began on Feb. 28, one drone did, killing six American soldiers.

An investigation by CBS News' flagship program 60 Minutes, broadcast Sunday, counts that strike among at least 31 successful Iranian attacks on U.S. military installations and ostensibly "diplomatic" sites across eight countries, a category that includes CIA stations operating under diplomatic cover. The Pentagon has never fully laid out the extent of that damage. ▸ Page 5

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Rafael's war code

Shargh examined the 13-page report submitted by Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to both the IAEA Board of Governors and the United Nations Security Council. The document reflects broader political and security considerations that could influence future international actions toward Tehran. In the current environment, marked by both diplomatic negotiations and security tensions, any claim regarding limitations in verification could be used to justify increased international pressure. Shargh maintained that Washington continues to seek concessions extending beyond previous nuclear arrangements and may use such reports to support its demands. The newspaper therefore portrayed the report as a sensitive political document that could affect future diplomatic and security calculations involving Iran.

Etemad: National victory

In an interview with reformist political activist Ali Bagheri, Etemad discussed changes in US policy and political discourse toward Iran. Trump, who had previously presented himself as a firm supporter of Israeli positions, has been compelled to modify his rhetoric and behavior. According to him, recent political developments in the US have contributed to the reopening of communication channels and renewed prospects for dialogue with Tehran. The US government, which once rejected diplomacy in favor of pressure-oriented policies, now finds itself turning once again to negotiations and indirect contacts through third-party mediators. Bagheri characterized this shift as evidence that Iran's approach has produced results. He described the situation as a "national victory," arguing that it should be recognized by all political groups in the country. In his view, supporters of the resistance strategy and even those who previously questioned it should acknowledge the political significance of the renewed diplomatic atmosphere and the willingness of Washington to engage through dialogue.

Resalat: Trump and Hegseth share responsibility

Resalat focused on the relationship between Trump and his war minister Pete Hegseth, arguing that their political positions and responsibilities cannot be separated, particularly regarding policies toward Iran. Hegseth implemented strategies that had been approved and supported by Trump. As a result, the president cannot distance himself from decisions or outcomes associated with those policies. Resalat maintained that both figures are tied to the same political approach and must share responsibility for its consequences. The article also argued that assertions of success against Iran are largely political narratives designed to obscure deeper strategic problems. It said that criticism within the US increasingly reflects concerns about economic costs, geopolitical consequences, and reputational damage linked to these policies. The paper concluded that Hegseth functioned as a direct executor of Trump's agenda and therefore any assessment of those policies must take into account the role of both individuals rather than treating them separately.

Jam-e-Jam: Enriched uranium and deterrence

Jam-e-Jam devoted its analysis to Iran's insistence that its enriched uranium stockpile remain inside the country. The newspaper noted that Iranian officials have repeatedly emphasized that no enriched uranium will be transferred abroad. It argued that the issue is directly connected to national security because the existence of enriched uranium contributes to Iran's deterrence capability and strengthens its strategic position. According to the analysis, the US seeks to limit the growth of Iran's deterrent capacity through restrictions on nuclear activities. The paper maintained that removing enriched uranium from the country would weaken Iran's leverage and potentially expose it to greater external pressure. It therefore described the material as an important element of defensive strategy. Jam-e-Jam further argued that preserving these resources provides future options for policymakers and protects national interests. For that reason, the newspaper concluded that maintaining enriched uranium within Iran remains a central strategic principle that should not be compromised in any future negotiations.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Public unity as a response to pressure

Arman-e-Emrooz commented on remarks attributed to US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent concerning Iran's economic and energy challenges. According to the paper, references to a difficult winter for Iranians were intended to increase public dissatisfaction and exploit existing economic concerns. The newspaper argued that US policymakers believe pressures related to electricity and gas supplies could be used to encourage social unrest and increase leverage against Tehran. In response, Arman-e-Emrooz stressed the importance of national solidarity and public cooperation. The paper argued that unity among citizens can serve as a powerful political response to outside pressure by demonstrating resilience despite economic difficulties. Drawing on recent periods of conflict and crisis, it maintained that Iranian society has repeatedly shown an ability to remain cohesive when confronted with external challenges. The article concluded that public solidarity not only reduces the effectiveness of pressure campaigns but also strengthens the country's ability to navigate difficult circumstances. For this reason, the newspaper described social cohesion as one of Iran's most important assets in responding to foreign pressure and preserving national stability.

Iran remains in a state of war, Pezeshkian says

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian has said Iran remains in a state of war, urging government officials to maintain the highest level of preparedness, provide full support to the Armed Forces, and ensure the uninterrupted supply of essential goods.

Addressing a cabinet meeting on Sunday evening, Pezeshkian said Iran's adversaries were working around the clock to exploit every available means to create difficulties, impose restrictions, and undermine the country's stability.

"We are in a state of war, and the enemy is using all its capabilities to create problems for the country," he told ministers and senior officials.

The president stressed that standing firm under such circumstances required resilience and a willingness to endure certain hardships, adding that the government must likewise operate around the clock and mobilize all its resources to meet the challenges.



He called on the administration to provide comprehensive support to the Armed Forces while pursuing practical measures to safeguard people's livelihoods and ensure the availability of essential goods and supplies.

Pezeshkian also emphasized the need for transparent and effective communication with the public, saying government officials had a responsibility to explain the realities of managing the country under wartime conditions.

Iran rejects allegations of plot to assassinate US officials, cites Israeli disinformation campaign

From page 1 "From the so-called 'refrigerator cases' in France to allegations that Iran is plotting to assassinate US officials, we are witnessing what appears to be a coordinated malign narrative campaign orchestrated by Israel's disinformation machine," Baqaei wrote.

He said the campaign sought to depict Iran not merely as a threat to Western governments but as an enemy of ordinary people and their everyday lives.

Baqaei argued that the underlying objective was to exploit public concerns about security and manufacture fear at a time when American and European public opinion was increasingly reluctant to support their leaders' war policies.

"When American and European public opinion refuses to support their leaders' warmongering, fear must be manufactured to push the public into backing an escalation of the war and to legitimize their leaders' reckless political and military actions under the pretext of protecting public safety," he said.

He added that portraying US officials themselves as potential targets of assassination was also intended to make the conflict personal for them and reinforce the narrative being promoted to justify further military action.



The Iranian spokesman contrasted these allegations with the 'established record of US and Israeli actions during their war of aggression against Iran,' accusing the two countries of resorting to state terrorism through the assassination of officials and attacks on civilians.

"In their war of aggression against Iran, the United States and Israel have carried out state terrorism in its most blatant form – assassinating officials and targeting ordinary civilians," he said.

Iran, by contrast, had responded and continued to respond through resistance and 'legitimate self-defense,' without resorting to terrorist violence or seeking to disrupt the lives of ordinary people, he added.

He stressed that ordinary Americans and Europeans were not Iran's adversaries, but were themselves suffering the consequences of the 'disastrous decisions of their political leaders.'

Baqaei also criticized the conduct of US officials during the conflict, referring to their retreat into military bunkers after days of declaring victory.

He described the move as a transparent attempt to elicit public sympathy at a time when Americans were increasingly outraged by 'their leaders' falsehoods' and Washington's effective subordination of its policies to Israel's priorities.

The spokesman further argued that media manipulation and political messaging could not conceal the growing fear and psychological pressure resulting from the conflict.

"No amount of spin or media manipulation will dispel their mounting fear or growing psychological distress," he said.

Concluding his remarks, Baqaei said Iran had no intention of adopting the methods of its adversaries to prevail in the conflict.

"Iran does not need to become a mirror image of its wicked aggressors to defeat them. Nor does it see any reason to play the game of losers," he wrote.

Iran prepared for diplomacy, economic blockade and military confrontation: deputy FM

From page 1 He pointed to the 12-day war, which erupted while negotiations were underway, followed by the 40-day war, which also coincided with diplomatic talks. He also cited the Islamabad negotiations and the resulting memorandum of understanding, which, he said, remained in effect for no more than two weeks.

Gharibabadi stressed that Iran's fundamental requirements must be fully addressed in any potential agreement with Washington.

These include a permanent end to the war on all fronts, the lifting of the US-imposed economic blockade, the resolution of the issue of Iran's frozen assets, and the removal of certain sanctions, particularly those targeting the oil sector.

He said that after abandoning its commitments and effectively nullifying the Islamabad understanding, Washington had imposed additional sanctions. Their status must also be resolved, he added, emphasizing that the United States cannot retain them as leverage and then expect Iran to enter further negotiations simply to have them lifted.

Addressing the recent expansion of the US military presence in the region, Gharibabadi said the additional forces and military equipment deployed after the previous understanding were among the outstanding issues that Washington must address through concrete action.

Differences still stand in the way of negotiations

Gharibabadi said significant differences remained between Tehran and Washington over these issues, preventing the two sides from moving toward negotiations and finalizing the text of an agreement.

He explained that Washington had proposed implementing some measures within the two-day or original seven-day timeframe while seeking to defer others to a later stage.

"From our perspective, these proposals are not workable. If even one of the issues is left unaddressed at this stage, no understanding can fundamentally be achieved. And even if one were reached, it would not be sustainable," he said.

Iran remains in a state of war

The deputy foreign minister said Iran was currently facing two possible paths: pursuing diplomacy or continuing to confront military threats and the conditions of war.

While some describe the current situation as "neither war nor peace," Gharibabadi



said his personal assessment, from a legal standpoint, was that Iran remained in a state of war.

Gharibabadi also dismissed recent statements by US President Donald Trump and other American officials suggesting that Washington was no longer seeking an agreement with Iran and continued to regard economic sanctions as an effective instrument of pressure.

He said such positions represented nothing more than a continuation of policies that had repeatedly failed, despite changes in their presentation.

"There is nothing new about this. Only the names change; in reality, these are the same failed policies," he said.

Third oil tanker explodes in Hormuz as IRGC warns of US-devised route

TEHRAN – The Iranian Navy has announced that another oil tanker violating maritime regulations exploded after striking naval mines in a prohibited area east of the Strait of Hormuz.

On Monday, the Navy issued a statement regarding an oil tanker that violated regulations by sailing along an unauthorized route east of the Strait of Hormuz with its navigation systems turned off.

The statement added that this was the third rogue oil tanker to catch fire and be disabled after striking a naval mine east of the Strait of Hormuz in the past 24 hours.

It stressed that, despite the US president's false claims, the Strait of Hormuz remains closed and will stay closed for as long as the Islamic Republic of Iran deems necessary, adding that all vessels are required to use authorized routes and comply with regulations announced by Iran's Armed Forces.

Shipping companies and tanker owners were also warned once again to refrain from sailing along unauthorized routes or switching off their navigation systems, the statement noted.

