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## Hezbollah chief tells Basij youth that Israel will not remain on Lebanese soil

TEHRAN — Hezbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem used Basij Day to deliver a blunt message to Israel: the popular mobilization that helped sustain Lebanon's resistance will not allow occupation to become permanent.

In a statement released on Friday, he praised the Basij's young volunteers, workers, farmers, students and families as a social force capable of defending the country while rebuilding it from within. ▶ Page 5

## Book says UAE and Israel were secret military partners decades before Abraham Accords

**By staff writer**

TEHRAN — Past the hacked iPhone and the $2 billion said to have sat within Jared Kushner's reach, Matthew Cole's "Princes and Thieves" tells an older story.

It begins in the 1990s in a hotel room in southern Europe, and it ends with American policy in West Asia allegedly shaped by a foreign ruler who learned early that a secret can do the work of an army.

Cole writes that Mohammed bin Zayed, known as MBZ, hired two Syrians to film his older and allegedly homosexual brother and rival, Khalifa bin Zayed, having sex with a man in that hotel room. ▶ Page 5

## Chinese ambassador expresses confidence in expansion of practical economic co-op with Iran

**By Mahnaz Abdi**

TEHRAN- Chinese Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu expressed confidence that practical economic cooperation between Tehran and Beijing will expand further, citing China's development achievements, its new Five-Year Plan, and growing Iranian business participation in Chinese trade exhibitions as key drivers of bilateral engagement.

Speaking at a press briefing at the Chinese Embassy in Tehran on November 25, Cong made the remarks in response to a Tehran Times question on how Beijing intends to advance practical economic cooperation with Iran under China's current development priorities—particularly in trade, investment, financial cooperation, and connectivity—despite existing international economic and financial restrictions. ▶ Page 4

## Iran outlines sustainable tourism strategy at Tashkent international gathering

TEHRAN- Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri has outlined the country's efforts to promote sustainable tourism, expand rural tourism infrastructure and encourage renewable energy use at the International Conference on Sustainable and Resilient Tourism in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Addressing a specialized panel at the conference on Friday, Salehi-Amiri presented Iran's experience in distributing tourism opportunities more evenly across the country and involving local communities in the economic benefits of the industry, CHTN reported.

The minister said one of Iran's priorities has been to distribute tourist flows across different geographical areas, particularly by directing part of the tourism capacity toward rural communities, the report added. ▶ Page 6



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*Flags, portraits, and red headbands fill "Ravaq-e Keshvardoust," the street that housed the martyred Leader's modest home and office in Tehran, as Basij members renew their pledge with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on Wednesday evening, November 25, 2026.*

# Leader Calls for Nationwide Spread of Basiji Spirit

***Adherence to individual and collective piety are essential attributes of a genuine Basiji, the Leader notes***

*Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei says Basij members must spare no effort in showing kindness and making sacrifices for the people, the Islamic system and the Revolution, while remaining steadfast in confronting the enemies of Islam and the Islamic system.*

TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei issued a message on Thursday calling on the Basij Organization to expand the Basiji spirit across the country.

In the message marking Basij Week, the Leader emphasized the need to strengthen the institution and adapt it to the evolving capacities of Iranian society.

Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei described the Basij as an invaluable body established on the initiative of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, to bring together generations of committed, hopeful and self-sacrificing Iranians dedicated to the dignity of Islam and Iran and inspired by the school of Imam Hussein (PBUH).

He said the Basij had demonstrated its pivotal role during the eight-year Sacred Defense, when its members formed the backbone of the country's wartime efforts. Their presence on the war fronts, he noted, helped spread a spirit of faith, sincerity, courage, sacrifice and devotion throughout the society.

The Sacred Defense refers to Saddam Hussein's war against Iran in the 1980s.

The Leader said the Sacred Defense had left a lasting imprint on the country's formal and informal institutions, with the Basiji spirit emerging as one of the most valuable legacies of that period.

Elaborating on the future role of the organization, Ayatollah Khamenei outlined four key priorities.

First, he said the nationwide awakening of the Iranian people during the Third Sacred Defense (resistance against the US-Israel war of aggression on Iran), which he described as a manifestation of the expansion of the Basiji spirit across the country, required the Basij Organization itself to undergo a transformation and a new phase of development. ▶ Page 2



## *'Iran Banoo' event held to celebrate women's achievements*

The fifth edition of the national event "Iran Banoo" (literally meaning "Iranian Woman") was held in Tehran on Thursday, bringing together people from various walks of life.

Held under the slogan "Iranian Woman: Driver of Transformation and Architect of Civilization," the event aimed to introduce exemplary women who have made achievements at national and international levels and highlight the accomplishments of the Islamic Revolution in advancing women's status and opportunities.

The ceremony also honored 10 outstanding women for their achievements in various fields, celebrating their contributions to society and their role in shaping the country's future.

## Iranian commanders highlight military readiness, warn of decisive response to any aggression

TEHRAN – Senior Iranian military commanders have highlighted the country's enhanced naval, air defense and ground capabilities, warning that any renewed aggression against Iran would be met with a forceful response.

Speaking at Tehran's Friday prayers, Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani revealed that Iranian naval forces had struck the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier with a missile on the first day of the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran. ▶ Page 3

## Iran will not be intimidated, top diplomat says

TEHRAN – Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has reaffirmed Iran's readiness to defend itself against any threat, stressing that the country is equally prepared to pursue diplomacy provided its demands are respected and met.

Speaking in an interview on Thursday, Araghchi said the Israeli regime had resorted to "every lie" in recent days to create a climate of war and level accusations against Iran.

He said the regime was making increasingly bizarre statements and sweeping allegations on a daily basis, adding that only naïve people – including some in the West – could believe such claims. ▶ Page 2

## Iran flatly rejects allegations over Kuwait attack, warns of false-flag operations

TEHRAN – Iran has categorically rejected allegations of involvement in a drone attack on a military facility in Kuwait that killed two Italian nationals, with senior military and diplomatic officials stressing that Iranian forces had conducted no offensive operations in the region and warning against attempts to exploit the incident to escalate regional tensions.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi dismissed the allegations as baseless in separate telephone conversations on Thursday with his Kuwaiti counterpart, Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani. ▶ Page 2

## Iranian cartoonist wins in 3rd International Cartoon Competition in Türkiye for Minab cartoon

TEHRAN – An Iranian cartoonist has won a prize at the 3rd International Cartoon Competition, organized by the Culture and Arts Commission of the Istanbul Branch of the Human Rights Association (İHD) in Türkiye.

Atefeh Yaryan has received the First Prize in the General Category for her cartoon about the martyred Minab students, ILNA reported.

The Shajareh Tayyebeh School, located in Minab, Hormozgan province, was struck on February 28, as the US and Israel launched their military campaign against Iran. The attack hit the school while students were attending classes, killing 168 children and members of the school community. The incident caused widespread grief across Iran and prompted strong condemnation from Iranian officials, who described the targeting of the educational facility as a grave crime. ▶ Page 8

# TEHRAN PAPERS

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

## What is the outlook ahead?

The Iran newspaper, in an interview with international affairs analyst Jahanbakhsh Izadi, examined the future trajectory of relations between Iran and the US. He argued that Washington's strategy toward Iran is not based on a single option but rather on a multilayered framework that includes war, sanctions, pressure, isolation, and deterrent threats. In his view, US policymakers do not appear to be seeking regime change in Iran in the traditional sense. Instead, they seek to achieve their strategic objectives while dealing with the existing political system. The US has not fully achieved its broader strategic goals in the two conflicts it has fought with Iran. The issue of the Strait of Hormuz has also become an important factor in this equation. At the same time, he noted that major international actors rarely end a conflict without attempting to secure the strategic outcomes they consider necessary. This principle stems from the logic of power politics and international competition. Therefore, Trump and the US administration are striving to ensure that the conflict ultimately produces concrete strategic gains that can be presented as achievements both internationally and domestically.

**Shargh: Vigilance is necessary**

Shargh devoted its headline to Iran's cautious and calculated approach under current circumstances. The newspaper wrote that what matters most at this stage is avoiding both complacency about the possibility of war and certainty that war is inevitable. A delay in military action should not automatically be interpreted as the removal of the military option, just as every threat or military movement should not be treated as proof that conflict is about to begin. The reality is that the region has entered a fragile period in which several different paths remain available to decision-makers. The continuation of deadlocked negotiations, increasing political pressure from Israel, potential constraints within the US Congress, and concerns among Arab states about a wider regional confrontation all play a role in shaping future decisions. Shargh emphasized that one key point cannot be ignored: under present conditions, the distance between a manageable crisis and a large-scale military confrontation may be much smaller than political calculations often assume. This makes prudent decision-making, diplomacy, and strategic restraint particularly important.

**Etemad: Political closeness as a condition for cooperation**

Etemad argued that Iran and China share common interests on many regional and international issues. China has consistently supported diplomatic solutions and opposed the use of force. As a major global economic power, it offers opportunities in trade, industry, technology, and investment that Iran can benefit from while avoiding excessive dependence on any single partner. However, China also maintains broad relations with the US, Europe, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other countries, and considers all of these ties when making economic decisions. Therefore, strong political relations with Beijing do not automatically guarantee economic advantages for Iran. According to the article, meaningful benefits require effective negotiations, well-designed projects, mutual interests, and practical planning rather than reliance on political goodwill alone.

**Hamshahri: Trump trapped in a deadlock**

Nine months after the start of the war with Iran, Donald Trump continues to fluctuate between declaring victory, threatening renewed confrontation, and retreating from some of his stated objectives. According to Hamshahri, these contradictions reflect uncertainty in Washington about how the conflict should ultimately end. On one hand, Trump wants to convince the American public that military operations have achieved their goals and that Iran no longer represents a serious threat. On the other hand, his statements suggest that the dispute has not been fully resolved. The newspaper argues that Trump cannot simply close a file that he himself turned into one of the defining tests of his presidency without presenting a result that can be defended before voters. He still seeks to preserve a narrative of success, but faces significant obstacles in achieving a clear political and strategic conclusion. While a war can be declared over in a speech, resolving the issues that led to the conflict requires far more than a declaration of victory. It demands lasting political arrangements and strategic solutions.

**Ettelaat: Diplomatic capacities should be utilized**

Ettelaat quoted international relations researcher Ebrahim Meraji, who argued that China and Russia have some ability to influence developments related to Iran, but their role should not be overstated. Their strategic priorities do not always align with Iran's interests, making it unrealistic to expect them to incur major costs to change Washington's policies toward Tehran. However, both countries can help reduce tensions through their diplomatic influence and international standing. Meraji stressed that Iran should make use of these opportunities without becoming dependent on Moscow or Beijing. He emphasized that preserving independent decision-making and strong bargaining power is essential. Effective diplomacy requires cooperation with major powers where interests overlap while ensuring that Iran's national interests remain the primary guide of foreign policy.

# Leader calls for nationwide spread of Basiji spirit

*Adherence to individual and collective piety are essential attributes of a genuine Basiji, the Leader notes*

From page 1 ▸ He stressed that the organization must build on the capabilities of this mobilized nation and establish a more advanced and up-to-date model of the Basij, moving decisively toward realizing the motto, "Every Iranian is a Basiji!"

He noted that large numbers of people, including members of the Army, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), the police, government officials, parliamentarians and ordinary citizens, identify with the Basij because of their deep attachment to its ideals and ethos.

The same spirit, he said, is reflected in those who have filled the country's squares and streets day and night, as well as the large number of participants in the Janfada (Sacrifice for Iran) Campaign. Many others, although not formally registered as Basij members, admire its principles and seek to incorporate its values into their lives, the Leader stated. The organization, he emphasized, must make the fullest use of this God-given capacity.

Second, he called on the official Basij Organization to make sustained efforts to promote the Basiji spirit throughout every part of the country, saying its values could spread across society through the conduct and personal example of its members.

