

TEHRAN TIMES

8 Pages | Price 100,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 46th year | No. 15297 | Saturday | April 11, 2026 | Farvardin 22, 1404 | Shawwal 22, 1447

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei issues message on the 40th day of the martyrdom of the late Leader:

We Will Definitely Take the Management of the Strait of Hormuz to a New Phase



Tens of millions of Iranians from all walks of life poured into the streets and main places of the cities and towns across the great country of Iran on Thursday to mark the 40th day, known as Arbaeen in Islamic Sharia, since Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was martyred in an unprovoked and unwarranted U.S.-Israeli air raid on his office in Tehran on February 28.

Islamabad talks: Iran draws red lines, ball in US court

TEHRAN – Iran and the United States are set to hold negotiations on Saturday in Islamabad following a two-week ceasefire brokered by Pakistan. The truce came after 40 days of unlawful and unprovoked US-Israeli aggression against Iran that began on February 28.

Tehran has made clear that its participation in the talks is conditional. On Wednesday, Iranian officials warned that they may withdraw from the negotiations if Washington fails to fully implement key provisions of Iran's 10-point ceasefire framework — the plan that formed the basis of the truce. ▶ Page 3

For Iran, Dahiye holds the weight of a capital

By Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati
Managing Director

TEHRAN — One might say, in undiplomatic language born of sheer necessity: "From the very beginning, Lebanon was never truly under a ceasefire." One could ignore the Pakistani mediator's X post and the historical record of these negotiations. One could, once again, adopt the breaking of promises as a standard operating procedure. But it is impossible to expect that while Beirut burns under a rain of bombs, Iran will remain silent or that dialogue with Tehran will yield any meaningful result. ▶ Page 5

De-dollarization gains unprecedented momentum as US-Israeli war against Iran reshapes global economy

TEHRAN- The US and Israel launched wide-ranging strikes on February 28, and Iran responded by launching attacks on Israel and US-allied states in the Persian Gulf.

The US-Israeli attack was widely condemned by regional neighbors including Iraq, Turkey, and Pakistan, while global powers urged restraint. This military confrontation has not only threatened to ignite a full-scale regional war but has also sent shockwaves through international trade and finance — as explored in the analysis below by China's CGTN.

CGTN wrote in an analysis that the war of the US and Israel against Iran, in addition to causing extensive human and economic costs, is creating fundamental transformations in the main structures of the global economy — structures that for decades have been considered the main pillars of the international financial system. ▶ Page 4

Red Crescent, National Committee for Humanitarian Law condemn attacks on civilian infrastructure

TEHRAN - The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and the National Committee for Humanitarian Law (NCHL) have condemned the US-Israeli attacks on the country's civilian infrastructure.

In a joint statement issued on Wednesday, the IRCS and the NCHL warned about the Israeli attacks on civilian critical infrastructure carried out with the support of the United States, calling for the unconditional observance of the principles of international humanitarian law. ▶ Page 7

Iranians mark 40th day since martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei

TEHRAN – Iranians from all walks of life held solemn ceremonies on Thursday to mark the 40th day since the martyrdom of the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

He was martyred during the first day of the US-Israel aggression against Iran on February 28. The attack, targeting his office in central Tehran, also claimed the lives of several top military commanders who stood as guardians of the nation.

Millions of Iranians flooded streets across the country to honor the memory of the late Leader, elite commanders, and other victims of the brutal US-Israeli terrorist assault. In Tehran, processions commenced at Jomhouri Square and culminated at the site of Ayatollah Khamenei's martyrdom, becoming a powerful demonstration of national unity and unwavering loyalty to his revolutionary path. Mourners chanted slogans, recited elegies, and reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the Islamic Revolution, highlighting the enduring influence of the late Leader's vision. ▶ Page 3

IRGC rejects allegations of attacks on Persian Gulf states during ceasefire

TEHRAN – The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has categorically denied any missile or drone strikes against countries along the Persian Gulf littoral during the ongoing ceasefire between Iran and the United States, dismissing the reports as a ploy by hostile actors.