Before the latest tanker explosion, the IRGC had already put the number of tankers destroyed in the incidents at six.

According to the statement, the vessels were attempting to navigate a southern passage established by the United States, allegedly under the direct guidance of US military officers and with the support of American military aircraft. The IRGC said the tankers were violating Iran's regulations governing maritime passage through the strait.

The IRGC Navy also warned that the explosions had caused extensive pollution, spreading across the coastline and waters of the Strait of Hormuz.

Describing the incidents as punitive measures in response to the US-imposed blockade and violations of Iran's maritime regulations, the IRGC warned that it would take decisive action against vessels disregarding its directives.

It specifically cautioned oil companies, shipping operators and tanker owners against using an 'illegal and dangerous southern route' established by the United States, saying the passage had been heavily mined and was surrounded by 'walls of fire.'

"Trusting the lies of American military officials and cooperating with them will make you prey to the flames," the IRGC warned.

Monday's developments followed explosions involving two oil tankers reported by the IRGC Navy on Sunday. According to its statement, the vessels struck naval mines in the southern part of the strait after allegedly switching off their identification and positioning systems to pass covertly through unauthorized waters.

IRGC reports interception of seven US drones

Separately, the IRGC announced on Monday that its air defense systems had brought down seven US MQM-170C unmanned aerial vehicles, with the aircraft reportedly captured largely intact through electronic warfare operations.

IRGC Spokesperson Brigadier General Hossein Mohebbi disclosed the figure during a press conference marking the IRGC Aerospace Force Week, identifying the MQM-170C as a new type of American drone intercepted by Iranian forces.

The aircraft, manufactured by US-based Griffon Aerospace and known as the Outlaw G2, is a relatively small reconnaissance and target-drone platform. Although less sophisticated than the MQ-9 Reaper and MQ-1C Gray Eagle, it can play a supporting role in US surveillance and military operations over the waters south of Iran.

According to information released about the interceptions, Iranian forces have primarily employed electronic warfare capabilities to take control of the drones rather than destroy them with air defense missiles.

Military assessments suggest that one possible mission of the MQM-170C is to provoke Iranian air defense systems into revealing their positions, allowing more advanced US reconnaissance platforms operating at a distance to identify potential targets. The aircraft may also be used for surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

The reported capture of the drones largely intact would allow Iranian forces to counter such operations without expending costly interceptor missiles or necessarily revealing the locations of their air defense systems.

Taken together, the tanker incidents and the reported interception of American drones point to heightened military and maritime tensions around the Strait of Hormuz, where control of shipping routes, maritime security and the presence of foreign military forces have become central elements of the confrontation.

ECO backs iran plan to end imposed war

Islamabad declaration endorses Tehran's two-day initiative, urges diplomacy



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who visited Islamabad to attend the ECO conference, met with Pakistan's top general Asim Munir.

From Page 1 ▶

Tehran's two-day plan: seven conditions for lasting peace

Iran has recently conveyed through mediators its so-called two-day plan as part of what officials describe as Tehran's responsible approach to using diplomacy to end the imposed war.

The plan, according to Iranian officials, contains Tehran's seven demands and conditions together with practical and operational solutions to establish peace and stability in the region. While details have not been made public, Iranian sources say the roadmap could pave the way for reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and resumption of negotiations.

Tehran has made clear that Washington must meet the seven conditions before Iran agrees to return to diplomatic negotiations. Iranian officials argue that talks cannot resume under military threat, economic blockade and continued acts of aggression.

The ECO ministers' endorsement is seen in Tehran as an important regional signal that Iran's diplomatic track enjoys broad neighborhood support, in contrast to US-Israeli military pressure.

Araghchi: Hormuz insecurity rooted in US-Israeli aggression

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, addressing the ministerial session, began by thanking Pakistan's Foreign Ministry and the ECO Secretariat for organizing the meeting. He thanked Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar for his leadership of ECO and warm hospitality, and ECOSecretary General Asad Majid Khan and his colleagues.

He also thanked all countries that condemned acts of aggression against Iran's territorial integrity and people, and expressed condolences and solidarity over the martyrdom of Iran's Leader and a number of other Iranians in the aggression.

Araghchi said Iran has always adhered to international law, the UN Charter and peaceful settlement of disputes, including through diplomacy, and maintained its commitment to diplomatic engagement over the past two years. The United States, he said, chose a totally different path marked by aggression, threats, targeted assassinations, economic pressure and blockade, in clear violation of international law.

The aggression, he said, led to the martyrdom of senior political and military officials and the brutal killing of more than 5,000 Iranian citizens, including 168 students and teachers in a school in Minab.

Insecurity in the Persian Gulf and developments around the Strait of Hormuz, Araghchi stressed, are the direct result of joint hostile policies and aggressive actions by the United States and the Israeli regime against Iran, a fact that he said cannot be distorted.

Iran, he added, has always sought friendly and constructive relations with neighbors and has no inherent dispute with regional states. He laid out a clear principle: the territory, airspace and facilities of regional countries must not become a platform for attacks against one another. Iran's legitimate defensive measures, he said, target only military objectives and bases of the aggressors and should in no way be interpreted as action against neighboring peoples or governments.

He called for urgent formation of a genuine, inclusive and region-owned dialogue on security arrangements, based on non-aggression and preventing any third country from using one state's territory or facilities for aggression against another.

He said continued sanctions aimed at intensifying economic pressure and depriving Iranians of basic rights have only strengthened their resolve to defend legitimate rights and resist excessive and unlawful demands, and thanked ECO members for solidarity in difficult times.

Trade, transport and energy as strategic pillars

Despite the dominance of security issues, much of the Islamabad session focused on ECO's economic agenda.

Araghchi said that amid continuous transformation of the international system and global economic dynamics, ECO is moving beyond its traditional role toward becoming an effective platform for collective action, enabling members to address emerging challenges and contribute to a more inclusive and just global economic order.

In current global and regional conditions, he said, trade, transport and energy must constitute the three strategic pillars of ECO cooperation. Strengthening connectivity, facilitating intra-regional trade and enhancing energy cooperation will increase collective resilience, reduce vulnerability to external factors and help build a more integrated and self-reliant region.

Iran, he said, welcomes the formation of a technical negotiating committee to revise the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA). He urged current parties to actively pursue renegotiation while encouraging other members to join, with the aim of crafting a modern, next-generation, more inclusive, effective and operational trade agreement that expands regional trade and supports economies for the benefit of all peoples of the region.

With US-Israeli aggression increasingly affecting regional energy security, Araghchi said strengthening energy cooperation has become an urgent and strategic necessity. The region, he argued, needs not only an independent security framework but also a reliable and sustainable regional energy mechanism to protect energy flows, ensure stable supply, reduce vulnerability to external factors and boost resilience against geopolitical shocks.

He also pointed to ECO Vision for the next decade, prepared after extensive meetings and consultations. Drawing lessons from the previous vision, the document emphasizes result-oriented approaches, practical implementation and measurable achievements. Its implementation, he said, should be based on guidelines to be provided by leaders at the 18th ECO Summit in Tehran on December 4, 2026, for which he invited all dignitaries.

Gaza, mediation push and road to Tehran summit

On Palestine, Araghchi said the situation in occupied Palestine must remain high on the collective agenda and not be forgotten, calling it a source of shame for humanity and one of the gravest moral and human crises of the present era amid what he called deeply regrettable international inaction.

Over the past three years, he said, Gaza has witnessed full-scale genocide, including war crimes, continued occupation, attempts to change demographic composition, use of prohibited weapons, widespread destruction, forced displacement and blocking of essential humanitarian aid by the Israeli regime. He also warned of escalating expansionist policies in the West Bank and occupied Al-Quds, including illegal settlement expansion, daily terrorist attacks by extremist settlers, systematic displacement, and the dire situation of nearly 10,000 Palestinian prisoners reportedly subjected to severe physical and psychological torture.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held talks with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar on the sidelines of ECO meeting in Islamabad.

Today, especially in harsh winter conditions, he said, Gaza urgently needs effective action to force Israel to lift the blockade and ensure unhindered entry of international aid, particularly food, medicine, temporary shelter and reconstruction material for more than 1.5 million displaced and homeless Palestinians. He said the international community faces a major test of adherence to humanitarian principles in Gaza and the West Bank, calling for practical action, collective responsibility and an end to silence.

Speaking after the meeting, Araghchi said the summit paid special attention to Gaza, where he said a silent genocide is underway with food, clean water and medicine blocked and heavy rains and floods worsening suffering. He said ECO members reacted positively to Iran's two-day plan and expressed hope it would lead to a permanent and complete end to the current war. ECO Vision, energy and renewables, science and technology and regional security were also discussed, he said.

In an interview with Pakistani television, Araghchi said: "We trust Pakistan as a good friend... Pakistan is doing its job. The issue is very complex and difficult."

On the sidelines, Araghchi held bilateral talks with Ishaq Dar and joined other ministers in a group meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who stressed regional economic, trade and transit cooperation. The ministers thanked Pakistan for successful hosting of the 30th Council meeting and stressed multilateral cooperation and integration. Araghchi underlined regional cooperation in economy, trade, transport and transit as requirements for sustainable development and expressed Iran's readiness to assist.

On Monday evening, he also met and held talks with Field Marshal Asim Munir, Pakistan's Chief of Defense Forces.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed regional and international developments and discussed the expansion of bilateral relations in areas of mutual interest.

Furthermore, they exchanged views on existing challenges and threats to regional peace and security, as well as ways to strengthen cooperation to safeguard peace and stability.

Araghchi leaves Pakistan for Oman for further consultations.

After the strikes, Iran rethinks the nuclear threshold

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – More than eight months have passed since Trump and Netanyahu launched their war on Iran, a war Trump thought would be over within days. Where does it stand today?

The United States has failed to achieve any of its stated objectives. All of its military bases in the Persian Gulf have been destroyed or critically damaged. The Strait of Hormuz remains under Iranian control. Although the United States has managed to open a maritime route to the south, this solution is not sustainable, not even in the medium term. Iran has endured 40 days of intensive attacks, but the state has survived. And, above all, Iran's nuclear program, the main stated justification for the war, remains, for now, outside the scope of negotiations.

The war also brought the assassination of the Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who had long opposed the development of nuclear weapons. During his tenure, the debate was practically closed to public discussion because of a fatwa, an Islamic legal opinion, issued in 2003 that categorically prohibited the production and use of nuclear and biological weapons. The legal and political weight of this fatwa was such that, in 2021, the then Intelligence Minister, Mahmoud Alavi, drew harsh criticism from Islamic jurists after suggesting that, if cornered, Iran should consider possessing nuclear weapons to defend itself.