He identified good character, compassion, kindness, respect for the people and adherence to



individual and collective piety as essential attributes of a genuine Basiji. He also highlighted humility, modesty, self-sacrifice, avoidance of self-promotion and recognition-seeking, and rejection of extravagance and ostentation.

Such conduct, he said, would make the Basij a "light of the nation" in every neighborhood, city and village, encouraging others to embrace its principles and way of life.

Third, Ayatollah Khamenei underscored that the defining commitment of Basij members is to the school of Imam Hussein (PBUH), which he described as a correct understanding of the pure Islam of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

He said all their alliances and dissociations, as well as their expressions of loyalty and disavowal, must be guided by this foundation. Two Quranic principles – "Merciful among themselves" and "Firm against the disbelievers" (48:29) – serve as the guiding light for the Basiji spirit.

Accordingly, he said, Basij members must spare no effort in showing kindness and making sacrifices for the people, the Islamic system and the Revolution, while remaining steadfast in confronting the enemies of Islam and the Islamic system.

He also stressed that preserving the social cohesion and sacred unity of the Iranian nation must be a shared responsibility of all Basij members. The importance of this unity, he said, has become particularly evident in recent days, as its strength and profound impact on the enemy's calculations have been demonstrated alongside the victories achieved by courageous and self-sacrificing Islamic combatants on the battlefield.

Fourth, the Leader said the Basij had consistently helped compensate for shortcomings in the country's formal and informal institutions throughout its existence.

Given the considerable expansion of the Basiji spirit during the current nationwide awakening, he said, a formidable collective capacity had now taken shape, encompassing both the organization's institutional capabilities and all those who identify with the Basij in spirit.

This includes those present in the squares and streets, participants in the Janfada Campaign and others committed to individual and social advancement, whose hearts, he said, constitute the true bases of the Basij.

He called for the full mobilization of this extensive social capacity to address the country's challenges and capitalize on new and unprecedented opportunities, thereby giving greater depth and substance to the motto, "Every Iranian is a Basiji!"

The Leader expressed hope that, guided by these principles, Iran's Basij would be remembered in the country's history as an outstanding model of mutual support and a powerful embodiment of the concepts of the Ummah and the nation, paving the way for major achievements and substantial progress in the future.

# Iran rejects flatly allegations over Kuwait attack, warns of false-flag operations

From page 1 ▸ Expressing regret over the casualties and material damage, Araghchi conveyed his condolences to the Italian government and people over the deaths of the two nationals and offered Tehran's readiness to cooperate with Kuwait and Italy in a joint investigation to establish the facts, determine the origins of the incident and identify those responsible.

In a post on his X account following the conversations, the Iranian foreign minister described the incident as suspicious and warned that it could be part of an attempt to provoke a wider conflict.

"The incident is suspicious and looks like a precooked recipe for war," he wrote, reiterating Iran's readiness to work with the two governments to determine what had happened.

Separately, Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi, senior spokesperson for Iran's Armed Forces, categorically denied claims by the Kuwaiti army that Iranian forces had attacked a vital facility in the country.

Speaking late Thursday, Shekarchi stressed that Iran's Armed Forces had conducted no military or offensive operations in the region.

Referring to the history of hostile actions and the involvement of Israeli and US forces in false-flag operations and adventurism, he said the accusations against Iran appeared intended to provide cover for further destabilizing activities and efforts to fuel insecurity in the region.

The Iranian Embassy in Rome also issued a categorical denial of Tehran's alleged involvement in the attack, warning of attempts to widen the scope of the ongoing regional conflict.

In its statement, the embassy described the situation in West Asia and the Persian Gulf as critical and complex, attributing it to the repercussions of military aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran, which it said had continued in various forms over the past nine months.

The diplomatic mission cautioned against false-flag operations designed to expand the conflict, link developments in other regions to the crisis in the Persian Gulf, draw European countries into the confrontation and further aggravate regional instability.

It urged all parties to remain vigilant against such attempts and warned against exploiting the Kuwait incident to widen the confrontation and involve additional countries.

# Iran will not be intimidated, top diplomat says

From page 1 ▸ Araghchi described the campaign as an attempt to draw the United States into another war.

He also said the outcome of recent US elections had clearly demonstrated growing public awareness that the interests of the Israeli regime were being prioritized over those of the United States.

"This is not something I am saying," he noted, pointing out that the issue had also been raised within the United States, including by the American president and vice president.

The foreign minister said Iran made no distinction between the Israeli regime and US policies as a whole, underscoring Tehran's determination to defend itself.

"We are fully prepared to defend ourselves and know very well how to do so," he said.

At the same time, Araghchi emphasized that Iran remained ready for diplomacy and was willing to pursue that course if its demands were respected and fulfilled.

# Iran urges world to remember children killed in Minab school strikes

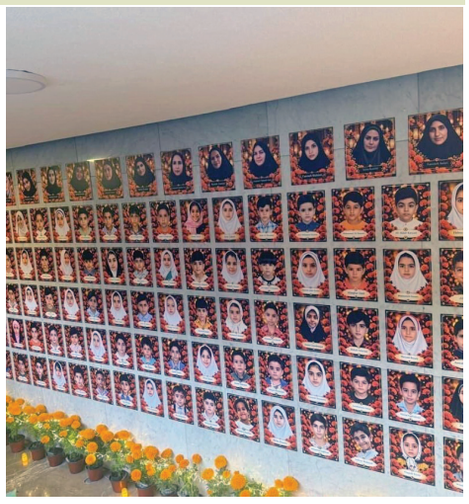
TEHRAN – Iran's Mission to the United Nations has called on the international community to remember the children killed in the February 28 attacks on Minab, highlighting the devastating human toll of the strikes.

In a statement posted on its official X account on World Children's Day, the Iranian mission stressed that every child is entitled to fundamental rights, including protection, education and the right to have their voice heard.

It emphasized, however, that the most fundamental of all rights is the right to life and to a future filled with hope and happiness.

According to the mission, 168 children and teachers were killed in two strikes carried out with US Tomahawk missiles in the southern Iranian city of Minab on February 28.

The mission further stated that around 300 students who survived the attacks continue to suffer from severe psychological trauma and require long-term care, treatment and support.



"The people of Iran will never forget the tragedy of Minab's children, whose lives were brutally taken in US airstrikes," the statement said.

The Iranian mission called on the international community to give voice to the suffering of Minab's children and honor their memory, stressing that their tragedy must never be forgotten.

# Iran's nuclear technology progress cannot be stopped: AEOI chief

TEHRAN – Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami has reaffirmed that Iran's advances in nuclear technology will continue unabated despite efforts by its adversaries to impede the country's scientific and technological development.

Speaking at a ceremony on Thursday to inaugurate the northern irradiation processing center in Rasht, the capital of Gilan Province, Eslami described the completion of the facility's first phase as another milestone in Iran's pursuit of advanced technologies.

"The first phase of this complex has been completed, and this achievement is part of the country's path toward growth and excellence in advanced technologies," he said, emphasizing that Iran's progress in nuclear technology was unstoppable.

Eslami said Iran's adversaries oppose the country's development of advanced technologies because scientific capabilities translate into national strength and power, which they do not want the Iranian people to acquire.

He pointed to decades of efforts by major world powers to restrict independent countries' access to advanced technologies, noting that such policies are reflected even in US legislation.

"This has a long history, and even US laws and policymaking, including congressional legislation dating back to 1950, reflect attempts to restrict certain countries' access to these technologies," he said.

The AEOI chief added that successive US administrations had sought to prevent the Islamic Republic from entering the nuclear technology field, stressing that nuclear technology is among humanity's major scientific achievements and that all countries are entitled to benefit from it within the framework of established international laws and regulations.

He also criticized the political approach adopted by certain powers toward Iran's nuclear activities, saying that unfounded allegations were being used as a pretext to obstruct the country's scientific progress.

"When the other side has no logic or substantiated evidence, it resorts to fabricating cases and making allegations, such as claiming that Iran is seeking to build nuclear weapons, in an attempt to halt the country's progress," Eslami said.

Referring to information and documents made public in recent years, he said disclosures by intelligence services and other parties had shed light on the motives behind efforts to create an atmosphere of suspicion surrounding Iran's nuclear program.

Such efforts, he stressed, were intended to prevent Iran from advancing, despite the fact that the country's nuclear activities are grounded in knowledge, research, technical capabilities and scientific expertise.

Located in Lakan, Rasht, the irradiation processing center has an initial annual processing capacity of 10,000 tons, with the infrastructure in place to double that figure to 20,000 tons.

The facility operates under the AEOI's Radiation Application Development Company and uses gamma irradiation systems and electromagnetic wave technology.

Its establishment in Gilan is particularly significant given the province's annual agricultural production of approximately 3.6 million tons.

The center is designed to improve the quality and safety of agricultural products by eliminating pests, extending shelf life, and reducing post-harvest losses. These capabilities are expected to help minimize agricultural waste and strengthen the export potential of the province's products, particularly rice.

# Iranian commanders highlight military readiness, warn of decisive response to any aggression

From Page 1 ▶ Irani said Iranian forces had identified the enemy's central command structure and the aircraft carrier at the outset of the conflict before launching a missile that had never previously been tested in combat.

"The missile hit its target and struck the enemy's body," he said, describing the strike as a direct hit against the 'heart of the enemy.'

The commander added that, despite its military capabilities, the adversary had sought assistance from ports in neighboring countries to evacuate wounded and dead personnel, provide medical treatment and carry out repairs. These measures, he said, were aimed at enabling the enemy to resume combat flights against targets inside Iran.

Irani said the Iranian Navy had since further upgraded its systems and operational capabilities while maintaining constant vigilance. He stressed that the force was monitoring all enemy movements and stood ready to respond to any hostile action.

Describing the adversary's position in the region, the naval commander said that despite deploying its resources and military capabilities, it had been unable to secure passage for even a single vessel through the Strait of Hormuz.

"Whatever it has brought into the scene, whether manned or unmanned, at sea or in the air, has not been able to get even a single vessel through the Strait of Hormuz," he said.

Irani added that enemy pilots, troops and commanders were facing uncertainty over where, how and by what means they were being targeted. He said the Iranian people and the Islamic Republic would take pride in driving the enemy out of the Persian Gulf and West Asia permanently.

**Developing of air defense systems**

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said the country had developed new air defense equipment and advanced systems in response to lessons learned from the 12-day and 40-day wars imposed by the United States and Israel.

He described strengthening air defense capabilities as a major defense priority, saying the recent conflicts had demonstrated the need to expand efforts in this field.

"We concluded from the recent wars that we must do more work in the field of air defense than we did in the past," Sayyari said.

He added that Iran had developed new equipment through the efforts, determination and innovation of its specialists, and that these capabilities had already been employed in defending the country and inflicting considerable damage on the enemy.

Sayyari also referred to the Army's newly developed air defense products and the design of advanced systems, warning that any force contemplating aggression against Iran would encounter their capabilities in practice.

"In the event of any aggression, the enemy will see the effects and capabilities of these systems," he said.



**Armed Forces chief warns of regret-inducing response**

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Ali Abdollahi, in a message marking Navy Day, warned that any threat or act of aggression against Iran would be met with a "decisive, effective and regret-inducing" response.

Abdollahi said the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz had become focal points of strategic confrontation with 'global arrogance and criminal Zionism.'

He praised the operational and combat readiness of both the Iranian Army Navy and Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy, emphasizing that their close cooperation was essential to protecting national security and interests, defending Iran's territorial waters and safeguarding its maritime authority in the Sea of Oman.

The senior commander said Iran's Armed Forces were fully prepared to respond to any threat or aggression.

He also commended Navy commanders and personnel for their role in defending the country's independence, security and maritime power.

**Tanker explosion in Strait of Hormuz**

In a separate development, the IRGC Navy said an oil tanker had struck a naval mine and exploded while attempting to pass through an unauthorized route in the Strait of Hormuz.