In a statement issued by the IRGC Public Relations Office in the early hours of Friday, the Corps declared: "As of this hour during the ceasefire, the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran have absolutely not launched any projectiles toward any country. If these reports published by the media are indeed true, they are undoubtedly the work of the Zionist enemy or the United States."

The statement further stressed that Iran operates with full transparency in military matters: "If the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran strike any target, they will announce it with full courage in an official statement. Any action not mentioned in the official statements of the Islamic Republic of Iran has nothing to do with us." ▶ Page 3

Former FM Kamal Kharrazi martyred in US-Israeli attacks



TEHRAN- Kamal Kharrazi, the head of the Strategic Council for Foreign Relations and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had previously been injured in a terrorist attack by the US and Israeli enemy, was martyred late on Thursday.

Kharrazi was an advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Martyr Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei; the head of the Strategic Council for Foreign Relations; the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran; the head of the Iranian Institute of Higher Education in Cognitive Sciences; and a member of the Expediency Discernment Council.

He also held other executive positions throughout his career, including CEO of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents, CEO of the Islamic Republic News Agency, and Permanent Representative and Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations.

Scholars condemn damage to Iran's cultural heritage

TEHRAN - A group of international researchers and heritage specialists has condemned the damage inflicted on Iran's cultural heritage during the recent US-Israeli military strikes, warning that the destruction threatens not only historical sites but also global scientific research and collective human memory.

In a statement, the scholars said that since Feb. 28, 2026, intense bombardments by the United States and Israel on Iranian territory, described by the signatories as violations of international law, have already caused "considerable" damage, despite a fragile ceasefire announced overnight on April 7-8.

"We express our solidarity with the Iranian people, who bear, and will continue to bear, the brunt of the consequences of this war," the statement said. ▶ Page 6



A conceptual art installation featuring 2,000 red butterflies and crimson pages is displayed at the ruins of Minab's Shajareh Tayyebbeh Elementary School to mark the 40th day since the martyrdom of its students.

Minab installation commemorates martyred students

TEHRAN- To honor the memories of the young students martyred in the recent tragedy and mark the 40th day of their martyrdom, a conceptual art installation featuring 2,000 red butterflies and symbolic crimson pages has been unveiled at the ruins of Minab's Shajareh Tayyebbeh Elementary School.

Reaching a height of nine meters amidst the wreckage, the installation serves as a visual narrative of ascension, designed to honor the children's memory and break the silence of the tragedy and transform it into a timeless narrative of innocence and ascension.

The project, titled the "Minab Martyr Children Memorial," is organized by the Center for Islamic Architectural Arts of the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Our hands are on the trigger

Kayhan, in an article, addressed Iran's power and readiness to defeat American hegemony. The newspaper wrote: What the enemy had designed as a swift and decisive operation turned into a 'disgraceful and historic defeat.' The Islamic Republic of Iran is a world superpower, and its hand is on the trigger. The third imposed war advanced accordingly, trampled Israel, and brought an end to America's superpower status. The desperate enemy surrendered to the new equations and the conditions set by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the war was halted for two weeks. These victories are the result of the bond between the 'wise leadership of the Revolution, military steadfastness, and the intelligent presence of the people.'

Etemad: A temporary ceasefire through Iran's initiative

Etemad, in an interview with Hossein Rabiei, a university professor, examined the ceasefire between Iran and the United States and the negotiations. If the conditions specified by Iran, namely the same 10-point package, become the basis of action and are accepted by the United States, we can hope that this ceasefire will turn into a lasting peace. In the negotiation process, we must observe how willing both sides are to consider and respect the red lines they have set and the limits they have defined for engagement. We hope that the United States will be able to accept Iran's conditions. The conditions Iran is putting forward, if accepted by the United States and the international community, can lead to the realization of the peace that we have in mind.