His assassination, and the subsequent rise of Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei to the supreme leadership, may bring a change in the Islamic Republic's strategic calculations. This does not mean the decision rests in the hands of a single individual. What it means is that Iran has gone through a direct war with the United States and Israel, and that this experience has changed the country's calculus as a whole, not only that of the Wali.

For years, Washington and Tel Aviv relied on the threat of military intervention to try to deter Iran from crossing the nuclear threshold. While that threat remained hypothetical, Tehran had, at the very least, to contemplate the possibility that moving toward the manufacture of nuclear weapons could provoke an overwhelming military response. Once the United States moved from threat to action, the calculation changed.



In the wake of recent events, the debate over the nuclear program has gained new momentum. In this context, a growing number of Iranian political figures argue that a change in nuclear doctrine could strengthen the country's deterrence.

For years, those inside Iran who opposed building nuclear weapons could argue that crossing the threshold would bring a devastating attack from the United States or Israel. But that attack has now happened, even though Iran has no nuclear weapons. Hence the argument that restraint protects Iran from war is now much harder to sustain, and, for those who favor change, only effective deterrence would have prevented the attack.

Thus, over the past few weeks, several Iranian political figures, of greater or lesser standing, have made statements about a possible revision. Mohsen Rezaei, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said in an interview that, although no decision has been taken, the possibility of a change is being debated. Another example is Mohammad Javad Haj Ali Akbari, Friday prayer leader in Tehran, who described a review of the doctrine as a national demand.

This does not mean Tehran has decided to cross the nuclear threshold. But it does mean that the strategic case for doing so may now be stronger than at any previous moment. The increasingly open public statements of Iranian officials and figures reinforce this assessment.

On another front, Iran complains that both the international treaties, specifically the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed in 1968, and the competent body in the field, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), have failed to keep their side of the bargain: they have neither guaranteed protection against attacks by nuclear powers such as the United States and Israel, nor safeguarded Iran's nuclear facilities.

In various sectors of Iran's political and analytical circles, the IAEA is commonly seen as operating within a broader structure of alliances led by the United States; it is regarded as neither reliable nor strictly technical, but as a political instrument.

This distrust, combined with the war, makes a comprehensive nuclear agreement far harder and costlier to reach. Before the war, negotiations could focus mainly on enrichment, the lifting of sanctions, inspections, and verification mechanisms. Today, any serious agreement must also address the consequences of the war itself.

Iran is unlikely to accept significant concessions on nuclear matters without effective guarantees against new military attacks, access to its frozen funds, the ability to export oil, and an acceptable arrangement on the Strait of Hormuz.

The irony is that a war whose pretext was Iran's nuclear program may end up contributing to a change in its doctrine.

US will never abandon its hostility toward Iran: MP

TEHRAN – The United States will not abandon its hostility toward the Iranian nation, an Iranian lawmaker has said, stressing that the country's security and independence must not be made contingent on negotiations with Washington.

Mojtaba Yousefi, a member of the Iranian Parliament, said the deterrent against war and foreign aggression was Iran's military strength and national resilience, not diplomacy alone.

Talking to Mehr News Agency, Yousefi referred to the Leader's recent remarks that those who still believe concessions to the United States could persuade it to change its hostile conduct are seriously mistaken.

He said developments over the past year had demonstrated that Washington was unwilling to abandon its hostile approach, having launched attacks against Iran on two occasions while diplomatic negotiations were underway.

According to the lawmaker, the attacks exposed the real purpose behind Washington's diplomatic engagement was not to resolve disputes or improve the lives of Iranians, but to gather intelligence and prepare the ground for military operations.

Yousefi argued that Iran's historical and civilizational depth, combined with its resilience over the past 47 years, made it impossible for the United States to bring the Iranian nation to its knees through pressure and threats.

Referring to claims made by some countries over Iranian islands, he questioned whether Iran should surrender any part of its territory merely to maintain good relations with other states.

Yousefi said historical experience had shown that yielding to foreign demands in the hope of securing security or ending hostility was a fundamental mistake. Such an approach, he warned, could ultimately undermine the country and pave the way for its fragmentation.

"Negotiations alone are not what keep the threat of war away from our country. It is steadfastness and resistance that do so," he said, adding that Iran's defense capabilities and the resolve of its people remained the principal guarantees of national security.

Food security assured for next six months, deputy minister says

TEHRAN – Iran has enough stocks of essential goods to meet domestic demand for the next six months, even if all of the country's borders were to close, a deputy agriculture minister said, describing current reserves as the strongest in two decades.

Mohammadreza Talaei, deputy minister for trade development at the Agriculture Ministry, said the country's stocks of essential goods were at an "ideal" level, with around 5.5 million tons of commodities currently held at ports.

Speaking at a ceremony marking the departure of the former head and the appointment of an acting head of Jahad Esteghlal Institute, Talaei said the successful management of imports of four million tons of goods without major disruption demonstrated the organization's operational capacity, particularly compared with supply crises between 2015 and 2017 involving commodities such as wheat.

He said Jahad Esteghlal had also successfully countered market manipulation and prevented dumping, in which goods are sold below their production cost. When corn prices fluctuated between 50,000 and 700,000 rials per kilogram, for example, careful management of imports and timely market supply helped keep prices around 580,000 rials, he added.

Talaei also praised Parviz Jafari's management of the Government Livestock Affairs Support Company, saying effective management of the supply of protein products had helped keep market prices balanced despite inflationary pressures.

He said the country's current reserves were unprecedented in the past 20 years and would ensure food security and the supply of essential goods for six months, even in the unlikely event of all borders being closed.

Livestock support company clears debts to importers

Parviz Jafari, the company's former head, presented a report on his 15 months in office, saying he had transformed its heavy liabilities and depleted reserves into quality stocks while clearing its debts.

When the 14th administration took office, the company had no soybean meal reserves, only 120,000 tons of corn and 30,000 tons of soybeans, and foreign-currency debts exceeding 60 trillion tomans, he said.

Today, the company's outstanding foreign-currency obligations have fallen to less than one percent, while it holds high-quality reserves and owes no money to importers, Jafari added.

Masoud Namazi, the former head of Jahad Esteghlal Institute, said the institution's profit had climbed to 18 trillion rials ($36 million) last year from 900 billion rials.



He forecast a profit of more than 60 trillion rials ($120 million) over the next 10 months.

Namazi added that all outstanding international obligations had been settled over the past two years and that all legacy cases had been resolved.

Seyed Saeed Rad, head of the Government Trading Corporation of Iran, said managing trade and supply chains during wartime and economic crises had been particularly challenging.

He described managing the poultry production chain and importing 4 million tons of goods over the past two and a half years as strategic achievements, saying the scale of the operations showed that state trading involved far more than routine commercial activity.

Importing four million tons of goods was equivalent to managing a fleet of 70 ships, each with a capacity of 70,000 tons, Rad said. The operation involved substantial additional costs, including inspections at origin and destination, food and drug standards, quarantine, veterinary procedures, flag fees and customs duties, alongside the complexities of foreign-currency allocation and banking procedures.

He praised the Livestock Affairs Support Company for supplying essential commodities such as corn, barley and meat, saying its management of poultry production had helped prevent a major disruption in the production chain.

Akbar Fathi, the Agriculture Ministry's deputy for planning and economic affairs, said the ministry had faced one of the most difficult periods in the country's economic history over the past two years, amid intensified sanctions, two wars and the implementation of economic reforms, including the removal of preferential exchange rates.

He said the Livestock Affairs Support Company had played a key role by managing strategic reserves and building stocks beyond expected levels, thereby countering claims of shortages. The company had also successfully implemented a contract-based poultry production program during the difficult period of exchange-rate liberalization.

Cement production rises 7%, exports to Afghanistan increase

TEHRAN – Iran's cement production rose seven percent in the first seven months of the current Iranian year (late March to late September), reaching 40.4 million tons, while exports to Afghanistan and through northern routes increased by about 15 percent, partly offsetting a sharp decline in shipments from southern border crossings, the secretary of the Cement Industry Association said.

Ali-Akbar Alvandian told ISNA that cement production increased by 2.6 million tons from 37.9 million tons in the same period last year, driven by stronger domestic demand.

Clinker production, however, fell 11 percent to 38.9 million tons from 43.8 million tons a year earlier, a decline of 4.8 million tons, he said.

Alvandian said exports through the country's southern borders had dropped 67 percent year on year, with shipments through southern outlets and to Iraq seriously disrupted by economic conditions, a reduction in import permits issued by Iraq and restrictions affecting southern border crossings.

Exports to markets such as Afghanistan and through northern routes rose by around 15 percent compared with the same period last year, partly compensating for the decline in clinker exports. Overall exports nevertheless fell 29 percent year on year, he said.

Alvandian said improved coordination over electricity quotas and consumption had given producers greater scope to increase output. Production conditions improved in November, allowing factories to prepare for the coming months.

Regarding planned gas restrictions in December and the final quarter of the year, he said a timetable and relevant instructions had been issued, and gas consumption by cement producers had been reduced to almost zero since the previous week.

Gas remains available only to white cement producers, which account for a small share of the industry's output, while the rest of the sector will rely on mazut fuel oil, he added.

The association is consulting with the Oil, Energy and Industry, Mining and Trade ministries to coordinate measures and prevent disruptions to production, Alvandian said. The aim is to limit the damage and restrictions imposed during the cold season compared with the challenges faced last summer and ensure sufficient cement supplies for domestic demand.

Free zones meet annual foreign investment target in 7 months

TEHRAN – Iran's free trade and special economic zones met their annual target for attracting foreign investment during the first seven months of the current Iranian year (March 20-September 21), an official at the Secretariat of the High Council of Free Trade and Special Economic Zones said.

Seyed Gholamhossein Mousavi, acting director of investment development and business environment at the secretariat, made the announcement at a meeting with investment managers from 18 free zone organizations, stressing the need for stronger planning and more ambitious targets to attract both domestic and foreign investment.

He said sound economic governance in free zones required a comprehensive roadmap for investment and development, along with its effective implementation.



Mousavi pointed to the legal advantages available to free zones, including those provided under Article 65 of the Permanent Provisions of Development Plans Law, saying these provisions gave the zones more favorable conditions for business activity and investment than areas outside the zones.

He also said 15 priority projects were being finalized. Once completed and revised, the projects will be uploaded to the comprehensive investment information system of the Economy Ministry, managed by the Organization for Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran, making them accessible to domestic and foreign investors.

Mousavi expressed hope that more effective planning and better use of the free zones' legal and economic advantages would accelerate investment inflows in the coming years and strengthen their contribution to the national economy.