According to a statement issued on Friday morning, two tankers had attempted to make a covert passage north of Jazirat Umm al Ghannam Island. One struck a naval mine and exploded, while the other was forced to turn back.

The statement said the number of tankers attempting to use the unauthorized route had fallen sharply in recent days, describing the trend as evidence of the IRGC Navy's authority and control over the eastern and western approaches to the strategic waterway.

**Warning fire drove US F-16 away**

The IRGC also announced that a US F-16 fighter jet had changed course and moved away from Iranian airspace after an air defense system operated by the IRGC Aerospace Force fired a warning shot.

In a statement on Thursday, the force said the aircraft had approached Iranian airspace southeast of Hengam Island while escorting vessels it described as violating maritime regulations and providing them with air cover near the Strait of Hormuz.

The warning fire prompted the fighter to carry out a sharp maneuver before turning away from Iranian airspace, the statement said.

The IRGC warned that attempts to circumvent regulations governing maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz were unacceptable and could result in heavier losses for the vessels involved and the military forces supporting them.

Describing Iran's airspace as a red line, the force warned US commanders that any renewed intrusion by American fighter jets would trigger a decisive air defense response. It added that such aircraft could face a fate similar to that of an F-15 fighter and US drones previously targeted by Iranian forces.

**Army maintains highest level of readiness**

Separately, Deputy Commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Force for Operations Brigadier General Sirous Amanollahi said the force was at its highest level of combat readiness and had prepared operational plans to counter potential threats.

Speaking to IRNA on Friday, Amanollahi said Army units had been deployed along the country's borders, from the northwest to the area where Iran, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan meet.

He said operational plans had been drawn up based on assessments of potential adversaries' capabilities, while the Ground Force's combat capacity had been strengthened throughout border regions.

Amanollahi also pointed to coordination among the Army, the IRGC, the Law Enforcement Force, the Basij and popular forces under the commander-in-chief's leadership, saying inspections and assessments had confirmed that the force's combat readiness was in excellent condition.

He added that Ground Force units had received advanced weapons and equipment, including air defense and maneuver systems, and were prepared to act in accordance with their operational plans.

The general said Iran's experience during the eight-year war imposed by the Iraqi Ba'athist regime, along with lessons from recent conflicts involving the United States and Israel, had shaped the country's military preparations.

He stressed that the Ground Force would resist any attempt to threaten Iran's borders and would not allow hostile forces to enter the country. He also credited public presence with helping prevent ground operations against Iran.

# The world after Washington's hegemony



**By Xavier Villar**

MADRID - The summit held this week in Shenzhen, bringing together Donald Trump, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, was the first in which the leaders of Washington, Moscow and Beijing met in a format reserved for the three of them. It was not their first face-to-face encounter, they have long crossed paths at the UN, APEC and the G20, and their diplomats have negotiated jointly on North Korea and Iran, but it marks an important moment in great-power diplomacy.

What was billed as Yalta 2.0, in reference to the 1945 conference in Crimea where Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin divided up spheres of influence in the postwar order, was nothing of this sort. This was not a meeting of three victors of a great war, but of three major powers seeking to set the rules of their relationship in a changing world, at a time when U.S. global hegemony is being questioned.

According to the Chinese military commentary account Rongping, Trump came to Shenzhen to acknowledge the end of U.S. hegemony and the entry into the multipolar era. The White House's retreat on tariffs against countries that "have rebelled" was the first admission. After the "strategic humiliation" in Iran, the consolidation of the Russia–China alliance and an Asia-Pacific deployment reduced to "an empty shell", the United States "can no longer contain its rivals, cannot fight on every front and can no longer resist".

For the United States, the meeting would reinforce confidence in personal diplomacy and direct dialogue with adversaries, while offering a chance to address issues of vital importance to Washington: the war in Ukraine, Iran and the region, energy security and nuclear policy.

For China, hosting it would bolster Beijing's aspiration to a central role in shaping the new international order. Xi also wants to present China as a stabilising power amid deep fractures and the eroding liberal order.

Finally, for Russia, it would offer a chance to escape international isolation and regain legitimacy alongside two superpowers.

But the summit achieved no significant progress on any agenda item—nuclear arms reduction, non-proliferation or the war in Ukraine—nor did it offer even a roadmap. Neither Ukraine nor Iran figured explicitly in the joint declaration, despite their prominence in the leaders' talks. There was no agreement on a ceasefire, territorial arrangements or a negotiating framework for Ukraine, nor any concrete understanding on managing the conflict with Iran or securing the Strait of Hormuz.

Politically, the final declaration was a minimal understanding between three countries still deeply divided over the causes of, and solutions to, contemporary conflicts.

For example, although all three wished to reform the UN to, in their words, meet today's global challenges more effectively, they did not agree on its content.

Nor was there any commitment on energy security. The three countries acknowledged that, amid the war in Iran and the conflict in Ukraine, any regional disruption to energy infrastructure has a global impact far beyond the regions directly affected. Yet no targets or mechanisms were set.

Finally, the declaration mentioned an intention to begin trilateral nuclear talks and stated that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". Yet, as elsewhere, there was no arms control agreement, no commitment to reduce warheads, and no verification mechanisms or timelines.

The three did agree that the International Criminal Court (ICC) and similar bodies should not overreach in exercising their jurisdiction, reflecting long-held reservations in Washington, Moscow and Beijing about their scope and legitimacy.

Far from a new Yalta 2.0, as several outlets were quick to claim, the meeting left most issues in suspense, with no concrete agenda.

If the summit served any purpose, it was to show that the United States, far from imposing its will on every front, has no choice but to negotiate, compelled by circumstances. The fronts it keeps open force it to spread itself thin, no longer able to contain everything. Meanwhile, China–Russia relations are at their best moment in history: high political trust, close economic ties and broad diplomatic convergence.

One cannot fail to mention the EU's total absence: no presence at the meeting, not a single mention in the final declaration.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot sought to play down the summit, saying: "these three leaders fundamentally disagree on everything, so they cannot agree on anything".

Shenzhen was not Yalta. The problem is that there is no consensus on what it was. Stanly Johny, international affairs editor of The Hindu, saw the summit as "multipolarity with bipolar characteristics". Russian Eurasianist ideologue Alexander Dugin, for his part, posted on X on 16 November 2026, on the eve of the summit, a world map divided into three zones of influence, dominated by the United States (the Americas, Greenland and Japan), Russia (besides its own territory, Europe, Africa and West Asia) and China (all of southern Asia).

Whatever reading one takes of the summit, Trump undeniably arrived weakened, after his defeat in Iran, and leaves no stronger against his main strategic rival.

# Araghchi mocks 'circus' at Paris event, questions France's commitment to freedom of expression

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has criticized the disruption of an event in Paris attended by his French counterpart, Jean-Noël Barrot, questioning France's commitment to freedom of expression for Iranians living in the country.

In a post on his X account, Araghchi described the incident as a "circus" staged by the French Foreign Ministry and urged Barrot to address restrictions on the right of Iranians in France to express themselves before lecturing Tehran on the rights of Iranians in their own country.

"A circus in front of Barrot, organized by his own ministry," Araghchi wrote.

"Mr. Barrot should perhaps focus on ensuring freedom of expression for Iranians in France before lecturing us about the rights of Iranians in Iran," he added.

The incident took place late Wednesday at the Arab World Institute in Paris during an event focusing on Iranian women's rights, which Barrot attended.

The gathering was disrupted by supporters of Iran's former monarchy, who support Reza Pahlavi, the US-based son of the ousted shah. They reportedly taunted left-wing opponents of the Islamic Republic during the event.

Barrot later said the event had been organized to provide a platform for Iranian voices to express themselves freely.



## Tehran Chamber, Turkish ambassador consult on facilitating trade, goods transport

TEHRAN- During a meeting between Ahmet Aydin Dogan, Turkey's new ambassador in Iran, and Mahmoud Najafi Arab, head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, the two sides explained measures taken to facilitate trade exchanges and smooth road transport between the two countries, and examined solutions for developing Iran-Turkey trade and economic relations with a focus on strengthening transit corridors, joint production and investment, expanding exhibition interactions, and sending trade delegations.



In the continuation of diplomatic exchanges with the Tehran Chamber, Turkey's new ambassador, accompanied by the embassy's commercial counselor, also attended the private sector parliament of the capital and, in a meeting with the head of the Tehran Chamber, the secretary-general, and the deputy for international affairs and trade development, emphasized his embassy's readiness to strengthen economic and trade cooperation with Iran's private sector.

At the beginning of the meeting, the head of the Tehran Chamber referred to the good relations between Iran and Turkey, described Turkey's role in the resilience of Iran's economy during the eight-year imposed war as significant, and spoke of the need to strengthen trade relations between the two countries.

He then referred to the capacity of the shared borders between Iran and Turkey, described long truck queues at the borders as an obstacle to the development of trade between the two countries, and added: Given the restrictions created at Iran's southern ports, Turkish ports can be an alternative route for the import of part of goods by Iranian traders.

Najafi Arab, referring to the slowness of customs and border procedures, including at the Bazargan border, proposed that reciprocal passage of Iranian and Turkish road transport fleets be made possible. He also emphasized the need for expert examination of transport and logistics obstacles with the aim of speeding up the movement of goods between the two countries, and noted that currently only a limited part of the road transport fleet passage capacity at the Bazargan border is being used.

The head of the Tehran Chamber also listed facilitating the movement of goods at border crossings, examining the possibility of using other Turkish ports for trade by Iranian traders, resolving the problem of long truck queues at the borders, and determining the status of goods stockpiled in port warehouses as among the issues that can be pursued.

Najafi Arab, announcing the Tehran Chamber's readiness to pursue these issues with the participation of relevant ministries, emphasized the need to strengthen communication between specialized associations and relevant institutions of the two countries with the aim of facilitating transport and making better use of border capacities.

In another part of the meeting, Najafi Arab referred to opportunities for investment and joint production, and described the capacity of free and special economic zones and the availability of a 25-year tax exemption as a platform for developing cooperation between Iranian and Turkish companies. He proposed using this capacity in economic areas of interest to the parties to form joint cooperation in the production and supply of products.

**Removing obstacles to goods transport on the agenda**

Ahmet Aydin Dogan, Turkey's new ambassador in Iran, referring to the history of economic cooperation between the two countries, described Iran-Turkey relations, especially in industrial and trade areas, as extensive and developed. Stating that "Turkish companies have been cooperating with Iranian traders for years," he added: A number of Turkish companies are active in various economic fields in Iran. Also, the significant population of Iranians residing in Turkey, a major part of whom are economic actors, helps develop exchanges between the two countries.

Referring to the effective role of chambers of commerce in developing economic relations between the two countries, the Turkish ambassador expressed satisfaction with the Tehran Chamber's interactions with Turkish private sector associations and institutions and described these chambers as drivers of economic cooperation.

He also stated: Meetings have been held by my colleagues with Iranian officials, and while visiting some border crossings, measures have been pursued to improve customs and border procedures. Consultations have also been held with Iranian executive bodies to facilitate and accelerate road transport between the two countries.

Referring to the poor condition of some roads as one of the factors slowing transport, the Turkish ambassador reported that technical problems at border crossings are being examined and pursued by his colleagues. He described restrictions on fuel purchases, the lack of cargo on trucks' return routes, and taxes imposed on trucks with Turkish plates as other issues requiring examination and follow-up by the Iranian side.

In another part of his remarks, welcoming the Tehran Chamber's proposals on joint cooperation and benefiting from the capacities of free and special economic zones, he described removing obstacles to the activity of Turkish companies in Iran and providing support mechanisms for these companies as among solutions for developing trade relations between the two countries.

Aydin Dogan also announced planning for meetings with the participation of Turkish companies aimed at expanding trade cooperation with Iranian firms in the near future, and declared the Turkish Embassy's readiness to facilitate and strengthen economic interactions with Iran's public and private sectors.