Iran: A diplomatic battle in line with the war

War does not disappear; it merely shifts from one form to another. Therefore, the ceasefire and temporary halt of military operations in the 'Ramadan War' do not mean the end of the battle; rather, they mark the beginning of an ending and the start of a new type and phase of war in another arena — a diplomatic battle in the field of negotiation and bargaining. In this new phase, the main goal is to turn the ceasefire into lasting peace and to transform temporary and short-term achievements into enduring and long-term assets. With the establishment of a two-week temporary ceasefire, Iran steps into an arena and battleground more complex and uncertain than the military phase, full of ambiguity and distrust. By formulating, pursuing, and implementing a multilayered and multidimensional military-defensive strategy, Iran imposed its will on the enemy and forced it to

Pezeshkian and Erdogan discuss US-Israeli aggression

TEHRAN- President Masoud Pezeshkian of Iran and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey discussed the escalating situation following military aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran, exploring potential pathways to achieve a definitive end to the war.

During a telephone conversation late on Thursday, Pezeshkian expressed gratitude to several friendly neighboring countries for their efforts to halt the military strikes against Iran. He specifically acknowledged Turkey's stance in condemning 'the unjust aggression' by the US and Israel, as well as the solidarity shown by the Turkish people with the Iranian nation.

Pezeshkian said that despite 'a betrayal of diplomacy' by the United States and its aggression against Iran during two previous rounds of negotiations, the Islamic Republic had responsibly accepted requests from neighboring and friendly countries to cease hostilities and establish a ceasefire.

He stressed the need to end the war on all fronts, including in Lebanon, asserting that Israel's actions were aimed at inciting further unrest in the region. Pezeshkian also called on Islamic countries to unite against 'the war-mongering practices' of the Israeli regime, which 'threatened regional stability and peace.'

Israel's attack on Lebanon comes as Iran has recently proposed a temporary 10-month

retreat. The prerequisite of 'armed diplomacy' is discursive unity, integrated governance, unified command, a single structure and centralized decision-making, national spirit and unity, and the alignment and synergy of the battlefield and diplomacy.

Hamshahri: Either an agreement acceptable to Iran and the resistance, or the return of the US and Israel under fire

Hamshahri, in an analysis regarding negotiations in the midst of the war, wrote: Iran has so far shown that, as always, it remains committed to its agreements and obligations, but it is closely monitoring all possible scenarios for the future and will act in accordance with the timing and the atmosphere of relations. One possible US scenario is to sabotage the negotiation process, preventing the achievement of an agreement that secures the rights of Iran and the Resistance, and keeping Israel on the battlefield against Iran and Lebanon. The United States cannot in any way escape the consequences of any end to the ceasefire that does not produce a result acceptable to Iran and the Resistance; therefore, if the temporary ceasefire ends due to the other side's violations or the failure to reach an agreement acceptable to Iran and the Resistance within a timeframe, we consider reasonable, then, just as before the halt in fire, American interests across the region will once again be set ablaze.

Arman-e-Emrooz: A ceasefire in the continuation of consolidating achievements

Arman-e-Emrooz, in an analysis, assessed the current situation and wrote: From a strategic perspective, the difference between this situation and conventional ceasefires is that this time the acceptance of halting hostilities has occurred under conditions in which the balance has shifted in Iran's favor. In other words, this ceasefire is not pursued from a position of weakness, but rather as a continuation of consolidating achievements and turning them into political outcomes. Observers believe that what occurred during this period was not merely a limited military confrontation, but a combination of field power, political management, and social cohesion. According to Mohammad Ghazvini, a social affairs analyst, the new conditions have created an opportunity to strengthen the path of constructive engagement using international capacities and to pursue national interests within a stable framework. In his view, the combination of domestic power and active diplomacy can elevate the country's position in regional and global equations.

ceasefire plan to the United States.

In this plan, which has also been accepted by the United States, in addition to stopping attacks on Iran and Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran has demanded a halt to attacks on all resistance groups in the region, including Lebanon.

He further emphasized the importance of pressuring the international community and Islamic nations to compel the U.S. and Israel to halt their aggressions and crimes against countries in the region, particularly Lebanon.