Bank asset monetization fund to be unveiled next week, minister says

TEHRAN – Iran will unveil a fund next week to help banks monetize their real estate assets and use them to raise financing, Economy Minister Seyed Ali Madanizadeh said.

Under the proposed mechanism, banks will be able to transfer their properties to a fund established by the Economy Ministry in exchange for investment units, which they can then sell on the market or use as financing instruments and collateral, Madanizadeh said during a meeting with members of parliament's Civil Affairs Committee.

The fund will help turn idle assets into usable financial resources by making investment units available for trading, creating additional capacity for financing, he added.

Madanizadeh also said procedures for monetizing government and public-sector assets had been accelerated in recent months, with improvements in the review and approval of cases allowing government agencies to make greater use of the mechanism.

**Housing law needs revision to diversify financing options

The economy minister also called for changes to the law on boosting housing production, saying its current framework and financing mechanisms had failed to deliver the expected results in helping people become homeowners.

He said legal reforms and new financing instruments were needed to make more effective use of the banking network and capital market in funding the housing sector.

Madanizadeh said banks must operate within legal requirements while safeguarding the rights of depositors and shareholders. He pointed to improved banking performance in housing finance over the past two years, saying figures showed that banks were increasingly taking on a role in financing the sector.

He expressed hope that the banking system would be able to do more to help people buy homes and support housing finance.

Unlike many other countries, where a significant share of banks' portfolios and balance sheets is allocated to housing loans or housing finance securities, Iran's banking system has limited banks' involvement in the sector, leaving much of the responsibility to Bank Maskan, he said.

Diversifying housing finance would require restructuring banks' financial operations and cleaning up their balance sheets to create greater capacity for allocating resources to national priorities, as well as making wider use of different financing instruments, including those available through the capital market, Madanizadeh said.

He said the proposal to amend the housing production law had been raised last year but its follow-up was delayed by developments and constraints arising from the war.

The Economy Ministry, Central Bank and banking network agreed that the law's existing framework and mechanisms, despite their stated objectives, did not necessarily lead to the intended outcome of increasing homeownership, he said.

Madanizadeh said the ministry was working with the Central Bank and the Transport and Urban Development Ministry to prepare a bill revising the law. He urged members of the relevant working group to pursue the proposal so the necessary amendments could be submitted to parliament's Civil Affairs Committee.

Small Iranian industries seek to expand presence in Vietnamese market

TEHRAN – Iranian small industries are seeking to strengthen their presence in Vietnam through a trade mission involving food industry representatives, with plans to showcase domestic production capabilities and expand commercial ties with the Southeast Asian market, the head of West Azerbaijan Industrial Estates Company said.

Hadi Barzegar said coordinated planning and support for industrial units would help introduce Iran's production potential and facilitate cooperation with Vietnamese businesses.

He said West Azerbaijan Province had been designated to coordinate the mission, with support from the provincial Industrial Estates Company to help companies participate and reduce the costs of entering new markets.

The 17-member delegation was sent to Vietnam after two months of planning and coordination and with authorization from Iran's Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization, Barzegar said.

The group comprised food industry representatives from industrial parks and zones in West Azarbaijan, East Azarbaijan, Ardabil, Sistan-Baluchestan, Tehran and Isfahan provinces.

Barzegar said companies from 18 provinces had initially been expected to take part, but some withdrew because of wartime conditions.

The delegation's agenda included meetings with Iran's ambassador and economic counsellor in Vietnam, talks with the Hanoi Chamber of Commerce and discussions with specialist private-sector associations in the country's food industry.

The group also visited two Vietnamese food production facilities to learn about their manufacturing capabilities, explore potential areas of cooperation and gain a better understanding of the local market, he said.

Government bodies should support private investment: TCCIMA

TEHRAN – Government and public-sector institutions should act as supporters of private investment rather than compete with private businesses, the head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) said on Monday, calling for reforms to improve the business environment and encourage economic growth.

Mahmoud Najafi Arab said China's economic experience showed how government institutions could direct resources and activities toward encouraging private-sector investment and development.

In China, the public sector and governance structures serve the development of private businesses, whereas in Iran government agencies and some public institutions sometimes become competitors of the private sector, he said at a ceremony honoring outstanding standards-compliant companies.

Such conditions make economic activity difficult, Najafi Arab said, urging the government to adopt measures to improve the business environment and facilitate the work of businesses.

He said manufacturers and business owners were facing numerous challenges, including limited access to financing and investment capital, difficulties securing raw materials and other production constraints that threatened the continued operation of enterprises.

Maintaining production, preserving jobs and meeting quality standards under such circumstances required greater effort, sound management and responsibility, he said. Companies recognized for their commitment to standards had demonstrated that quality could be maintained even amid constraints through technical expertise, effective management and skilled human resources.

Purchasing managers' index shows modest improvement in October

TEHRAN – Iran's overall Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) improved modestly in the seventh Iranian calendar month of Mehr (September 22- October 21) from the previous month but remained below the threshold of 50, indicating continued contraction in economic activity, according to a report released alongside the manufacturing sector's PMI.

The seasonally adjusted PMI for the overall economy stood at 46.6 in the mentioned month, while the manufacturing sector index registered 45.7, based on the results of a field survey.

The PMI provides an overview of current economic and business conditions, as well as insights into demand trends, production, inventories of raw materials and finished goods, and business expectations.

The findings point to three major challenges facing businesses: weak demand and sales, supply chain constraints and increasing complexity in economic activity.

The report said short-term support measures should focus on addressing bottlenecks in raw material supplies, easing foreign currency allocation and imports, strengthening working capital and making economic and trade regulations more predictable.

It also highlighted the need to stimulate effective demand and reduce price uncertainty.

Monitoring new orders, production, sales, raw material inventories, prices and business expectations simultaneously could help identify risks to business activity at an early stage, the report said. Examining links between forward-looking demand and supply indicators and changes in production and sales could also provide a better basis for assessing the effectiveness of support policies and identifying vulnerable areas of the economy.

Businesses expect the government to address supply-side obstacles by facilitating raw material procurement and timely foreign currency allocation, resolving transport and import disruptions, strengthening working capital and ensuring a stable energy supply.

Iran hit 31 US sites in eight countries while troops were left exposed, 60 Minutes finds

Troops had to Google for hospital, and a soldier's husband says US command 'killed my wife'

From page 1 ▶ Before the war, the Pentagon pulled about 90 percent of its ground forces out of Kuwait, fearing retaliation. About 70 members of the Army Reserve's 103rd Sustainment Command, a logistics unit, were sent the other way, to a small outpost within reach of short-range Iranian drones.

Stephen Ramsbottom, the unit's deputy chief of operations, says some called it a "trailer park." Its defenses were built for car bombs. "There was nothing there designed to protect from an aerial attack."

Six soldiers told 60 Minutes they had seen U.S. intelligence that supposedly put Port Shuaiba on an Iranian target list.

US military command 'killed my wife'

"There was definitely an X where we were," Ramsbottom said. He says he warned John Hinson, the Central Command logistics chief, and was told, "We don't have to worry about protection."

A counter-drone system mentioned the week before never showed up. The Washington Post has reported that the 103rd's own assessments had judged the site unsuitable.

The 60 Minutes report claims that on February 28, the first day of the war, five Iranian quadcopters circled the site. After an all-clear around 9 a.m. the next day, soldiers went back to work. 30 minutes later, a drone hit their



quadruple-wide trailer.

Ramsbottom's whistleblower complaint, filed Friday with the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, says the post had no physician, no fixed aid station, and one ambulance.

Civilian medic Tanner Carson kept the only supplies in his truck. When Master Sgt. Nicole Amor asked about a mass casualty plan, he told her what he told everyone, that he could keep "two of you alive at most."

After the strike, soldiers Googled for a hospital. "They killed my wife," her husband, Joey Amor, said of the command.

Hundreds of structures hit

The report says that Port Shuaiba took the deadliest hit, but it was far from the only one. 60 Minutes found hundreds of buildings damaged across the Persian Gulf, including the destroyed Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain.

The Pentagon's inspector general reported in September hundreds of damaged structures in eight countries, about $184 million in harm to diplomatic sites, and as many as 30 MQ-9 Reapers destroyed.

An Associated Press analysis counted more than 115 strikes on 26 sites through August, with early-warning systems hit first, and regional officials told AP that Washington has moved aircraft and air defenses out of the Persian Gulf. Bases meant to scare Iran have been thinned out.

Trump's blistering reaction

Hours after the segment aired, Trump called CBS's new leadership "even worse than their predecessors," turning on a newsroom reshaped after pro-Israel media heir David Ellison took over the network and installed the ultra-Zionist Bari Weiss as editor-in-chief.

Offering no documentation, Trump claimed in his Truth Social post that Iran had fired 8,000 to 9,000 drones and about 2,000 ballistic missiles since Feb. 28, and insisted that only two drones and one missile had killed Americans.

By his count, "99.99%" were "shot down or, in any event, not caused U.S. deaths."

The sum skips the 865 wounded in the Pentagon's casualty database, the wrecked buildings, and the question the broadcast asked, which is why a known target had no drone defense.

Early in the war, top officers reportedly told lawmakers privately that U.S. defenses could not stop Iranian one-way attack drones.

Billions spent, no accountability

The Pentagon told Congress the war had cost $47.1 billion through Oct. 16, up from the $37.5 billion Hegseth cited in July. About $29 billion is munitions. Base repairs and other costs are not included.

Senate Democrats have demanded answers since April, and a Nov. 15 letter from Sen. Richard Blumenthal seeks a classified briefing and every force protection assessment for the outpost.

The Army finished its inquiry in June. Families briefed this week say it acknowledged no mistakes. "Just own it," said Tina Marzan, whose husband, Chief Warrant Officer Robert Marzan, died there.

Ansarallah's advances in Yemen throw Saudi Arabia into disarray



From page 1 ▶ Ansarallah's advance toward Aden, the seat of the Saudi-backed government, began on Sunday in a surprise military operation that forced Saudi-backed forces to withdraw from areas near the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

The war in Yemen began after Ansarallah, a Zaidi Shia group, captured the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014, forcing the Saudi-backed government to flee south to Aden. In March 2015, Saudi Arabia launched a military campaign with an Arab coalition to restore its favored government, carrying out thousands of airstrikes against Ansarallah forces.

After several relatively peaceful years, fighting erupted again in July when Saudi warplanes bombed Sanaa International Airport to prevent an Ansarallah delegation from landing in the Yemeni capital.

Saudi Arabia's military campaigns against Ansarallah have repeatedly produced the opposite of their intended results, consolidating the group's territorial gains while leaving the kingdom increasingly vulnerable to missile and drone attacks.

Many military experts have likened Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen to the United States' humiliating war in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s. The situation has since become even more precarious for Riyadh, as Ansarallah has expanded its reach toward the heart of Saudi Arabia and tightened its grip on the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden.