**Need to strengthen dispatch of trade delegations from Turkey to Iran**

Fereydoun Vardi-Nejad, secretary-general of the Tehran Chamber, referring to the chamber's continuous interactions with the commercial counselor of the Turkish Embassy, announced the signing of memorandums of understanding with the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and the Istanbul Chamber of Industry on the exchange and dispatch of trade delegations. He said: Despite these agreements, the presence of Turkish trade delegations in Tehran has been limited, and so far the major part of the executive measures under these memorandums has been pursued by the Tehran Chamber.

Emphasizing the need to strengthen mutual cooperation, he called for a greater presence of trade delegations from Turkey in Iran and added: The exchange of experiences, technical knowledge, and up-to-date achievements between Iranian and Turkish traders can help complete the economic capacities of the two countries and expand joint cooperation.

The secretary-general of the Tehran Chamber, stating that "Iran's private sector continuously participates in specialized exhibitions in Turkey," invited Turkish traders to attend the Iran Expo exhibition, which will be held in early next year.

**Continuation of specialized meetings**

Bigle Donmez, commercial counselor of the Turkish Embassy in Iran, referring to the continuous holding of bilateral trade meetings between economic firms of the two countries, announced consultations for developing cooperation in the health and treatment sector and expressed hope that these interactions would lead to practical results in the medicine and medical equipment sector.

The commercial counselor of the Turkish Embassy in Iran described using the capacity of digital tools in developing trade exchanges, creating joint investment opportunities, and continuously holding trade meetings between Iranian and Turkish traders and businessmen as among solutions for developing trade between the two sides.

# Chinese ambassador expresses confidence in expansion of practical economic co-op with Iran

**By Mahnaz Abdi**

TEHRAN- Chinese Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu expressed confidence that practical economic cooperation between Tehran and Beijing will expand further, citing China's development achievements, its new Five-Year Plan, and growing Iranian business participation in Chinese trade exhibitions as key drivers of bilateral engagement.



Speaking at a press briefing at the Chinese Embassy in Tehran on November 25, Cong made the remarks in response to a Tehran Times question on how Beijing intends to advance practical economic cooperation with Iran under China's current development priorities—particularly in trade, investment, financial cooperation, and connectivity—despite existing international economic and financial restrictions.

The ambassador said China's modernization achievements provide strong momentum for expanding bilateral practical cooperation. He also highlighted effective governance and the role of the Communist Party of China, referring to the Fifth Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee and its emphasis on advancing full and rigorous Party self-governance, strengthening discipline, and improving governance.

On China's economy, he said 2026 marks the start of the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026–2030), noting steady, innovation-driven, high-quality development. He cited 4.6 percent growth in the first three quarters of the year, saying emerging growth drivers continued to develop and economic transformation progressed steadily. He described the plan as both a roadmap for China's development and an opportunity for growth across the Asia-Pacific and wider world, as well as an invitation to the international business community to explore new cooperation areas.

Cong pointed to growing engagement between Iranian and Chinese business communities, saying Iranian businesspeople participated more actively in last month's China International Import Expo in Shanghai, and Iran's national pavilion size increased by 20 percent. Iranian companies and representatives have also taken part in various trade exhibitions across China, demonstrating growing interest in the Chinese market. "In light of these positive trends, I have strong confidence in the further expansion of practical cooperation between China and Iran," he said.

The remarks came during a briefing on the Fifth Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, held in Beijing from October 26 to 29, and the 33rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, held in Shenzhen on November 18 and 19. Cong said China remains committed to promoting peace and stability in West Asia amid regional tensions.

He underlined the historical foundations of Iran-China relations, noting longstanding civilizational ties and more than five decades of diplomatic relations. Describing both countries as members of the Global South, he said their relationship has withstood regional and international developments over the past 55 years, and that sustained, healthy relations serve both peoples and shared Global South interests.

Noting that 2026 marks the 10th anniversary of the Iran-China comprehensive strategic partnership, he expressed hope both sides would use the occasion to advance cooperation to a new level. He said China stands ready to share its global governance experience with other countries, including Iran, and that the Chinese Embassy is willing to facilitate exchange and promote bilateral engagement. He concluded by expressing optimism about the future of Iran-China relations and further progress in cooperation.

## Iran drafts 20-article package for economic cooperation with Iraq

TEHRAN- The secretary of the Iran-Iraq Chamber of Commerce said: The draft resolution for developing financial exchanges between Iran and Iraq has been drafted in the form of 20 articles and submitted to the Cabinet, and its finalization awaits the Central Bank's written opinion.

According to the Mehr News Agency, Jahanbakhsh Sanjabi, board member and secretary-general of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, at a joint meeting of the "Trade Facilitation and Development" and "Money and Capital Market" committees of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, referring to measures taken to develop economic relations between the two countries, stated: The Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber, together with the Headquarters for the Development of Iran-Iraq Economic Relations, has submitted a proposed package consisting of five executive programs aimed at maintaining and stabilizing economic relations to the First Vice President, one of whose axes is using Iraq's capacity to facilitate financial exchanges.

He added: The generalities of this package have been approved in the government's economic subcommittee, and it has been decided that its details be examined with the participation of the Central Bank, the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber, the Economic Relations Development Headquarters, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, and the Trade Promotion Organization.

According to Sanjabi, the draft resolution of the Cabinet has been drafted and submitted in the form of 20 articles, and its finalization awaits receipt of the Central Bank's written opinion.

The secretary-general of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, in response to the question of whether Iraq can replace the UAE in Iran's financial exchanges, said: The answer to this question is both positive and negative, because Iraq, due to its trade volume and neighboring position, has significant capacity for Iran, but the country's banking and financial infrastructure is not comparable to that of the UAE.

Referring to restrictions on money transfers through Iraq's exchange-office network, he stated: From the Central Bank of Iraq's perspective, part of financial transfers with Iran faces legal restrictions. In addition, the gap between the official exchange rate and the free-market rate is also considered another challenge of financial activity in this country.

**Export figures and broader economic ties**

Sanjabi, presenting statistics on Iran's five-year exports to Iraq, said: According to official reports, the value of Iran's exports to Iraq during this period has exceeded $51 billion, but forex commitments have been settled for less than $34 billion of that amount, and as a result, about $17 billion of the foreign currency from exports has still not been determined in the statistics related to the settlement of forex commitments.

He continued: Expert reviews show that the return of resources from Iran's exports through Iraq's exchange-office network may take between four and 12 months. Therefore, it is necessary to design a mechanism that, while returning the resources from trade to the country's economic cycle, also manages the costs and benefits of intermediation.

In mid-October and on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Abdolnaser Hemmati, Governor of the Central Bank of Iran, met and held talks with Nizar Nasser Hussein, Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq.

This meeting, held in a constructive atmosphere, saw the two sides exchange views on ways to develop and consolidate bilateral relations.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran, in this meeting, referring to the deep historical, economic, and political commonalities between Iran and Iraq, emphasized the necessity of strengthening joint monetary and banking cooperation between the two countries.

He also announced the readiness of the banking system of the Islamic Republic of Iran to transfer experiences in banking areas.

And in early October, Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development, in a meeting with Iraq's ambassador in Tehran, highlighted the deep historical, cultural, and religious ties between Iran and Iraq, emphasized developing bilateral transport links in the rail, road, air, and maritime sectors, and reported efforts to resolve flight problems between Tehran and Baghdad.

Farzaneh Sadegh, after meeting Iraq's ambassador in Tehran, said in an interview, referring to the deep and historical relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq: "The relationship between Iran and Iraq is one between two countries with civilization, culture, history, and deep religious commonalities, which has brought the peoples of the two countries closer together."

She stressed: "This connection between the two countries is deep and intertwined, and countries that are far from Iran and Iraq in terms of culture, civilization, ethics, and historical and religious commonalities cannot create discord and separation between the two nations."

*(See full text at tehrantimes.com)*

## Chabahar–Zahedan railway 96% completed

TEHRAN- The CEO of the Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company announced the completion of rail-laying on the 480-kilometer Chabahar–Zahedan railway route and 96% physical progress on the project, saying it is expected to be ready for operation even earlier than the end of the next Iranian month (December 21).

According to IRNA, reporting from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Hooshang Bazvand, speaking on the sidelines of the 11th weekly monitoring meeting of the Chabahar–Zahedan railway project, said: Rail-laying on the 480-kilometer Chabahar–Zahedan route was completed about 40 days ago, and the project has now reached 96% physical progress.

Referring to the strategic importance of the project, he stated: The Chabahar–Zahedan railway is one of the country's infrastructure mega-projects, which is highly important economically and for its role in completing transport corridors, and the president and the minister of transport and urban development have placed special emphasis on its implementation.

The CEO of the Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company, referring to the start of rail-laying on this route from Khash in October 2024, added: Rail-laying on the 480-kilometer route was completed about 40 days ago, which, in my view, is a unique or at least rare record in the country's rail-laying sector and in the 14th government.

Bazvand, stating that the project now has about 96% physical progress, emphasized: According to the plan communicated by the minister of transport and urban development, we must complete the project by the end of the next month, and given the pace of work, there is even a possibility that it will be ready for operation before the end of Dey.

Referring to continuous oversight of the project's implementation, he said: The Chabahar–Zahedan railway project is being monitored continuously by the minister of roads and urban development's office and the Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company, and it is also included in the president's management dashboard. The exact date of its inauguration will be determined in coordination with the minister of roads and urban development and the president.

# Book says UAE and Israel were secret military partners decades before Abraham Accords




From page 1 ▶ Russian handlers then allegedly delivered the recording to their father, Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founder of the United Arab Emirates.

The old man saw through it. He was "amused," Cole says, and admired the "cunning." Inside the family, the episode came to be read as an early sign that MBZ intended to rule.

Cole's account of Khalifa's sexuality has not been verified elsewhere. Nor have his allegations that MBZ later lobbied Washington against Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, known as MBN, over rumors of homosexuality, though similar claims appear in books by Ben Hubbard and by Bradley Hope and Justin Scheck.

MBN was eventually pushed aside by Mohammed bin Salman, whose rise to power MBZ actively backed.

The book also disputes the official explanation for Khalifa's retreat. Khalifa became UAE president in 2004 but deferred to his younger brother, which was blamed on a 2014 stroke.

Cole says Khalifa was already struggling with alcoholism and an undiagnosed mental illness, and that MBZ, newly deputy crown prince of Abu Dhabi in 2003, allegedly drugged him through forced medical treatments that left him in a stupor and damaged his nerves.

An American nurse with a family connection to MBZ allegedly helped. Cole adds that MBZ fathered a child with the nurse's niece, Lisa, who raised the boy in Southern California.

**Fighter jets and a long-kept secret**

On Israel, Cole says MBZ was an admirer by the 1990s, over the objections of a father sympathetic to the Palestinians.

In 1998, as armed forces chief of staff, he read in Aviation Week about a new American F-16 fitted with Israeli software and pressed to buy it.

The UAE agreed to purchase 80 aircraft with Israeli systems installed. Washington was a participant, not a bystander: the Clinton administration hosted secret Israeli-Emirati talks to calm Israeli fears that the sale threatened its "Qualitative Military Edge."

The Abraham Accords, signed in September 2020, merely announced what the two militaries had long practiced, according to the book.

**The blunt deal and an Emirati poet**

The bargain Kushner, MBZ and MBS allegedly discussed was blunt.

Arab states in the Persian Gulf would recognize Israel and sideline the Palestinians. Jordan would take the vast majority of the roughly three million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, cutting its population by 90 percent. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would then recognize a rump Palestinian state, with some Negev and Jordanian land attached.

One Emirati stood in the way. Habib Al Sayegh, a poet, editor at Al Khaleej and secretary general of the Arab Writers Union, was no dissident.

He had defended the blockade of Qatar. In August 2019, he published a column titled "Israel Is Our Real Enemy and A Dangerous Project."