Pezeshkian reiterated that Iran's responsible approach to accepting the ceasefire was intended to preserve regional stability and prevent an escalation of conflicts. He noted, however, that the continuation of the ceasefire depended on the actual commitment of the opposing side to its obligations.

For his part, President Erdogan expressed his wishes for success, dignity and honor for the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, and for the Iranian administration and people. Erdogan reaffirmed Turkey's solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Erdogan expressed satisfaction with the cessation of hostilities and emphasized Turkey's readiness to work with friendly countries in the region to continue efforts for a definitive end to the war and the establishment of sustainable security.

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei issues message on the 40th day of the martyrdom of the late Leader:

We will definitely take the management of the Strait of Hormuz to a new phase

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei hailed the Iranian people's "clear victory" in the war launched by the United States and Israel on February 28.

In a statement marking the 40th day since the martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei on the first day of the US-Israeli campaign, he urged continued public gatherings to condemn the aggression and show support for the Islamic Revolution. The statement opened with a verse from the Holy Quran and framed the events within a broader narrative of resistance and national unity.

Bellow is the full text of the message from Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei.

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

"Indeed, We have granted you a clear victory, that Allah may forgive you your past sins and those that will follow, and that He may complete His blessings upon you and guide you on a straight path, and Allah will help you with a mighty help" (Quran 48:1-3).

A nation in mourning, a nation unbowed

Forty days have passed since the occurrence of one of the most dreadful crimes committed by the enemies of Islam and Iran, and one of the heaviest sorrows for the people in the history of this nation — the grief of the heartbreaking martyrdom of the illustrious Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the father of the Iranian Nation, the Leader of the Islamic Ummah and today's truth-seekers, and the Master of the martyrs of Iran and the Resistance Front — the Great Khamenei (may God sanctify his pure soul).

Forty days have passed since the lofty soul of our martyred Leader has taken up residence close to God, as a guest at the banquet for the Friends [Awliya] of God, the Truthful Ones [Siddiqin], and the martyrs. At the same time or following this, a large number of his companions, commanders and those fighting for Islam, as well as innocent fellow citizens — ranging from newborn infants to the elderly — have also attained this great blessing.

From sorrow to sacred defense

Forty days and nights have passed since Almighty God called the Leader of this Ummah to His appointed meeting. But unlike what took place at the time of Kalim-Allah [Moses], the martyred Leader's companions and his Ummah rose up to establish truth and confront falsehood. They stood firmly against Samiri and his calf like towering mountains, and they have been descending like balls of fire on the heads of the aggressors and the Pharaohs.

For forty days and nights, the world's Arrogant Powers have put aside their deceptive, hypocritical masks, exposing their hideous, satanic face of murder and oppression, aggression and lies, arrogance and child-killing, tyranny, and corruption.

On the other side, for forty days and nights, the devout children of the Great Khomeini and the beloved Martyr Khamenei, along with the followers of the pure Islam of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), have shown their presence in the cities' squares, the streets, and the battle trenches with determination and exemplary courage. Despite the losses and damages wrought by the enemy's savage onslaught, they have transformed the Third Imposed War into an epic Third Sacred Defense.

The dawn of a new chapter

Although the aware, vigilant Iranian nation has demonstrated that it's grieving the great loss of its martyred Leader, it has also — following in the footsteps of the direct inheritors of Ashura — turned this grief into an epic and



transformed laments into battle cries. All of this has caused the heavily armed enemy to become totally bewildered and desperate, while earning the admiration of all the freedom-loving people in the world. This time, the ignorance and foolishness of the Arrogant Powers ensured that Esfand 1404 [Feb/Mar 2026] marked the dawn of a new chapter in the empowerment and rise of the name of Iran and the Islamic Revolution. The flag of Islamic Iran has been raised not only within our territorial borders, but also deep within the hearts of the world's truth-seekers.