Analysts say Ansarallah's growing military superiority has placed Saudi Arabia and its allied government in Yemen in an increasingly perilous position.

On Sunday, Saudi-backed forces announced their withdrawal from Dhubab airport and territories they controlled near the Bab al-Mandab Strait, saying the move was intended to defend Aden.

Retired Lebanese Brigadier General Hassan Jouni, a military and strategic affairs expert, said the fighting is now centered on control of a mountainous triangle of territory in southern Yemen that could determine the outcome of the war.

The area connects Aden to Taiz, another city held by the Saudi-backed government but encircled by Ansarallah.

"This triangle is the strategic center of gravity for the war in Yemen as a whole," Jouni told Al Jazeera.

He warned that Ansarallah's advances could completely sever the Saudi-backed government's coastal supply routes.

An Ansarallah offensive in September resulted in the Saudi-backed government losing control of Yemen's Red Sea coast, including the strategic port city of Mocha. Subsequent advances also left Taiz completely besieged by Ansarallah forces.

Majed al-Nuzaili, spokesperson for the Saudi-backed forces, defended the withdrawal from the Bab al-Mandab region, describing it as part of a broader tactical maneuver.

Jouni, however, offered a much bleaker assessment of the situation facing government forces, saying Ansarallah fighters had reached Tor al-Baha, about 50 miles from Aden.

"The Houthi (Ansarallah) forces have reached this line, meaning that they are indeed in the defensive line area of the city of Aden. We do not say they have approached Aden, but the defense of the city of Aden begins in this area," he told Al Jazeera.

"The basic combat direction now is in the vicinity of the besieged city of Taiz. On the other hand, of course, the Houthis will focus their attention now on approaching Aden and controlling the first defensive zone."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

October 7 and the awakening of global conscience

From page 1 ▶ In fact, some Western public figures faced censorship or other punitive measures for their anti-Zionist stance, usually under the guise of combating antisemitism. Despite having no antisemitic intent, they ultimately suffered painful personal consequences, raising profound questions about freedom of expression.

But following Operation Al-Aqsa Flood and the devastating genocidal war on Gaza, a political earthquake shook the global conscience. This time, cracks appeared in the dominant Western narrative.

Today, unconditional solidarity with the Zionist regime no longer guarantees political popularity or electoral success.

On the contrary, it has sometimes become a heavy electoral liability. Trump, seeking to win American voters, has spoken of ending Washington's annual aid to the regime.

Calls to reassess the relationship with Tel Aviv are also gaining ground in American political circles, including discussions surrounding the positions of senior officials.

Meanwhile, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, one of the leading figures of the French left and a presidential contender, goes even further, speaking about deploying the French navy to protect humanitarian aid convoys heading to Gaza.

Terms like "genocide" and "apartheid" moved from the activist fringe into mainstream political discourse. The UK Green Party won a parliamentary seat in a traditional Labour stronghold by campaigning explicitly on Gaza as a genocide, while French leftist parties demanding sanctions saw electoral gains.

In Berlin, the Palestinian flag flew, even if only for an hour, outside the Reichstag (the German parliament), in place of the German unity flag.

At Western universities, young people are breaking through the wall of silence. In the streets of London and Paris, chants demanding justice are growing louder. And in international human rights forums, questions about responsibility for the genocide and the suffering of civilians are becoming increasingly urgent.

A structural shift is occurring where younger Westerners are more moved by real-time images of Gaza than by Holocaust memory as a moral guide. This "image discipline" is replacing the post-war "memory discipline," weakening the automatic deference to Zionist narratives that defined previous generations.

In another equally telling development, more than a million European citizens have signed a petition calling for the full suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, amid growing public demands for an end to arms supplies to the Israeli regime.

The number of verified signatures has exceeded 1.1 million, bringing the initiative before the European Commission. It is a striking illustration of how public protest is moving beyond the streets and into the institutions.

The repeated Global Sumud Flotilla attempts to break the siege of Gaza, and the viral images of them being attacked by drones, kept the humanitarian crisis in the global spotlight. This grassroots mobilization sustained pressure on governments and created a visual counter-narrative to the Israeli regime's military claims.

More remarkably still, the aftershocks of this earthquake have reached the corridors of justice in The Hague.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Repressive measures against Bahrain's Shia scholars

From page 1 ▶ The proceedings were initially scheduled for November 22 but were abruptly brought forward to November 16, following US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's inflammatory remarks claiming that Shiite clerics in Iran are the cause of problems in the region.

The timing has further raised serious concerns about Washington's political influence and the implicit green light its hostile rhetoric may have provided to repressive Persian Gulf monarchies.

Undoubtedly, the escalation cannot be separated from the wider US-Israeli confrontation with Iran and the resistance bloc.

Washington's repeated hostility toward independent Shiite religious authority has helped create a political climate in which they increasingly portrayed as security threats.

The targeting of Bahrain's Shiite scholars is not an isolated judicial development; it follows years of arrests, arbitrary detention, citizenship revocations, restrictions on religious freedom, and politically motivated prosecutions documented by opposition groups and human rights organizations.

Shiite scholars have historically played a central role in Bahrain's religious, intellectual, educational, and social life; their work extends beyond jurisprudence and theology to include family welfare, education, poverty, economic justice, corruption, social cohesion, and national identity.

Their independent influence has increasingly challenged the ruling establishment's attempts to control public discourse and political consciousness.

The betrayal of the reform promises associated with the 2001 National Action Charter marked a turning point.

Many religious scholars had encouraged participation in the referendum, hoping for constitutional reform, an elected government, independent judicial system, and equal citizenship.

Instead, constitutional arrangements were altered, political power remained concentrated within the ruling establishment, and prominent advocates of reform faced growing surveillance, restrictions, and imprisonment.

The systematic repression has intensified amid Bahrain's normalization relations with Israel and expanding security cooperation with Washington.

Shiite scholars have repeatedly criticized foreign military influence, normalization policies, and efforts to marginalize Bahrain's Islamic and Arab identity.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Bahrain sentences Sheikh Isa Qassim and 63 others to life imprisonment in sham trial

From page 1 ▶ Some defendants were also fined 100,000 dinars, about $265,000, and judges ordered more than 8 million dinars confiscated, money the state says will go to charity.

To justify the crackdown, the regime's prosecutors smeared the scholars as an Iranian-backed "terrorist network," with public security chief Tariq Al Hassan framing the purge as a battle against "an ideology that demands obedience to Iran's leadership above Bahrain's sovereign authority."

Defense lawyers and families argue the Al Khalifa monarchy is recycling tired security pretexts to criminalize Shia religious practice.

20 rights groups, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, warned days before the verdict of torture reports, coerced confessions and closed hearings. When such claims are brushed aside, said Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei of the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, the judiciary becomes "an instrument of persecution."

The arrests began May 9 with night raids on clerics' homes. Human Rights Watch counts at least 37 seized that day and more than 700 people arrested since, children among them.

Hearings opened in July. The verdict, due November 8, slipped to November 22 while families and activists were kept out of court, then was pulled forward to Monday.

The U.S.-Israeli war on Iran shapes every aspect of the crackdown. Home to the U.S. Fifth Fleet and a signatory to the 2020 Abraham Accords normalizing ties with Israel, U.S. military assets in the country has come under Iranian missile and drone strikes, and ruling officials have been shaken by displays of public support for the attacks among large segments of the population.

In an interview with Reuters, a relative of one defendant stated that authorities are directly targeting Shias and "anyone who criticizes the Americans or the Israelis for the war they have launched."

The regime's forces have also restricted Ashura mourning processions and torn down religious banners across Shia neighborhoods.

Manama is repeating a well-worn pattern of state repression. Following the Saudi-backed military crackdown on the 2011 uprising and the forced dissolution of Al-Wefaq, the regime targeted Sheikh Qassim in 2017 on trumped-up illegal fundraising charges, imposing a suspended sentence alongside the same 100,000-dinar penalty.

A leaked 2006 document, the Bandar Report, described a plan to naturalize Sunni foreigners and dilute the Shia majority.

Protests have spread, with at least 25 arrests reported last week. The February 14 Coalition called the sentences an attack on the existence of Shias, and Al-Wefaq declared them null and void. Sheikh Qassim has warned that Shia institutions face an existential threat.

SPORTS

Iran team head to Thailand for 2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup

TEHRAN - Iran's national beach soccer team left Tehran on Sunday night for Thailand for the 2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup.

Team Melli will face Afghanistan in their opening match of the tournament, which also serves as the qualifying tournament for the 2027 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup.

Members of Iran's national beach soccer squad departed for Bangkok to take part in the continental competition.

The 2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup will kick off on Nov. 18 with a match between Japan and Bahrain.

Iran have been drawn in Group B, alongside Vietnam, Afghanistan and Lebanon.

Under the guidance of head coach Ali Naderi, the Iranian team will begin the campaign against Afghanistan before facing Vietnam and Lebanon in their second and third group-stage matches.

Iran's second group match against Vietnam is scheduled for Nov. 21, while their final group-stage encounter against Lebanon will take place on Nov. 23.

If Iran finish top of Group B, they will face the runners-up of Group C in the quarter-finals.

The quarter-final matches are scheduled for Nov. 25, followed by the semifinals on Nov. 27. The final will take place on Nov. 28.

2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Group Draw:

Group A: Thailand, Japan, Bahrain, Iraq

Group B: Iran, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Lebanon

Group C: Oman, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan

Iran will be aiming to make a strong start to the tournament, advance to the knockout stages and secure qualification for the 2027 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup.

Iranian judoka wins gold at SCO Member States Open Cup in Russia

TEHRAN - Iranian judoka Elyas Parhizgar has won a gold medal at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States Open Cup, underway in Russia.

The Iranian athlete won a gold medal in the -81 kg category, defeating a Russian opponent in the semifinals and a Tajik judoka in the final.

Parhizgar's triumph marked Iran's first gold medal at this edition of the tournament.

The sporting event, taking place in Moscow and the surrounding region from November 11 to 23, features more than 2,000 athletes representing SCO member states and invited teams, with approximately 100 medal events on the program.

Athletes are competing in 11 disciplines, including table tennis, trampoline gymnastics, sambo, sport climbing, artistic and rhythmic gymnastics, weightlifting, fencing, chess, judo and wushu.

Iran is represented by a 70-member delegation competing in six sports: sport climbing, judo, weightlifting, artistic gymnastics, chess and table tennis.

Iran's generational shift will continue: Ghalenoei

TEHRAN - Amir Ghalenoei, head coach of Iran's national football team, has announced that the process of introducing younger players and rebuilding the squad will continue at an accelerated pace.