Security officers allegedly seized him on MBZ's orders, pulled out teeth with pliers and whipped him with a strap tipped with sharp metal for three days. An MBZ aide described the body as "almost unrecognizable."

Cole says a source explained the killing as a message: "We're all rowing in the direction that I choose." The rights group Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN) has asked the United Nations to open an independent investigation.

**Qatar crisis and the Fifth Avenue tower**

Cole says Kushner held the most consequential foreign policy job in Washington with no Senate confirmation, few notes, and almost no oversight.

Tom Barrack, now ambassador to Turkey, allegedly wanted a Persian Gulf-funded Marshall Plan for the region and was handed only "the Egyptian part."

When Saudi Arabia and the UAE blockaded Qatar in June 2017, Cole says Kushner quietly approved it and told no one.

Then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson later phoned Mohammed bin Salman to stop what Cole's sources describe as a possible Saudi incursion, in a country hosting 10,000 American troops.

One White House official told Cole Qatar was about 72 hours from losing its ruling family. Qatar later helped bail out the Kushner family's 666 Fifth Avenue tower, according to Cole.

# Hezbollah chief tells Basij youth that Israel will not remain on Lebanese soil




From page 1 ▶ Basij Day, marked on November 26, commemorates the volunteer mobilization founded by Imam Ruhollah Khomeini during Iran's Islamic Revolution.

Sheikh Qassem described the model as an effort to organize the energies of an entire people, and credited the martyred Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and martyred fighters with carrying it into Lebanon.

"With you, the Israeli enemy will not be able to remain on our land as an occupier," Sheikh Qassem told the volunteers.

He urged them to keep attending universities, running businesses, farming land and caring for their families, while remaining ready to defend Lebanon when danger demands it.

His words landed amid escalating Israeli aggression across southern and eastern Lebanon. On Thursday night, Israeli warplanes struck areas near Ayn al-Tina in the western Bekaa, followed on Friday by artillery shelling and airstrikes hitting Kfar Tibnit, Zawtar Sharqieh, and Qantara.

Two days earlier, at a ceremony launching an encyclopedic commentary on Nahj al-Balagha by the martyred Sayyed Hashem Safieddine, Sheikh Qassem warned that Hezbollah would not tolerate continued Israeli aggression without end.

"The Resistance's patience in the face of injustice has its limits," he said. "When we sense danger approaching, we will push it back and defend our existence and our rights."

He tied sovereignty to liberation. Lebanon cannot claim independence while Israeli forces attack its territory, occupy parts of the south and prevent displaced residents from returning home, Sheikh Qassem affirmed.

He called for an end to Israeli attacks, a full withdrawal, deployment of the Lebanese Army south of the Litani River, release of detainees, reconstruction of destroyed villages and the return of their people.

"There can be no sovereignty without liberation, and no independence alongside subservience," he said.

Sheikh Qassem directed his sharpest criticism at Washington. He accused the United States of pressing Lebanese authorities into concessions that favor Israel, and said Lebanon could not achieve independence under American tutelage or under regional states acting with Washington.

Submission to the U.S. ambassador's dictates, he argued, would fracture the country and destroy its ability to decide its own future.

He also criticized President Joseph Aoun's Independence Day address, saying it wrongly placed Israeli and American aggression on the same footing as Hezbollah and the Lebanese people enduring the attacks.

Sheikh Qassem questioned whether concessions and surrender had become the defining features of the current presidency, especially through a framework agreement he said had stripped Lebanon of its rights.

Sheikh Qassem rejected claims that Hezbollah serves Iran rather than Lebanon. "Iran bears the burdens for our sake," he said, presenting Tehran's support as solidarity with a people under attack rather than foreign control.

He reiterated Hezbollah's commitment to civil peace, national unity and the Lebanese Army, while saying the movement would discuss a national security strategy after an Israeli withdrawal and without external interference.

Sheikh Qassem also demanded the release of five young men detained in Batroun and defended members targeted in the Dahr al-Baidar case as carrying out legitimate resistance work.

# Israel threatens to displace one million Gazans

The war minister of Israel's interim government on Thursday made new threats to displace one million Palestinians in Gaza unless Hamas gives up its weapons, France 24 reported.

In a post on X, Israel Katz – who is known for his hawkish remarks – said that Hamas would either "disarm voluntarily" or the Israeli military "will disarm them as part of Operation Gideon's Chariots II – including another evacuation of one million Gaza residents southward".

On Thursday, Hamas reacted to the Katz's post, saying, "These statements once again make the occupation's premeditated intentions toward our people unmistakably clear."

It added, "They also demonstrate its utter disregard for all efforts to implement the agreements reached and the roadmap welcomed by the mediators and President Trump."

The threat by war minister Israeli Katz comes as three Israeli strikes overnight into Thursday killed eight Palestinians in Gaza City and central Gaza.

A strike on a residential apartment in Deir Al-Balah City in central Gaza killed a man and his wife, health officials said.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Katz said in a joint statement that the military killed Khaled Abu Nada, who oversaw economic and education affairs for Hamas in Gaza, in the overnight strike.

Another two separate strikes in Gaza City killed three people each, according to the Shifa hospital.

Israel's military said that one of the strikes targeted three Hamas forces without elaborating, and did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the other strike.

The overnight casualties are the latest in Gaza, where near-daily Israeli fire and airstrikes have persisted more than a year after a ceasefire deal was reached between Israel and Hamas.

In its statement, Hamas said, "As crimes, aggression, and grave threats against our people in the Gaza Strip continue, we have yet to hear a word from the so-called 'Peace Council.' It has maintained complete silence. We therefore hold it politically responsible for the blood of civilians being shed as a result of the occupation's crimes, the actions of war criminal Netanyahu, and the policies of his fascist government."

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Netanyahu on November 21, 2024, and then-war minister Yoav Gallant.

Starvation as a method of warfare and intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population cited as "war crimes." Murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts were also considered "crimes against humanity."

At least 74,746 Palestinians have been killed in more than three years of war in Gaza, according to the territory's health ministry.

**Hamas chief's son survives assassination attempt**

In its incessant deadly attacks on Palestinian citizens in Gaza, the Israeli occupation army on Friday attempted to assassinate the son of Hamas chief Khalil al-Hayya. However, the son survived the assassination attempt.



Senior Hamas official Basem Naim ?told Reuters that Izzeldeen al-Hayya and his family had survived a dawn airstrike and Hamas sources said several people, ?including Hayya's daughter-in-law, had been wounded but there ?had been no deaths.

**UN ruling disputes Israeli claims used to dismiss UNRWA Gaza staff**

Meanwhile, a United Nations tribunal has cast doubt on evidence used by UNRWA - the UN agency for Palestinian refugees - to dismiss staff in 2024.

The UNRWA Dispute Tribunal, an impartial tribunal within the UN, found that the decision was based almost entirely on unsubstantiated allegations by the Israeli government.

UNRWA dismissed nine Palestinian employees in January 2024 after allegations by Israel that they had participated in the October 7, 2023, Hamas-led attacks on southern Israel.

The tribunal noted that the UN's internal investigation did not include testimonies from the 19 staff members whom Israel accused of involvement in the attacks, according to the judgement seen by Al Jazeera on Thursday.

The judgement said "safety and security concerns" meant that the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) "was not able to interview the 19 staff members and afford them usual due process to respond to the allegations".

The tribunal also said the allegations against the workers were "based almost entirely on information in Israel's possession".

"That information has remained in the custody of Israeli authorities and they alone have remained privy as to exactly how it was collected, by whom, when, and where," it said.

The tribunal also expressed doubts over telephone conversations and messages that Israel claimed to have intercepted and presented as evidence of the staff members' involvement in the attacks, including with someone "identified by Israeli officials as a Hamas operative".

"OIOS did not confirm in the investigation report that it was satisfied that the caller was a Hamas operative or that the 'user' of the receiving phone was the Applicant," the judgement said.

# Palestinian detainees face widespread torture with govt approval: rights group

An Israeli human rights organization accused Israel on Friday of subjecting Palestinian detainees to widespread torture with government approval, saying the country's law enforcement system is unwilling to prevent such practices.

In a report obtained by Anadolu Agency, the Committee Against Torture in Israel said the government-sanctioned use of torture has repercussions throughout the Israeli judicial system, Middle East Monitor reported.

Statements extracted under torture make their way from interrogation rooms into police, prosecution, judicial, and detention systems, becoming part of case files, influencing judicial decisions and serving as grounds for convicting Palestinians, it said.

The Israeli law enforcement system has "no desire" to prevent torture, the committee said, adding that judges, lawyers, and senior officials ignore signs of torture even when they are clear and undisputed, and even sanction the practice.

Judges see bruises on detainees and hear their complaints of violence without taking effective measures to stop or investigate such practices, before being asked to rule on evidence obtained during interrogations, it added.

The report, titled "Tainted by Torture: Palestinian Detainees in the Israeli Judicial System," examined 42 complaints that the committee helped file over the past decade.

The complaints included cases of severe sleep deprivation, forcing men and women into stress positions and other forms of severe physical violence.

The committee warned that efforts to carry out executions in Israel for the first time since 1962 could affect Palestinians convicted on the basis of confessions extracted under torture, regardless of whether those confessions are truthful.

It stressed that the death penalty deprives individuals of their right to life and is irreversible, adding that its application within a judicial system that accepts confessions obtained under torture compounds the danger.

On March 30, the Israeli Knesset (parliament) gave final approval to a law providing for the execution of Palestinian prisoners, which took effect in the occupied West Bank in May.

The law provides for execution by hanging for Palestinians convicted by military courts of intentionally killing Israelis in attacks classified by Israel as "terrorist" acts.

It allows death sentences to be issued by a majority of judges even without a request from prosecutors, while excluding Israeli occupiers from the same legal procedure.

On May 11, the Knesset passed a separate law establishing a special military court to try detainees from the Gaza Strip accused of participating in certain attacks, allowing death sentences to be issued by a majority of judges.

The UN has called on Israel to repeal the law providing for the execution of Palestinian prisoners, while Human Rights Watch has described it as discriminatory legislation.

# Iran outlines sustainable tourism strategy at Tashkent international gathering

TEHRAN- Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri has outlined the country's efforts to promote sustainable tourism, expand rural tourism infrastructure and encourage renewable energy use at the International Conference on Sustainable and Resilient Tourism in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Addressing a specialized panel at the conference on Friday, Salehi-Amiri presented Iran's experience in distributing tourism opportunities more evenly across the country and involving local communities in the economic benefits of the industry, CHTN reported.

The minister said one of Iran's priorities has been to distribute tourist flows across different geographical areas, particularly by directing part of the tourism capacity toward rural communities, the report added.

He said this approach has been pursued through the expansion of traditional rural accommodation facilities, known as eco-lodges, and the development of tourism infrastructure in villages.




According to Salehi-Amiri, approximately 3,000 eco-lodges are currently operating across Iran, while establishing at least one such facility in every village is among the country's development goals. He said the initiative could help local communities benefit from tourism revenues and create employment opportunities beyond major urban and established tourist destinations.

The minister also referred to Iran's broader tourism infrastructure, saying the country has around 25,000 tourism facilities, including hotels, tourism villages and establishments providing health tourism services.

Turning to environmental sustainability, Salehi-Amiri highlighted efforts to promote green tourism and renewable energy, particularly solar power. He said the use of solar energy in some tourism facilities had been encouraged as part of measures to reduce the industry's environmental footprint.

He also pointed to the establishment of administrative mechanisms to coordinate sustainable tourism policies at both national and provincial levels. Provincial working groups are operating under the supervision of provincial directors-general of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts, while a national working group chaired by the ministry's deputy for tourism is responsible for coordinating and following up on related initiatives.

The minister said rural tourism development, investment in sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy use and institutional coordination collectively form part of Iran's efforts to move toward a more sustainable tourism model.