Portrait of a Leader: Faith, wisdom, and vision

This occasion provides a good opportunity to offer a brief description of the character of our illustrious Leader. We are speaking of a man who was not well understood despite his fame. Everyone knows that our martyred Leader was an astute, insightful jurist; a tireless mujahid as firm and steadfast as a mountain; a practicing, pious scholar; and a man who would constantly remember God, pray the Tahajjud (night) prayer, beseech the Lord, and take recourse in the sacred Immaculate Imams (PBU). He truly believed in divine promises from the depths of his soul. Among his other notable qualities was his deep love for Iran and his relentless work to maximize the independence of our beloved country, along with a constant emphasis on unity and national solidarity. He dedicated his life to establishing, strengthening, and sustaining the Islamic system. At the same time, the Islamic Republic meant nothing (to him) without (the presence and role of) the people in his view.

The architect of strength

Alongside his great authority and firmness, his thoughts and perspectives were imbued with a profound adroitness. He paid special attention to the capacities of the country, especially its youth. He placed great importance on science, technology, and the progress that could be achieved with them. He held a special regard and high esteem for the honorable families of the martyrs, the wounded veterans, and all those who had made sacrifices for the war. He possessed valuable, extensive experience in various fields — sometimes experiences that spanned several decades — in addition to a long list of other exceptional attributes.

These days, certain media outlets repeatedly speak of his artistic sense, deep appreciation of the arts, and support for artists. While this trait alone can add immense value to a person's character — and undoubtedly this existed in our beloved Leader in its truest, most excellent form — it appears to be something somewhat small when compared to his other qualities and virtues. Personally, I know of many different "talents" in him.

One of his greatest talents — one that receives far less attention — was his talent in educating and nurturing society by shaping the thoughts, spirits, and emotions of the general population and different groups in society.

Another of his talents was his purposeful creation of institutions. He undertook this endeavor

especially in the early years of his activities and as the Leader, always looking toward distant horizons.

Another of his talents was in strengthening the country's military structure, the positive outcome of which the Iranian nation witnessed and benefited from during the two recent Imposed Wars. Furthermore, his capacity for innovation and using initiative in various scientific, strategic, and policymaking areas was yet another of his talents. A glimpse of this can be seen in the formulation of the general policies of the governmental system. Added to this was his mastery in creating meaning through the timely coining of novel terms and phrases, each carrying profound conceptual weight, which then shaped public discourse. Among his talents was a talent refined by the polishing of his exalted soul by hardships, trials, and tribulations due to his patience and steadfastness on the path of truth. This was a talent in foreseeing distant events, for truly, "A believer sees with the light of God." There were also other talents that cannot be enumerated in this brief overview.

Divine grace and a life of sacrifice

None of these virtues and talents stemmed from anything other than special divine grace and the special attention of our Master [Imam Mahdi (AJ)] and his pure forefathers (PBU). Perhaps the magnet that drew such divine grace and attention toward that great man can be summarized in his relentless, sincere struggle for the truth. However, beyond the grueling hardships of his struggle against the traitorous Pahlavi regime, he uniquely capitalized on another special opportunity in the course of fulfilling his duty. This is something that the general public is largely unaware of.

Destiny had it that this young Sayyid — intensely eager for knowledge and equally driven to action — at a time when his honorable father was on the verge of losing his sight, chose to abandon all the ostensible avenues of academics in Qom that promised advancement. After years of diligent study in the presence of eminent scholars, he placed his trust in divine grace and dedicated himself entirely to caring for his father.

Divine grace in response to this act of sacrifice manifested itself when Sayyid Ali Khamenei unexpectedly rose like a sun from Khorasan before he had even reached the age of 30. He was soon recognized as a pillar in intellectual and revolutionary struggle, and made remarkable strides in traditional Islamic sciences at the same time. This was to such an extent that in the 1970s, SAVAK Secret Police described him as "the Khomeini of Khorasan." I must emphasize that this path of both spiritual growth and outward progress continued throughout the next phases of his life.