Speaking at a press conference ahead of Iran's match against Iraq, Ghalenoei emphasized the importance of the encounter, saying matches between the two neighboring nations always carry special significance, regardless of whether they are friendlies or competitive fixtures.

"Matches between Iran and Iraq are always important because the two teams are technically very close.

It makes no difference whether the game is a friendly or an official one; these encounters always have their own significance," he said.

Ghalenoei added that the upcoming match would provide another opportunity to continue the national team's generational transition.

"However, our approach to tomorrow's match is to continue the process of rebuilding the squad and introducing younger players, which we have already started, at a faster pace," he stated.

The Iranian coach also spoke about football cooperation and the exchange of coaches and players between the two countries.

He described both nations as having talented and technically capable football professionals, welcoming the presence of Iranian coaches working in Iraqi football.

"I am pleased that two of our good coaches have moved to Iraq and are working in its football system.

Such exchanges can benefit football in both countries, just as Iraqi players have previously come to Iran and contributed to our football," Ghalenoei said.

Referring to former Iran international Alireza Mansourian's coaching experience in Iraq, Ghalenoei noted that Mansourian had taken charge of Al-Talaba when the club were going through a difficult period but had managed to improve the team's situation by the end of the season.

He added that Mansourian's experience in the Iraqi league could further strengthen football ties and encourage the exchange of technical knowledge between the two nations.

Ghalenoei also expressed his respect for the Iraqi national team, highlighting the close relationship between the two neighboring countries.

"Iran and Iraq are two great nations in the region, with brotherly relations. This is more important than anything else," he said.

The Iranian coach praised Iraq's progress in international football, particularly recalling the country's historic triumph at the 2007 AFC Asian Cup.

"Iraq football team demonstrated their capabilities in previous years.

In particular, when they won the 2007 Asian Cup, I was the head coach of Iran's national team. I remember Younis Mahmoud, who captained that team and is now the president of the Iraqi Football Association," he added.

Iranian chess players claim golds at Open SCO Cup

TEHRAN – Iran's female chess player Mobina Alinasab and her compatriot Reza Mahdavi claimed two gold medals at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Open Cup in Russia on Monday.

On the second day of the competition in Moscow, Alinasab secured the women's blitz title after completing 11 rounds, taking the gold medal.

Her victory marked Iran's third gold medal at this year's SCO Open Cup.

Earlier in the day, Mahdavi had won a gold medal in men's blitz.

On Sunday, Iranian judoka Elyas Parhizgar had won a gold medal in the -81 kg category.

The competition is being held across 11 sports in Moscow, Russia, with athletes from 21 countries taking part. So far, the Iranian delegation has won three gold and two bronze medals.

Herbert Karim-Masihi looks beyond monuments to capture Iran's cultural heritage

From Page 1 ▶ His reflections follow the unveiling last month of his photographic book, "Thousands of Years, Iran", which depicts various aspects of the country's historical, cultural and architectural heritage. The book was officially unveiled at a ceremony held at the Museum of the National Bank of Iran (Bank Melli), attended by Tourism Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri; Kim Junpyo, South Korea's ambassador to Iran; Mohsen Seifi Kafshgari, chief executive of Bank Melli; and Amin Arefnia, head of the Bank Melli Printing and Publishing Company.

The event also brought together archaeologists, cultural heritage experts, members of parliament and cultural officials, including Jebrael Nokandeh, head of the National Museum of Iran, and Mohammad Mehdi Asgarpour, chairman of the board of directors of the Iranian House of Cinema, and Gholamreza Amirkhani, head of the National Library and Archives of Iran.

Rather than concentrating exclusively on celebrated monuments, Karim-Masihi's photographs seek to capture the broader cultural landscape of Iran, encompassing different historical periods, religious traditions, communities and aspects of everyday life. He also prefers to leave many images without extensive captions, allowing viewers to engage with them before encountering historical explanations or interpretations.

In the following interview, he discusses the ideas behind his book, his approach to photographing Iran's diverse heritage and the role of personal perspective in documenting the country's past and present.

To begin, could you briefly introduce yourself? Your book, Thousands of Years, Iran, brings together photographs documenting the country's historical and cultural heritage. What inspired you to undertake this project, and what central idea did you hope to convey through it?

I am Herbert Karim-Masihi, a photographer of this land. For years, I have traveled across Iran, photographing silent monuments and remote landscapes, searching for something that may not be immediately visible: the continuity of life in a country that has changed its appearance many times but has never stopped moving forward.



Iranian photographer Herbert Karim-Masihi (right) shows his photographs to Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei during a solo exhibition, Nov. 12, 2026.

From my perspective, Iran cannot be reduced to one historical period, associated exclusively with one ruling dynasty or defined by one religion. It is a living land that carries the accumulated experiences of its people.

The soil of Iran is sacred to me, and everything that has grown or taken shape on it is part of that significance. A mosque, a church, a temple, a palace, a village, a home or even a wall built centuries ago by an unknown hand – all belong to the same cultural landscape.

I do not distinguish between a building from the Achaemenid or Sasanian period and one from the Safavid era, or between monuments associated with the Ilkhanids and those belonging to other periods. They are all pieces of a larger whole, and that whole is Iran.

How do you approach photographing Iran's different historical periods without allowing personal beliefs or historical preferences to influence your work?

When I photograph Iran, I try to distance myself from ideological perspectives and historical prejudices. For me, history is a combination of grandeur and defeat, kindness and oppression. I do not want to praise one period simply because of my personal beliefs or affiliations while overlooking another.

We are not merely heirs to the Achaemenids and Sasanians. We are heirs to all the ethnic groups, languages, religions, cultures and ways of life that have developed on this land throughout history.

Perhaps this is why I rarely feel the need to classify or label everything in my photographs. When I tell viewers that this is Iran, I do not want to restrict their imagination with a particular historical name or date before they have even looked at the image.

I want them to see first, feel what they are looking at and then ask themselves: Where is this place? What does this photograph have to tell me?

In the book, you have chosen not to rely heavily on captions or explanatory texts. What is behind this decision?

I wanted the audience to encounter the photograph itself before being introduced to its name or background. I believe written explanations sometimes stand between people and what they are actually seeing.

I want viewers to have the opportunity to experience an image emotionally before learning where it was taken. They can then develop their own interpretation and form a personal connection with it.

This does not mean that historical information is unimportant. On the contrary, understanding the background of a monument or a cultural practice can deepen our appreciation of it. But I believe the first encounter should belong to the image and the viewer.

Your photographs focus on monuments and landscapes, but you also emphasize the importance of ordinary people's lives. How do you see the relationship between everyday life and cultural heritage?

One should not look only at magnificent buildings and archaeological remains to understand history. Sometimes history remains alive in the simplest actions of ordinary people.

I remember visiting a village near Persepolis, where I saw a man cleaning his livestock shed. The way he was doing his work reminded me of the continuity of traditional ways of life over thousands of years. At that moment, I realized that our real heritage is not confined to palaces and inscriptions. It also survives in people's language, food, behavior, rituals and everyday lives.

Years ago, I met a Japanese traveler who was travelling from one city to another with a backpack. I asked him why he chose to travel in such a demanding way instead of making his journeys more comfortable.

His answer was simple: many cultures can be better understood among ordinary people.

I have never forgotten that observation. It changed the way I looked at cultural heritage.

When we talk about Iran's heritage, we often think of palaces, columns, inscriptions and monumental architecture. But our heritage is not limited to stones and museums. It is also present in the lives of people who continue traditions, sometimes without even realizing how historically significant they are.

What role do time, light and patience play in your photography, particularly when documenting historical sites?

Photography, for me, is more than recording an image. It is about understanding time and discovering moments.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

Iran allocates $34m for restoration of war-damaged historic sites

TEHRAN – Iran has approved 88 trillion rials (some $34 million) to restore historic buildings and monuments damaged during the recent war with the US and Israeli regime, with an initial allocation of 10 trillion rials (some $4 million) set aside to launch restoration work, Tourism Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri said on Monday.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 46th meeting of the Strategic Council of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Salehi-Amiri said 149 historic buildings and relics had been identified as damaged in 21 provinces.

He said the estimated cost of restoring the affected sites had initially been put at 75 trillion rials, based on 2025 figures, but would need to be revised to account for rising costs this year.

The approved allocation of 88 trillion rials was secured through the country's reconstruction headquarters, chaired by the first vice president, with the support of the head of the Planning and Budget Organization, the minister said.

An initial 10 trillion rials will be released to begin restoration and conservation work, with the remaining funds to be provided gradually to complete the program, he added.

Tehran province accounts for the largest share of the damaged heritage sites, with 63 buildings, followed by Isfahan with 33 and the Sanandaj area in Kordestan province with around 12, according to Salehi-Amiri.

He said the ministry would determine restoration priorities in other provinces based on technical assessments, taking into account the extent of damage, the severity of destruction and the historical and architectural significance of each property.

The ministry's teams are expected to begin restoration work shortly after the initial funds are released, Salehi-Amiri said, adding that progress would be regularly reported to the public.

He described the restoration program as a national effort to safeguard Iran's historical memory and cultural identity, saying the damage caused by the war should not weaken the connection between future generations and the country's heritage.

Second Announcement

National Iranian Oil Company

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0540001

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

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

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

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

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex,
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 4644 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

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Tehran ready to boost ties with Muscat in combating narcotics



TEHRAN – Brigadier General Hossein Zolfaqari, the secretary general of the Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ), in a meeting with Oman's ambassador to Iran, Yarub bin Qahtan bin Nasser al Busaidi, has announced the country's readiness to develop joint efforts with Oman in the fight against drugs and related crimes.

During the Sunday meeting, Zolfaqari referred to Oman's 2026 Law on Combating Narcotic Drugs, and said that the two countries need to promote collaboration in dealing with narcotics, noting that the partnership could focus on addressing maritime drug trafficking, IRNA reported.

Highlighting that the drug problem is a global issue affecting all countries, the official elaborated on the country's achievements, saying that Iran has various initiatives on the agenda to address illicit drug challenges.

Expounding on the studies conducted over the past three decades, Zolfaqari noted that in the first six months of the current Iranian year, which started on March 21, the anti-narcotics police have seized more than 150 tons of illegal drugs.

He also voiced the country's willingness to share expertise and knowledge learned in the fight against drugs, including prevention and treatment strategies, with Oman.

Referring to the previously reached agreements in dealing with narcotics, the official proposed holding joint meetings and establishing working groups to expedite executive and operational measures.