**Regional tourism cooperation**

On the sidelines of the Tashkent gathering, Salehi-Amiri also held separate meetings with tourism officials from Tajikistan, Pakistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan to discuss ways of strengthening regional cooperation.

*(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)*

# Minab hosts Women's Day rally commemorating Shajareh Tayyebeh School victims

TEHRAN- A city rally tour with a focus on women drivers was held in Minab, Hormozgan province, on Friday, marking Women's and Mother's Day and commemorating the students martyred in the Shajareh Tayyebeh School tragedy.

The event was organized to celebrate the occasion and honor the memory of the victims of the school tragedy, according to Salim Mohammadi, deputy director of the Hormozgan Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Mohammadi said the program was organized in cooperation with the provincial Department of Sports and Youth, the province's automobile and tourism vehicle sector, and the motorcycling and automobile racing associations of Hormozgan and Minab.

He described the rally as an opportunity to introduce Minab's tourism and cultural potential while bringing sporting activities together with urban tourism experiences.

The route, which passed through notable sites and attractions in the city, was intended to familiarize participants with Minab's local identity, cultural heritage and tourist destinations, he added.

Mohammadi said the event could also help promote urban tourism and encourage greater participation by women in tourism-related activities.

The rally was held in remembrance of the victims of the Shajareh Tayyebeh School tragedy in Minab, whose memory has become a central part of commemorative events in the city.

On February 28, the Shajareh Tayyebeh elementary school in Minab became the site of a devastating massacre as the United States and Israel initiated their strikes against Iran.

*(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)*

# Historic Kong port to host cultural, tourism festival

TEHRAN- The historic port of Kong in Hormozgan province is set to host a series of cultural, artistic and social events aimed at celebrating its maritime heritage, highlighting its tourism potential and preserving the region's longstanding cultural identity.

The five-day Cultural and Tourism Week and National Day of Historic Kong Port will run from November 30 to December 4, featuring a variety of programs showcasing the port's traditional customs, maritime knowledge and rich local culture, provincial tourism official Salim Mohammadi said on Thursday.

The event will provide an opportunity to present the region's longstanding seafaring traditions and the cultural heritage of its residents, Mohammadi added.

He described Kong as a prominent living example of maritime culture, sea trade and climate-adapted architecture in southern Iran, noting that the continued practice of traditional customs and efforts to preserve its historic urban fabric underline the importance of safeguarding the port's heritage.

According to Mohammadi, the events have been planned to tell the story of the region's history, honor the legacy of previous generations and strengthen younger people's connection with Kong's historical and cultural identity.

He added that the organizers seek to use the occasion to promote sustainable tourism and introduce Hormozgan's attractions to a wider audience.

The five-day program will include handicrafts exhibitions, performances of traditional rituals and local music, specialized sessions on architecture and urban planning, and educational workshops focusing on cultural heritage preservation.

Located on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf in Hormozgan Province, the historic port of Kong has long been an important center of maritime trade, fishing and traditional boatbuilding. Its cultural landscape reflects centuries of interaction between Iran and other parts of the Persian Gulf, East Africa and South Asia. The town is known for its distinctive historic urban fabric, traditional houses, narrow shaded alleys, windcatchers (badgirs) and underground water-storage structures, which demonstrate how local architecture adapted to the region's hot and dry climate.

Kong is also associated with the traditional skills of building and sailing lenj boats, wooden vessels historically used for trade, fishing and long-distance sea journeys. These skills, along with the knowledge, customs, music and rituals connected with navigation, were inscribed on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2011. The Cultural Landscape of Kong Historic Port is also included on UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites.

Situated on the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, Hormozgan is home to picturesque coasts, natural and historical landmarks, and bustling shopping centers always attracting tourists' attention to the southern province.

Historical documents indicate that the settlement of this region dates back to the Achaemenid era. This province has always been of great importance due to its access to the Persian Gulf.

The name Hormozgan comes from the Strait of Hormuz. Due to the importance of this strait for the country, since 1976, the coastal province, ports, islands of the Persian Gulf, and the Sea of Oman have been renamed to Hormozgan.

Hormozgan borders Kerman to the north and northeast, Fars and Bushehr to the west and northwest, and is adjacent to Sistan-Baluchestan to the east.

## Iran lose to Australia in 2027 FIBA World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN – Iran were defeated against Australia 84-67 in the 2027 FIBA World Cup qualifier on Friday.

Max Mackinnon put on a shooting clinic, dropping 30 points to help the Boomers secure their ticket to the 2027 World Cup.

For Iran, Mohammad Amini finished with 15 points, five rebounds, an assist, and six steals in Seremban, Malaysia.

Team Melli are scheduled to face the Philippines on Sunday.

Australia booked their place with 18 points, followed by New Zealand (16 points) and Iran (14 points).

The top three teams in each of the two groups will go to Doha, along with the best fourth-placed team by the end of the sixth window in March.

In Group F, China suffered a shock 82-80 loss to Saudi Arabia on Thursday to fall to 5-4, tying South Korea for third and fourth place. South Korea had earlier routed Qatar, 74-52.

Meanwhile, Australia became the first team in the Asian Qualifiers to qualify for the World Cup after improving to a perfect 9-0 record with three games to play.

New Zealand boosted their own World Cup aspirations by going 7-2, good for second in Group E.

## Abdollahpour wins silver at World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Final

TEHRAN – Iran's Maryam Abdollahpour claimed the silver medal at the World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Final on Friday.

The Iranian representative in the women's under-57kg category sustained an injury during her semifinal bout against a Chinese opponent at the Para Taekwondo Grand Prix underway in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The Chinese athlete was disqualified after delivering an illegal kick to Abdollahpour's face, allowing the Iranian athlete to advance to the final.

However, due to her injury, Abdollahpour was unable to compete in the final and had to settle for the silver medal.

With this result, she earned 60 valuable points towards qualification for the Paralympic Games.

## Iran march into 2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup final

TEHRAN - Iran moved a step closer towards defending their title with a dominating 10-2 win over Lebanon in the semi-finals of the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2026 on Friday.

Four-time champions Iran will meet either Japan or Oman in Saturday's final.

Mahdi Shirmohammadei set the tone for Iran in the second minute, sweeping the ball wide past the left post then heading over two minutes later. At the other end, captain Mohammad Merhi saw his shot fly over the bar off a corner as Lebanon soaked up the pressure to move upwards, Davoud Baghdadabadi found Iran's opener in the sixth minute, directing Ali Nazem's lob with a confident overhead kick from close range past Ali Hallal.

Mohammadali Mokhtari went around Hallal in the ninth minute to put the ball into an empty net and Mohammad Masoumizadeh added another a minute later after intercepting a poor goal kick by Hallal and firing between the keeper's legs, the-afc.com reported.

Goal number four dropped when Nazem's attempt hit his opposing number Sameh Jalal in the chest and bounced in, Ali Mirshekari then headed in off Nazem's cross before Mahmoud Matar bundled the ball into his own net after fumbling Movahed Mohammadpour's bicycle kick.

Lebanon pulled one back in the 16th minute, Haitham Fattal picking up Matar's pass to place the ball beyond a lunging Mohammed Dastan, but that was as far as they got, Masoumizadeh finding the net again by snatching Mohamad Ossman's poor back pass to second-choice keeper Mohamed Choker and slotting home.

Reza Dayeri secured goal number eight with a superb volley that landed in the bottom left corner in the 23rd minute, Dastan then tipping over his counterpart Choker' s goal kick five minutes later to prevent Lebanon adding a second. The Central Asian side wrapped up their emphatic win with Masoumizadeh securing his hat-trick in the 31st minute and a free-kick by Mohammadpour (35th) before Dastan mishandled Hallal's kick to gift Lebanon a second consolation goal.

The 2026 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup is the 12th edition (5th official) of the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup, the premier beach soccer tournament contested by Asian men's national teams, organized by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

The tournament is taking place between 18 and 28 November 2026.

Iran are the two-time defending champions, having defeated Oman in the 2025 final.

## Iran claims historic bronze at World Youth Table Tennis Championships

TEHRAN - Iran's Benyamin Faraji and his Kazakh teammate, Alan Kurmangaliyev, have secured a historic bronze medal in the doubles event at the World Youth Table Tennis Championships, marking the first time an Iranian player has reached the podium in this category at the competition.

Their campaign came to an end in the semi-finals after they suffered a 3–0 defeat to South Korea. The Korean pair took the first two games 11-6 before wrapping up the match with an 11-5 win in the third to advance to the final.

Before reaching the last four, Faraji and Kurmangaliyev had beaten their counterparts from India and Poland in two hard-fought matches, winning both 3-2.

Their victories secured them a place among the tournament's top four pairs and guaranteed them a bronze medal.

China also advanced to the final after overcoming France in the other semifinal, setting up a title clash with South Korea.

The historic medal represents Iran's maiden podium finish in the doubles competition at the World Youth Table Tennis Championships.

The Iranian youth team was coached by Miad Makif, head coach of the national youth squad, while Ali Haddadgar accompanied the delegation as its head.

The ITTF World Youth Championships 2026 are being held at Ata Sporlar? Merkezi in Istanbul, Turkey, from November 21 to 28.

## Foolad remain third in 2026/27 PGPL

TEHRAN – Foolad football team and Paykan shared the spoils in a goalless draw in matchweek 14 of 2026/27 Iran's Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) on Friday.

Sepahan sit top of the table with 27 points with one game in hands. Foolad are third with 25 points.

Since 2013, the league comprises 16 teams. The winner of the Persian Gulf Pro League along with the Hazfi Cup champion automatically qualify for the AFC Champions League Elite group stages. The third-place team of the Persian Gulf Pro League qualifies for the AFC Champions League Elite Play-off round.

The bottom two teams in the league are relegated to Azadegan League. The format and number of teams has varied over the years.

*First Announcement*

National Iranian Oil Company

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

**TENDER NO.: 08-21-0540015**

**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 5 IN, L-80, SEAMLESS, 18 PPF, VFJL | 14,000 | LE |
| 2 | CASING 5 IN, P-110, SEAMLESS, 18 PPF, VAM FLUSH JOINT | 2,500 | 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 135,526.77 EURO or 275,927,495,190 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.**

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

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# Earthquake drill aims to turn students into safety ambassadors

TEHRAN – The 28th national "Earthquake and Safety" drill will be held simultaneously in schools across the country on Sunday, November 29, marked by the ringing of the earthquake bell, with the aim of promoting preparedness and encouraging students to act as safety ambassadors in their homes and communities.

This year's drill will be held under the theme "Safe Schools, Resilient Society," IRNA reported.

"The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world, undergoing earthquakes with various social and economic consequences. Hence, we are looking for ways to enhance public preparedness and invest in educating a generation that is well-informed, collected, and trained to respond to natural hazards," IRNA quoted Omid Mohtarami, an official with the Crisis Management Organization, as saying.

This approach is not a choice, but a fundamental and strategic necessity, he added.



According to the official, some 16 million students along with their parents and teachers from nearly 120,000 schools will participate in this year's maneuver. The national Crisis Management Organization aims to ensure that school earthquake drills transform from one-off, symbolic exercises and theoretical knowledge into muscle memory.

Earthquakes drills do not merely focus on training on sheltering; it seeks to instill a sense of readiness and prepare students and staff on how to establish clear evacuation route, and avoid rushing, Mohtarami noted.

These students become safety ambassadors in their homes and society; consequently, the function of the school evolves from a purely educational institution into a central hub and base for crisis management training and prevention at the neighborhood and local community levels.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran, but more than 6 percent of the victims of the world's earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.

In the past Iranian year (March 2025 – March 2026), a total of 2,380 earthquakes with a magnitude of more than 2.5 on the Richter scale were recorded across the country over the past calendar year (March 2025–March 2026), according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran, Mehr news agency reported.