Stronger anti-drug cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries

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

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

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

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

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

The seizure of an annual average of approximately 730 tons of various narcotics over the past decade, thanks to the round-the-clock, dedicated efforts driven by a commitment to humanity that transcends considerations of religion, creed, or race, along with the sacrifice of over 4,000 martyrs and 12,000 individuals who sustained injuries in this sacred struggle, demonstrates Iran's firm resolve and determination to decisively combat the pernicious phenomenon of drug trafficking, Kakavand stressed.

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

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

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

The main seizure of methamphetamine in and around the Middle East and Southeast Asia over the past few years has been reported in Iran, according to the report, which was published on August 13.

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

National Cancer Institute plans to become nano-oncology hub in Islamic world

TEHRAN – The National Cancer Institute, affiliated with the Academic Center for Education, Culture, and Research (ACECR), aims to establish a cohesive international structure that links the research, technological, clinical, educational, and economic capacities of Islamic nations in the fields of nano-medicine and cancer so that it turns into a leading reference hub in nano-oncology in the Islamic world.

Referring to the scientific, research, and technological capacities of the institute and its interactions with the INN, Zahra Sheikhi, the ACECR Deputy for Research and Technology, said the establishment of Islamic countries' nano-oncology innovation center in collaboration with the National Cancer Research Institute and the nanotechnology network is one of the main focuses of the initiative.

The institute officially became a member of the Inter-Islamic Network on Nanotechnology (INN) in November, laying the ground for the expansion of scientific, research, and technological cooperation with 57 member states of the network, the ACECR website reported on November 10.

The center is responsible for leading research initiatives, supporting technological projects, and developing clinical trials in the field of nano-medicine.

The formation of a research consortium focused on anti-cancer nano-medicines, with the help of universities and research centers from member states such as Turkey, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Egypt, under the scientific leadership of the National Cancer Research Institute is also on the agenda, Sheikhi added.

Furthermore, launching an observatory on technology and patents in the fight against cancer within the Islamic world, along with creating a shared database for identification and exchange of information on technologies, inventions, novel formulations, and nano-based targeted therapies could foster scientific capabilities of member states, she noted.

The initiative also aims to expand markets for the nanotechnology products manufactured by the institute in Islamic nations; these include drug nanocarriers, nanocurcumin, peptides, nanotechnology-based diagnostic kits, nanobiosensors, and targeted drug delivery systems.

According to the official, setting up a joint venture capital (VC) fund with the participation of foreign investors and philanthropists in the healthcare sector, particularly from North Africa and Persian Gulf states, to support cancer treatment technologies and projects that demonstrate preliminary evidence of clinical efficacy, participating in international events and creating platforms for technology commercialization, enhancing research collaborations and developing joint scientific capacity, establishing an international academy of nanomedicine and cancer, designing an international accreditation system for nano-oncology products, and strengthening health diplomacy in the Islamic world are among key requirements for the realization of the initiative.

Making strides in improving public health

According to a report in October 2025, the Motamed Cancer Institute, which raised its status to the Iranian National Cancer Institute, continues to make significant steps toward improving the public health and well-being of society.

Dr. Ramin Sarrami-Foroushani, the President of the Motamed Cancer Institute, affiliated with the ACECR, publicized the center's elevation to the "Iranian National Cancer Institute", highlighting it as a milestone in improving public health.

He noted that ACECR, by fulfilling its mission to address national challenges and leveraging scientific and technological capacities, continues to take significant strides toward improving the health and well-being of society.

In this regard, a press conference was held on October 13, on the occasion of Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October), to announce the 7th Nationwide Campaign on Screening for Common Cancers in Women.

Dr. Ramin Sarrami-Foroushani, President of the Motamed Cancer Institute of ACECR, announced that the center has been officially elevated to the status of the Iranian National Cancer Institute, with the support of the ACECR Board of Directors, the Central Headquarters, and the Vice-President of Research and Technology.

He explained that under the new structure, three specialized research centers — the Research Institute for Regenerative Medicine and Advanced Cancer Therapies, the Research Institute for Converging Technologies in Cancer, and the Research Institute for Personalized Medicine and Quality of Life — would operate under the umbrella of the National Cancer Research Institute, comprising around 10 research departments in total.

Sarrami-Foroushani added that this significant achievement is the result of three decades of dedicated efforts by ACECR's scientists and researchers, expressing hope that with continued support from national authorities, the institute will become a leading national hub for the development of innovative technologies in the field of cancer.

(See full text at tehrantimescom)

Postwar reconstruction must prioritize green recovery, sustainable development: DOE chief

TEHRAN – Reconstruction after the war should be viewed as an opportunity not merely to restore pre-war conditions, but to promote green recovery, advance sustainable development, and address environmentally harmful development patterns, Shina Ansari, head of the Department of Environment (DOE), has said.

She stressed that the consequences of war extend far beyond the cessation of military hostilities, leaving lasting impacts on soil, water, air, forests, wetlands, and natural habitats that can persist for years and affect future generations.

The official made the remarks on Monday at an international conference titled "The Shadow of War on People and Nature in the Region."

Ansari said designating November 6 as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict serves as a reminder that environmental protection must not be sidelined during wartime. Assessments of the environmental consequences of armed conflicts, she added, should begin during conflicts rather than be postponed until they end.

Referring to the five interconnected pillars of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda — people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership — Ansari said these dimensions could not be achieved independently. The experience of war, she noted, demonstrates that peace is the essential foundation for achieving the other dimensions of sustainable development.

Without peace, people's security and health are endangered, natural resources and ecosystems are damaged, and opportunities for social participation and national and international cooperation are undermined.

From this perspective, peace means more than simply the absence of war; it is closely linked to human security, public health, sustainable access to resources, and the ability to live with dignity. Protecting water, soil, air, and ecosystems is therefore an integral part of human security and lasting peace, she said.

Direct, indirect consequences

Highlighting the direct and indirect environmental impacts of armed conflicts, Ansari said attacks on industrial and energy facilities, fires at fuel storage sites, pollutant emissions, damage to water and sewage infrastructure, and contamination of water and soil create interconnected environmental and public health hazards.

Many of these impacts may not be immediately visible, she noted, but can persist for years, affecting livelihoods, food chains, and the health of local communities.

The experience of conflicts in other countries also shows that environmental consequences do not end when military operations cease, Ansari said.

If environmental concerns are not given a clearly defined place in damage assessments, relief programs, and reconstruction policies, she warned, part of the cost of war will be passed on to future generations.

Iran to highlight war-related environmental damage at COP31



At the 31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31) in Turkey, Iran plans to present documented reports on environmental damage caused by war, highlighting its impacts on infrastructure and human health. The country also aims to advance its environmental priorities, particularly those related to climate change, on the international stage.

COP31 is being held in Antalya from November 9 to 20, bringing together representatives from nearly 200 countries, government officials, experts, scientists, environmental activists, and international organizations.

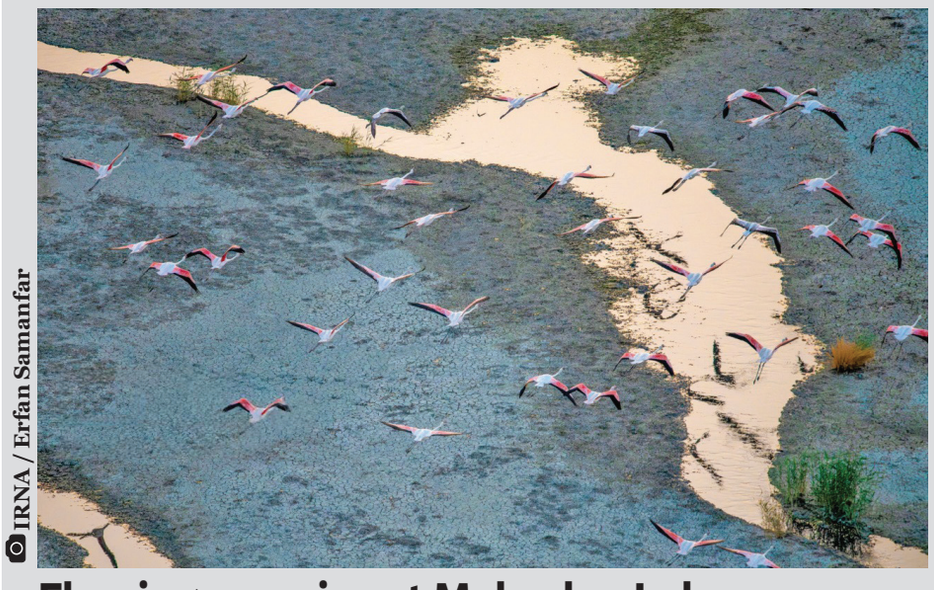
Iran is participating with a delegation of experts and representatives from relevant government bodies, headed by Ansari. The Iranian delegation is focusing on issues including drought, financing for food systems, war-related environmental degradation, and the presentation of investment-ready climate adaptation projects.

For the first time, Iran has also set up a national pavilion at COP31. Its announced program focuses on issues such as the environmental consequences of war, food security, and agricultural development.

Iran's participation in international climate conferences provides an opportunity to highlight national environmental challenges, pursue access to financial resources and technology, and strengthen regional and international cooperation on environmental protection and natural resource management.

Prolonged droughts, declining renewable water resources, land subsidence, desertification, dust storms, forest fires, and the vulnerability of wetlands are among the challenges facing the country in the context of climate change. Addressing them requires long-term planning, as well as adequate financial and technical resources.

Translating international commitments into practical and measurable action is also essential to achieving climate goals. Presenting investment-ready adaptation projects, drawing on the experiences of other countries, and pursuing climate finance mechanisms can all contribute to reducing Iran's vulnerability to climate change.



IRNA / Erfan Samanfar

Flamingos arrive at Maharloo Lake as autumn migration begins

As autumn arrives and temperatures begin to drop, flamingos make their way to Maharloo seasonal lake in southern Fars Province, creating a spectacular wildlife scene as they land on its waters.

These long-legged birds, with their distinctive pink plumage, along with reflections of the sky and surrounding landscape on the lake's surface, lend a unique beauty to this natural habitat.

Every year, during the migration season, Maharloo Lake welcomes large numbers of waterbirds and shorebirds. As one of southern Iran's important habitats for migratory birds, the lake plays a valuable role in maintaining the region's natural ecological cycles and biodiversity.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The one who gets married has completed half of his/her religion.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:49 Evening: 17:16 Dawn: 5:16 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:43 (tomorrow)

Keigo Higashino's 'The Keeper of the Camphor Tree' published in Persian

TEHRAN – "The Keeper of the Camphor Tree," a novel by bestselling Japanese author Keigo Higashino, has been published in Persian by Milkan Publishing House in Tehran with a translation by Omid Hosseini.

The novel, originally published in 2025, combines mystery, family relationships and elements of the supernatural to explore human connections, grief, hope and the possibility of emotional healing. Rather than following the conventional structure of a crime thriller, the book centers on an unusual tree whose mysterious powers bring together people carrying private worries, unanswered questions and unspoken feelings.