Out of recorded earthquakes, 910 had a magnitude greater than 3, 130 had a magnitude greater than 4, and 15 had a magnitude greater than 5 on the Richter scale.

# Free screening for three major cancers available at health centers

TEHRAN – The ministry of health has been providing free early detection and screening services for breast, cervical and colorectal cancers through its nationwide primary healthcare network for the past decade, with the program currently operating across 28,000 health facilities in urban and rural areas.

The initiative aims to identify these three potentially treatable cancers at earlier stages, when timely medical intervention can improve treatment outcomes, reduce complications and lower healthcare costs, Maryam Beheshtian, head of the Cancer Management Group at the Health Ministry's Office for Non-Communicable Disease Management, said on Thursday.

Speaking about the country's cancer prevention and early detection efforts, Beheshtian said the program, launched approximately ten years ago, is currently available free of charge at 17,000 rural health houses, 6,000 health posts and 5,000 comprehensive health service centers.

She noted that Iran, like many other countries, has incorporated early detection services for these cancers into its healthcare system, allowing people to receive initial assessments and, when necessary, be referred to specialized medical facilities.

Under the program, women aged 30 to 69 are eligible for breast cancer screening, while cervical cancer assessments are offered to women aged 30 to 59. Colorectal cancer screening targets people between the ages of 50 and 69.

Beheshtian explained that individuals who notice warning signs or symptoms can also seek free screening and assessment services at designated health facilities.

The process begins with preliminary examinations and questions about individuals' health conditions and medical histories. Those who require further investigation are referred from the primary healthcare level to the second level of services for more specialized examinations and diagnostic procedures.

She stressed that early identification is particularly important because cancers detected at earlier stages are generally easier and less costly to treat, while timely intervention can improve patients' prospects for successful treatment.

Public awareness and preventive education are also integral parts of the initiative. According to Beheshtian, healthcare workers provide women and other eligible groups with information on self-care practices and ways to recognize potential warning signs.

As part of these efforts, the Health Ministry organized a public awareness initiative this year under the slogan "Together Against Cancer: From Prevention to Treatment and Palliative Care."

The campaign involved the production of 200 educational materials in audio and visual formats, covering different aspects of cancer prevention, early detection, treatment and supportive care.

The materials were made available through the Health Ministry's website and distributed to representatives of various organizations and government ministries following a series of interdepartmental meetings, she added.

Iran's National Cancer Control Program also places early detection alongside prevention, diagnosis, treatment and supportive and palliative care as key components of a comprehensive national response to the disease. The strategy emphasizes strengthening healthcare infrastructure, improving public awareness and ensuring timely access to diagnostic and treatment services.

**National cancer care network**

The health ministry is set to launch the national cancer care network, aiming to integrate fragmented cancer treatment services into a coordinated, team-based, and traceable care pathway.

The initiative aims to ensure that the patients entering the network follow a clear path through the stages of diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up, without the need for patients to go to various centers, ISNA quoted Ali Motlaq, an official with the health ministry, as saying in September.

No new medical center is planned to be built; the network will benefit from available capacities to connect specialized physicians and medical centers. Based on the type of cancer, the center's capacity, the patient's place of residence, and other defined criteria, the patients would be referred to the best center and medical team, he noted.

The activities of the network focus on enhancing the quality of care, improving access, and reducing the financial burden of care on patients. Standardization of clinical pathways, systematic referral, teamwork and multidisciplinary decision-making, capacity management of centers, early diagnosis, patient navigation, and the electronic recording and monitoring of care pathways will also be among key components of the program, the official highlighted.

According to Motlaq, free cancer treatment does not mean unconditional access to cancer-related services and all medications free of charge in public and private sectors. The program aims to minimize patients' out-of-pocket costs for covered services in the public sector, and in specific cases, without paying any money directly.

Recording the information of patients, their referrals and follow-ups, and the received care will help clarify a patient's current situation, whether they have received required services, and who or what center is responsible for the next step in their treatment, he said.

# Iranian scholar grabs global leadership excellence award at CLC

TEHRAN – Mehdi Rashidi-Jahan, the CEO of Iran's Youth Science and Technology Center, has received the global influencer and leadership excellence award at the Creative Leadership Conference (CLC) Global held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The CLC Global was held from November 18 to 23, hosting leaders, managers, experts, entrepreneurs, and innovators from 60 countries, IRIB reported.

The event was a global conference on artificial intelligence (AI), technology, e-commerce and startups, while maintaining a broader focus on leadership, entrepreneurship, collaboration and professional networking. It served as a great platform to exchange experiences, present modern management perspectives, enhance professional interactions, and expand international cooperation among experts in different fields.

Since 2010, Rashidi-Jahan has been working across education, science, and technology, with a focus on developing educational and research programs, identifying and nurturing talented adolescents, expanding entrepreneurial opportunities, and establishing scientific and educational collaborations.

The award recognizes influential personalities, entrepreneurs, professionals, creators, and change-makers who are making a remarkable impact in their industry or community through leadership, innovation, and influence.

The CLC is a leadership and innovation platform established in Pakistan in 2023. The conference is global platform dedicated to empowering leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, innovators, and policymakers through leadership, networking, and innovation. Since its inception, CLC has been committed to creating a space where ideas are exchanged, partnerships are formed, and




opportunities are created that inspire collaboration, drive innovation, and generate meaningful impact across Pakistan and around the world.

The 2026 conference included keynote addresses, panel discussions, interactive dialogues and practical workshops. Workshop themes advertised by CLC include freelancing, e-commerce, AI, digital marketing and leadership psychology.

The event also included networking activities, startup exhibitions and pitches, creative competitions, leadership awards and cultural activities. The event was designed to connect participants with entrepreneurs, policymakers, CEOs, industry professionals, innovators and change-makers.

# Iran urges fair and inclusive financing for biodiversity conservation

TEHRAN – Iran has called for fairer, more inclusive and transparent international financing mechanisms for biodiversity conservation, stressing that sanctions and banking restrictions should not prevent countries from accessing financial resources needed to protect ecosystems and preserve biodiversity.



Biodiversity conservation efforts

Biodiversity is a global heritage whose conservation transcends national borders and requires collective international responsibility. Adequate funding and equitable access to international financial support are essential to protecting endangered species, preserving ecosystems and advancing global biodiversity targets.

Iran, home to rich biodiversity and a range of threatened species, needs both domestic and international resources to safeguard its natural heritage. However, unilateral sanctions and related financial restrictions have complicated access to some international funding opportunities, raising concerns over the equitable distribution of conservation resources.

Iranian representatives highlighted these concerns during the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17), held in Yerevan, Armenia, from October 19 to 30, calling for international financing mechanisms to ensure that access to support is determined by conservation needs, scientific criteria and eligibility requirements rather than political considerations.

Hamid Zohrabi, deputy head of the Department of Environment for Natural Environment and Biodiversity, said the country sought to emphasize fairness, transparency, inclusiveness and equal access for all eligible countries to international financial resources during the conference deliberations.

He said international financing mechanisms should develop practical measures to reduce implementation barriers, facilitate technical cooperation and improve developing countries' access to financial resources, while respecting relevant rules and requirements.

One of the key agenda items at COP17 was the first global review of collective progress in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The assessment highlighted a substantial gap between global commitments and implementation, with countries needing to accelerate efforts to achieve biodiversity targets by 2030.

Financing remains a major challenge in implementing the framework, which requires predictable, sustainable, timely, transparent and accessible resources, particularly for developing countries.

Iranian representatives raised the issue during negotiations on financial mechanisms, resource mobilization and other implementation-related documents, alongside delegations from developing countries, least developed countries and small island states.

In addition to the main conference sessions, Iran's delegation attended side events and held meetings with international biodiversity organizations to explore opportunities for financial and technical assistance for conservation projects.

Zohrabi noted, however, that the adoption of financial decisions at COP17 does not necessarily mean that new funding will be allocated to Iran.

Among the initiatives discussed at the conference was the Friends of Target 18, which seeks to advance the reform and elimination of subsidies harmful to biodiversity and promote positive incentives for conservation, including biodiversity-friendly subsidies.

Iran hopes to make greater use of international biodiversity financing mechanisms, particularly the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) and other relevant international funds, through continued engagement and the development of appropriate mechanisms.

Biodiversity is not merely a national asset but a global treasure, and its protection is a shared responsibility. Political and economic barriers should not undermine conservation efforts or accelerate the loss of biodiversity.

The Department of Environment (DOE) has released the final revision of the 'National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP3)', which provides a framework to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and achieve harmony with nature by 2050 through effective, comprehensive national participation.

The NBSAP3 has been developed through a participatory and forward-looking process, drawing upon the long-standing Iranian tradition of respect for nature, consistent with the national and global goals and the country's commitments to biodiversity, IRNA reported.

The strategy is designed to establish a national framework for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity, aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF).

The NBSAP aims to safeguard Iran's valuable natural assets by making biodiversity conservation an integral part of national development, public well-being, and Iranian identity. It seeks to achieve this through broad-based engagement involving all levels of government and society.

Speaking on October 16, at the summit of heads of state and government held as part of the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) in Yerevan, President Masoud Pezeshkian called for "peace diplomacy" to protect biodiversity, condemning the devastating environmental impact of wars of aggression as ecocide and urging the international community to establish effective, transparent, and enforceable mechanisms to safeguard natural heritage during wartime.

Pezeshkian described environmental cooperation as a bridge between nations, stressing that biodiversity conservation could serve as an important pillar of "peace diplomacy."

"In a region facing security crises stemming from the illegal and expansionist presence of powers, as well as climate change, water scarcity and ecosystem degradation, environmental cooperation can build bridges between nations," he said.

To strengthen the protection of wildlife species and habitats across the country based on a targeted and strategic approach, the DOE is implementing a comprehensive range of conservation, scientific, legal and operational initiatives, with priorities guided by data and scientific research.

The DOE focuses on a more scientific approach to develop and implement conservation efforts tailored to specific needs of each species and habitat, IRNA quoted Peyman Valizadeh, an official with the DOE, as saying.

It has so far prepared plans for the preservation of 25 endangered species, with thirteen more plans being developed. The plans provide a clear framework for species conservation by delineating the species' status, major threats, conservation priorities, necessary actions, and assessment indicators, he noted.

However, the DOE faces some challenges to implement these measures at national and provincial levels. One of the biggest challenges is securing funding to implement the plans. Developing specialized capacity to preserve species is the other problem. Lack of trained, specialized forces has made it difficult to implement the conservation action plans effectively. Therefore, training specialized personnel, developing experts' capacities in provinces, and strengthening scientific and technical capabilities of the headquarters are put on the agenda, the official highlighted.

# TEHRAN TIMES

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**NOVEMBER 28, 2026**


**GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING**

*This life is an epoch whilst the Hereafter is eternity.*
***Imam Ali (AS)***

**Prayer Times »** Noon:11:52 Evening: 17:12 Dawn: 5:23 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:52 (tomorrow)

## London Palestine Film Festival concludes

The London Palestine Film Festival, founded in 1998 by London University's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), has become a city-wide cultural event. The two-week festival lineup from November 13 to 27 featured more than 40 individual feature and short films, with more than 27 screenings and events, in arts centers and independent cinemas across London.



*A scene from "Who Is Still Alive"*

Gaza was again the central focus of this year's festival, even as coverage in the media has faded, featuring "Who Is Still Alive," the frontline medical documentary "Life Support," "From Ground Zero," "Chronicles from the Siege," and several short films, "Gaza's Twins," "Come Back to Me," "Madleens," documenting a grassroots civilian flotilla that set sail across the Mediterranean to challenge the blockade of Gaza, World Socialist We Site reported.

Most of the screenings and events, many held in large venues, sold out rapidly, testifying to the enormous popular opposition to Israel's ongoing war of annihilation of the Palestinians.