The story follows Reito Naoi, a young man whose life takes an unexpected turn after a series of unfortunate events leads to his arrest. Facing a prison sentence, he receives an unusual offer from a lawyer representing a relative he has never met: his aunt Chifune. She agrees to help secure his release on one condition – he must become the guardian of an ancient camphor tree standing on the grounds of a shrine.

With little direction for his future, Reito accepts the responsibility and begins his new role. The tree, however, is no ordinary landmark. According to a longstanding belief, people visit it after nightfall to communicate with it in a mysterious ritual, seeking comfort, guidance or a way to express feelings they cannot share with others.

As Reito observes the visitors, he encounters individuals whose lives and circumstances are far more complicated than they initially appear. Among them are a reserved middle-aged man who spends long hours humming to the tree, his daughter, who secretly follows him, and a wealthy young man who approaches the ritual with skepticism and reluctance.

Curious about the tree's significance and the reasons behind these visits, Reito repeatedly turns to Chifune for explanations. His aunt, however, does not reveal the answers immediately, telling him that he will understand the tree's secrets when he is ready.

Through these encounters, Reito gradually discovers that his responsibility extends beyond simply protecting an ancient tree. The people who come to it are seeking ways to confront their past, communicate with loved ones and find meaning in experiences that have shaped their lives. The tree becomes a meeting point between memory, loss and the human need for connection.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Cartoon of Day



Free Palestine
Cartoonist: Ahmad Qaddura from Sweden

Paris cinema to host retrospective of Abbas Kiarostami

TEHRAN- A retrospective of acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami, featuring 18 films spanning different periods of his career, will be held at La Filmothèque du Quartier Latin in Paris from November 20 to December 24.

The program offers audiences an opportunity to rediscover the filmmaker's work, from his early productions at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon) to his later films made in France, as well as his celebrated Koker trilogy.

The selection brings together feature films, short films and lesser-known works, providing an overview of Kiarostami's distinctive cinematic approach and his contribution to Iranian and world cinema.

A central part of the retrospective is the Koker trilogy, comprising "Where Is the Friend's House?" (1987), "And Life Goes On" (1992) and "Through the Olive Trees" (1994). Set in and around the villages of northern Iran, the three films explore ordinary people's lives through themes of friendship, responsibility, love and resilience, while blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality.



"Where Is the Friend's House?" follows a young schoolboy's efforts to return his classmate's notebook, turning an apparently simple task into a reflection on responsibility and compassion. "And Life Goes On" follows a filmmaker's journey through earthquake-stricken northern Iran in search of the child actors from his earlier film, portraying the determination of people to rebuild their lives. "Through the Olive Trees" further blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality through a story involving a film crew working in the aftermath of the earthquake.

The retrospective also includes several of Kiarostami's internationally acclaimed works, such as "Close-Up" (1990), a blend of documentary and fiction based on a real-life impersonation case; "Taste of Cherry" (1997), which follows a man contemplating suicide; "The Wind Will Carry Us" (1999), about a filmmaker's stay in a remote Kurdish village; "Ten" (2002), portraying conversations between a woman and her passengers in Tehran; "Shirin" (2008), built around women's reactions to a theatrical performance; "Certified Copy" (2010), exploring identity and relationships; and "Like Someone in Love" (2012), a story of unexpected connections in Tokyo.

The program also features several of Kiarostami's early works, including "The Bread and Alley" (1970), "The Recreation" (1974), "Experience" (1973), "The Wedding Suit" (1976), "The Chorus" (1982), "Orderly or Disorderly" (1981), "The Fellow Citizen" (1983) and "Homework" (1989).

Born in Tehran in 1940, Kiarostami began his filmmaking career at Kanoon, where he established a distinctive style through short films and works focusing on children's experiences and everyday life. He later became one of the most internationally recognized figures of Iranian cinema.

His films received major international recognition, including the Palme d'Or at the 1997 Cannes Film Festival for "Taste of Cherry." Kiarostami died in Paris in July 2016 at the age of 76.

The retrospective at La Filmothèque du Quartier Latin provides an opportunity for French audiences to revisit the work of a filmmaker whose minimalist storytelling, poetic imagery and exploration of the relationship between fiction and reality left a lasting mark on world cinema.

Iran, Armenia to expand cultural cooperation

TEHRAN – In a specialized meeting in Yerevan, Armenia, A high-level delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, led by Vice President Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi, held talks with Armenian officials including Armenian Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Alfred Kocharyan, and discussed strategies for developing cultural relations between the two countries.

At the beginning of the meeting, Kocharyan highly valued the centuries-old cultural ties between Armenia and Iran and emphasized the importance of opportunities to deepen them in various fields, ILNA reported on Sunday.

He highlighted the successful cooperation already in place, stressing the importance of implementing joint programs in various fields of intangible cultural heritage and contemporary art.

Also speaking at the meeting, Mohsen Javadi, deputy for Cultural Affairs at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, said that the Iranian delegation is pursuing cultural issues with the aim of identifying new opportunities and strengthening existing cooperation.

Pointing to the regular presence of Iranian artists in Armenian cultural events and the participation of Armenian artists in Iranian festivals and artistic programs, Javadi remarked: "The primary goal of these negotiations is not to create relations from scratch, but to deepen, expand, and organize the cooperation that has already taken shape through the initiative of artists, cultural activists, and the people of both nations."

Javadi emphasized that Iran and Armenia possess a rich historical and civilizational heritage, and noted: "The presence of Persian language enthusiasts, Iranology researchers, and academic figures familiar with Iranian culture in Armenia provides a fertile ground for the development of cultural cooperation."

He also stressed the necessity of moving beyond general discussions toward specific programs, suggesting that the topics discussed in this meeting should be followed up through official correspondence, the determination of priorities, and the drafting of executive agreements in subsequent stages.

Javadi invited Armenian cultural officials to visit Iran and proposed that Armenian Cultural Weeks be held in Tehran and other cultural hubs such as Isfahan and Shiraz, with reciprocal Iranian Cultural Weeks held in Yerevan.

According to him, these events could encompass a diverse range of cultural and artistic activities, including book exhibitions, literary programs, film screenings, musical performances, introductions to visual arts, and specialized seminars.

Emphasizing the importance of broad public participation, Javadi noted that cultural weeks provide the opportunity for cultural connections to transcend the sphere of elites and professional artists, allowing ordinary citizens—especially youth and families—to become acquainted with the cultural achievements of the other country.

Referring to the discussions held during the meeting of the high-level officials of the two countries, he announced a proposal to select and translate a collection of prominent works by Iranian and Armenian authors.

Based on this proposal, works by prominent contemporary Armenian authors in the fields of fiction, poetry, art, science, and technology will be selected for translation into Persian, while a collection of works by Iranian writers and researchers will conversely be introduced for translation and publication in Armenian.

The Deputy for Cultural Affairs noted that while a significant portion of the Iranian and Armenian audiences are familiar with the prominent figures of classical literature in both countries, the works of young authors and new literary trends have been less introduced to the counterpart's language.

"Expanding the translation of contemporary works can bridge this gap and provide a platform for the new generation to become acquainted with the thoughts, concerns, and social and cultural developments of both societies," he stated.

In this framework, the development of cooperation between publishers, translators, universities, and research centers of the two countries was also emphasized.

Another segment of the negotiations was dedicated to expanding the reciprocal presence of Iranian and Armenian publishers in book fairs and festivals.

Referring to the vast capacity of the Tehran International Book Fair to introduce the works of foreign authors, Javadi suggested that the presence of Armenian publishers and writers in this event should be strengthened.

Subsequently, the Armenian side proposed that the two countries explore the possibility of mutually attending each other's international book fairs as a "Special Guest."

Based on this proposal, Iran and Armenia could, during specific periods, achieve a more extensive presence in the book fairs of the counterpart country by benefiting from dedicated exhibition spaces and organizing diverse cultural and literary programs.

During the meeting, the unveiling of the prose translation of Ferdowsi's "Shahnameh" into Armenian was highlighted as a prominent example of cultural cooperation between the two nations.

This valuable work was translated by George Asaturyan, with the scientific editing and the writing of the introduction handled by Professor Garnik Asatryan, a prominent Armenian Iranologist.

This translation is the result of several years of scientific and research activity and presents the narrative portions of the Shahnameh in a literary prose format to Armenian readers.

During the unveiling ceremony, the efforts of the translator and editor, as well as the services of Loris Tjeknavorian, the prominent Iranian-Armenian composer, were honored.

For his part, Pourmohammadi, referring to the position of the "Shahnameh" in Iran's cultural heritage and its influence on art and literature, proposed the establishment of a "Shahnameh House" in Armenia, with the participation of researchers and artists from both countries.

Referring to the international standing of Iranian cinema, Armenian cultural officials noted the continuous presence of Iranian filmmakers' works at the Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival, describing the festival as an effective platform for connecting the cinematographers of the two countries.

The meeting also addressed the growing potential of the Armenian film industry and the necessity of utilizing the professional expertise of Iranian cinema.

In this regard, the expansion of Armenian language instruction, Armenian studies, and research related to Armenian history and culture in Iranian universities and academic centers was also a point of interest.

The Armenian side, referring to the joint cooperation between the two countries in introducing cultural traditions and rituals, cited the joint file "Tradition of Water and Rain Celebration: Tirgan/Vardavar" as an important example of the capacity for Iran-Armenia cooperation on the international stage.

This file has been submitted by Iran and Armenia to UNESCO for consideration in 2026 and is currently on the list of files under review for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Further in the meeting, Mohammad Asadi-Movahed, the Cultural Attaché of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Armenia, noted the experience of organizing joint programs during his tenure, stating: "The mission of the Iranian Cultural Center is not merely to introduce Iran's cultural and artistic capacities in Armenia; rather, this institution seeks to facilitate the introduction of Armenian culture, art, elites, and achievements to the Iranian community."

He described the Cultural Center as a shared platform for developing cultural relations between the two nations and emphasized the need to preserve and strengthen both institutional and grassroots cooperation.

The Iranian Cultural Attaché also mentioned the naming of the assembly hall in the historic Blue Mosque of Yerevan after Yeghishe Charents, the prominent Armenian poet and enthusiast of Iranian culture and literature.

This act, which took place during the visit of the Iranian delegation and in the presence of the Deputy President of Iran, was aimed at honoring Charents' literary stature and his historical role in the cultural ties between the two nations.

During the ceremony, Charents' passion for Iranian literature—particularly Ferdowsi's "Shahnameh"—and his historical role in protecting the Blue Mosque of Yerevan were highlighted.