One of the major events was "A Life in Cinema: A Tribute to Mohammad Bakri," who died in December 2025, featuring films he directed—such as "Jenin, Jenin" and "Since You Left"—alongside Screen Talks with his sons, the actors Saleh and Ziad Bakri.

The lineup of films was predominantly, but not exclusively, intimate, first-hand human testimonies rather than traditional news reporting, exemplified by the opening film "Who Is Still Alive," directed by Nicolas Wadimoff, Switzerland, 2025. It had two sold-out screenings and Q&A events at the Barbican Arts Center, the largest performing arts center in Europe.

The documentary, which premiered at the 2025 Venice International Film Festival, won the Cinema & Arts Award in Venice and the Prix de Soleure at the 2026 Solothurn Film Festival. In August 2026, the Swiss Federal Office of Culture selected it as Switzerland's official submission for Best International Feature Film at the 99th Academy Awards.

The documentary features nine survivors of the assault on Gaza, including an artist, musician, writer, journalist, film maker and school student, who share memories of the lives they left behind, their escapes, and their personal losses. Some of the handful of Palestinians that were able to escape via the Rafah crossing to Egypt before May 2024, they tell their stories amid a map of Gaza drawn in white paint on a black floor, showing its cities, camps, and neighborhoods. The only visual elements are the participants' own videos taken on their phones.

They present their often warm memories and their feelings about Gaza—a city that had since 2007 been subject to a brutal Israeli blockade, aided and abetted by Egypt, the Palestinian Authority and the imperialist powers, and denied most of modern life's essentials. In 2010, the then UK Prime Minister David Cameron described it in the House of Commons as a "giant open prison". Home to 2.3 million Palestinians, it has been all but obliterated by the ongoing Israeli bombardment.

The participants in the documentary come from the more privileged social layers within Gaza. Few others were able to get out. For this reason, their suffering highlights the unimaginable brutality of the situation facing those still trapped there.

## Cartoon of Day




The board of peace ignores the occupation's crimes and adopts its pretexts.
**Cartoonist:** Fahd Bahady from Syria

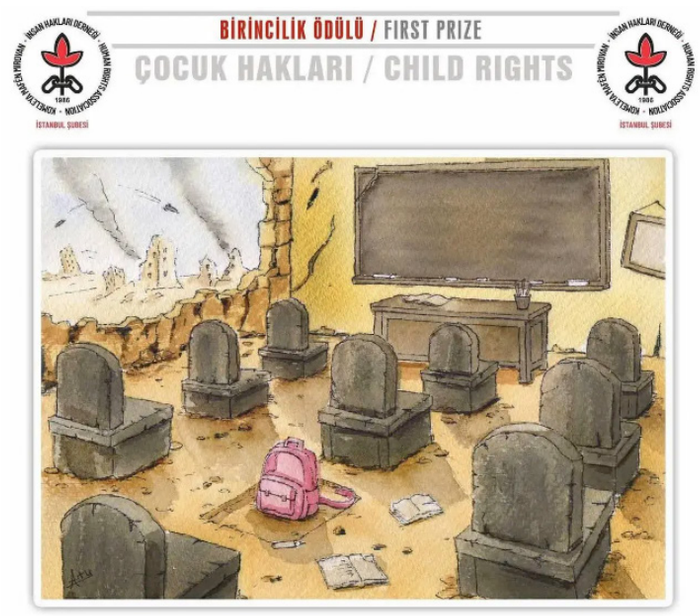
# Iranian cartoonist wins in 3rd International Cartoon Competition in Türkiye for Minab cartoon

TEHRAN – An Iranian cartoonist has won a prize at the 3rd International Cartoon Competition, organized by the Culture and Arts Commission of the Istanbul Branch of the Human Rights Association (İHD) in Türkiye.

Atefeh Yaryan has received the First Prize in the General Category for her cartoon about the martyred Minab students, ILNA reported.

The Shajareh Tayyebeh School, located in Minab, Hormozgan province, was struck on February 28, as the US and Israel launched their military campaign against Iran. The attack hit the school while students were attending classes, killing 168 children and members of the school community. The incident caused widespread grief across Iran and prompted strong condemnation from Iranian officials, who described the targeting of the educational facility as a grave crime.

The tragedy has since become a symbol of the human cost of the military aggression, particularly for children and their families. Memorial initiatives and cultural events have sought to preserve the victims' memory and bring international attention to the consequences of attacks on civilian facilities.




Held under the theme "Children's Rights," the competition brought together 520 cartoonists from 49 countries, who submitted a total of 1,238 artworks, once again demonstrating the power of art as a universal language in the struggle for human rights.

The participation of young artists under the age of 18, who contributed 93 artworks, was particularly meaningful. Their involvement reminds us that children are not merely individuals whose rights must be protected, but also active voices capable of expressing their own rights, questioning the world around them, and shaping the future.

Today, children in many parts of the world continue to face the devastating consequences of war, poverty, discrimination, violence, forced displacement, child labor, and deprivation of education.

Children's rights to life, education, healthcare, shelter, safety, play, and freedom of expression are fundamental human rights that must never be postponed or denied under any circumstances.

In the face of these realities, cartoon art is more than a form of artistic expression. It is also a powerful means of strengthening collective memory, making the invisible visible, encouraging criticism and reflection, and building solidarity.

The artworks submitted to the competition represent the artistic expression of a shared conscience emerging from different parts of the world and a common belief in every child's right to live in an equal, free, and safe world.

# Iranian, Turkish musicians to perform concert in Ankara dedicated to martyred Minab students

TEHRAN – Through coordination with the Iranian Cultural Attaché in Ankara, a joint concert featuring Iranian and Turkish musicians, dedicated to the memory of the martyred Minab students, will take place on November 30 and December 1 at the 800-seat Presidential Symphony Orchestra Concert Hall in Ankara, Turkey.

During an online coordination meeting for the joint concert, Asghar Farsi, the Cultural Attaché of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkey, praised Şefika Kutluer, Turkish flutist, for her decision to dedicate the opening concert of the 17th International Şefika Kutluer Festival, to opposing war and expressing solidarity with the martyred children in Minab, ILNA reported.

The Shajareh Tayyebeh School, located in Minab, Hormozgan province, was struck on February 28, as the US and Israel launched their military campaign against Iran. The attack hit the school while students were attending classes, killing 168 children and members of the school community. The incident caused widespread grief across Iran and prompted strong condemnation from Iranian officials, who described the targeting of the educational facility as a grave crime.

The tragedy has since become a symbol of the human cost of the military aggression, particularly for children and their families. Memorial initiatives and cultural events have sought to preserve the victims' memory and bring international attention to the consequences of attacks on civilian facilities.

For her part, Kutluer said that artists must always be the voice of humanity's awakened conscience. "As an artist and as a citizen of Turkey, a neighboring country of Iran, I am deeply saddened by the war directed against Iran and, specifically, by the loss of children's lives."

"Therefore, both as an international artist and in my capacity as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, I have decided to dedicate he opening concert of this year's festival to Minab students. This program serves as both an artistic protest against violence against civilians and children, and a sign of solidarity with the children of Minab."

Kutluer also noted the prominent place of Iranian music in world art history, saying: "Iranian music possesses a rich tradition and vast artistic capacities. Given the historical and musical affinities between Iran and Turkey, and the ability of Iranian music to resonate in international spaces, I believe a joint performance with Iranian artists could be a highly successful and valuable experience."

"Our instruments and our emotions are our weapons. We will tell the world: Let the children live," she said.

Seven musicians from the Iranian National Orchestra will join the upcoming concert, calling for peace through music.

The concert, titled "Let the Children Live," seeks to deliver a universal message of peace. The Iranian delegation will perform traditional instruments such as the tar, santur, oud, ney, and kamancheh. They will perform alongside Kutluer, bringing together traditional Iranian and Anatolian music in a program featuring works inspired by Turkish poets and thinkers including Âşık Veysel and Yunus Emre as well as Persian poet Rumi.

Two new compositions written by the Iranian musicians specifically for Kutluer and the concert will also receive their world premieres.

Kutluer, who has performed across five continents and released 17 albums, is among Türkiye's prominent cultural ambassadors. Her international honors include state decorations from Italy, Austria, Kazakhstan and Slovakia. She has organized the festival for 17 consecutive years, bringing musicians, orchestras and conductors from different countries to Türkiye.

# Anne Carson's 'How Not to Read a Poem' published in Persian

TEHRAN- "How Not to Read a Poem," an essay by Canadian poet and 2026 Nobel laureate Anne Carson, has been published in Persian in a translation by Saeed Amiri Chimeh.

The 56-page book has been released in the Arghanoon collection by Vazn-e Donya Publications in Tehran.

Originally published in 1992 in the academic journal "Classical Philology", the essay examines a philosophical exchange between Socrates and Protagoras in Plato's dialogue "Protagoras." Their discussion centers on a poem by Simonides of Ceos, an ancient Greek lyric poet, and the ways in which its meaning can be interpreted.

In Plato's dialogue, Socrates and Protagoras attempt to analyze Simonides' poem through philosophical argument, examining its language and the apparent contradictions in its statements. Carson revisits this exchange to explore the complicated relationship between poetry and philosophical interpretation.

Rather than treating the poem as a text with a single, easily identifiable meaning, Carson examines how the philosophers' efforts to explain it can lead them away from the poetry itself. Their discussion, she suggests, exposes the limitations of imposing a rigid philosophical framework on poetic language.

Drawing on her background in classical languages and literature, Carson approaches the subject with both the precision of a scholar and the sensitivity of a poet. She investigates how meaning is produced through language and how attempts to establish a definitive interpretation may obscure the complexity and ambiguity that make poetry distinctive.

The essay offers a broader reflection on the act of reading itself, questioning whether analytical approaches always bring readers closer to a literary work or sometimes distance them from its essential qualities.

Born in Toronto, Canada, in 1950, Anne Carson is a poet, essayist, translator and classicist whose work has established her as one of the most distinctive figures in contemporary literature. She studied classical languages and literature at the University of Toronto, where she received her bachelor's degree in 1974, master's degree in 1975 and PhD in Classics in 1981.

Her academic background, particularly her extensive engagement with ancient Greek literature, has had a profound influence on her writing. Carson frequently brings classical mythology, philosophy and poetry into conversation with contemporary literary forms, combining scholarly research with personal reflection, experimentation and unconventional narrative structures.

Her first major book, "Eros the Bittersweet," published in 1986, explores the nature of desire and the paradoxes of love through ancient Greek literature, particularly the works of Sappho and Plato. The book established her reputation for combining classical scholarship with original literary criticism.

Among her best-known works is "Autobiography of Red" (1998), a novel in verse that reimagines the ancient Greek myth of Geryon, a red-winged monster defeated by Heracles. Carson transforms the myth into an unconventional coming-of-age story exploring love, identity and emotional vulnerability.

Other notable publications include "The Beauty of the Husband: A Fictional Essay in 29 Tangos" (2001), "Nox" (2010), "Red Doc" (2013) and "Float" (2016). Her work frequently moves between poetry, prose, drama, translation and visual art, challenging conventional distinctions between literary genres.

Carson is also widely recognized for her translations of classical Greek literature, including works by Sappho, Sophocles and Euripides. Her translation of Sappho's surviving fragments, published as "If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho" in 2002, is among her significant contributions to the modern reception of ancient Greek poetry.

On October 8, 2026, Carson was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. The Swedish Academy recognized her for her "bold and inventive oeuvre that, in playful dialogue with the classical tradition, has created new forms for contemporary literature."

Her selection highlighted the distinctive way she brings ancient literary and philosophical traditions into contemporary writing, making classical themes relevant to modern readers while continually experimenting with language and form.

Carson's work has received numerous other honors, including the T. S. Eliot Prize, two Griffin Poetry Prizes, a MacArthur Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Princess of Asturias Award for Literature in 2020.

Through her poetry, essays and translations, she continues to explore the possibilities of language and the enduring relationship between ancient thought and contemporary literary expression.