The enduring influence of martyrdom

These days, it's frequently heard that various groups of our dear people — quite rightly and with deep longing — speak of that unique personage of our time. Gradually, more facets of the radiant jewel of his exalted personality

are coming to light. Furthermore, the resolve to emulate his specific actions is steadily becoming widespread. For instance, our dear people have learned from his clenched fist at the time of his martyrdom. And now, his clenched fist has become a shared symbol of their faith and conviction for some. Thus, this has been proven once again that the influence of a martyr is far greater than that of a living person. His resonant voice in calling for monotheism, the pursuit of truth, and the struggle against oppression and corruption, rings louder and his message penetrates deeper than it did during his lifetime. Moreover, the heartfelt desire of this highly esteemed martyr, which was the prosperity and felicity of this nation and all other Muslim nations, has come closer to reality than ever before.

Victory in the Third Sacred Defense

My dear brothers and sisters! Today, up to this point in the epic Third Sacred Defense, it can be said with complete confidence that you, the heroic nation of Iran, are the definite victors in this battlefield.

Today, the emergence of the Islamic Republic as a major power, accompanied by the Arrogant Powers falling into a downward decline toward weakness, has become evident before everyone's eyes. This is undoubtedly a divine blessing that's been bestowed upon the Iranian nation. It's a blessing born from the grace of the pure blood of our martyred Leader, the other crimson-shrouded martyrs, our innocent citizens, and the flowers who have been torn to pieces [the martyred children] from the Shajarah Tayyebah School in Minab. This comes in the wake of the nation's collective supplications and beseeching the Lord, along with their valiant presence in the cities' squares, neighborhoods, and mosques. This has been granted due to the selfless, unconditional, sincere sacrifices of the devoted fighters of Islam in the IRGC, the Army, the Law Enforcement Forces [FARAJA], the anonymous soldiers, and the border guards.

Unity: The path to a stronger Iran

Like any other blessing, we must thank God for this blessing so that it may endure and grow, "If you are grateful, I will surely increase My favor to you" (Quran 14:7). The expression of this gratitude in our actions is our unremitting struggle to achieve a powerful Iran.

At this current juncture, what is essential to attaining this motto and the strategic objective of our martyred Leader is the uninterrupted presence of our dear people in the same way that they've been present during the past 40 days. This presence is a crucial pillar of the exalted structure in which a mighty Iran has now become firmly established.

Therefore, the announcement of an intention to enter negotiations with the enemy must not lead to the belief that the public's presence in the streets is no longer necessary. On the contrary, even if the time has come — hypothetically speaking — for a period of calm on the military battlefield, the duty of every citizen who is able to be present in the public squares, neighborhoods, and mosques has become even more significant than before. Undoubtedly, your resounding cries in the public squares have a profound impact on the outcome of the negotiations. Likewise, the astonishing and ever-increasing number of millions participating in the "Ready to Sacrifice for Iran" campaign is an influential factor in this arena.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Islamabad talks: Iran draws red lines, ball in US court

From Page 1 ▶ **Lebanon at the heart of Iran's plan**

One of the central disputes concerns Lebanon. Iranian officials insist that Israeli military operations in Lebanon must stop as part of the ceasefire. According to the 10-point plan, the agreement brokered by Islamabad covered all fronts of the conflict, including Lebanon.

Importantly, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shehbaz Sharif also stated that the ceasefire included Lebanon, reinforcing Iran's interpretation that hostilities in that country were meant to halt under the agreement. His remarks directly contradict US claims that Lebanon was not part of the arrangement.

US officials, including Vice-President J.D. Vance, have argued that the ceasefire was limited to direct US-Iran hostilities and did not explicitly restrict Israeli actions in Lebanon. They have characterized the disagreement as a matter of interpretation, but Tehran maintains that the terms were clearly communicated during Pakistan's mediation efforts.

Iran sets clear preconditions

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who is expected to head the Iranian delegation in Islamabad, stated that two mutually agreed measures remain unfulfilled: a ceasefire in Lebanon and the release of Iran's blocked assets prior to the commencement of negotiations.



Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi also reiterated that Iran's 10-point proposal will serve as the foundation of the negotiations. He emphasized that the Islamic Republic supports diplomacy based on mutual respect and credible guarantees, not arrangements that would allow adversaries to regroup and resume aggression.

"Iran has always welcomed dialogue," he said, "but not negotiations built on deception or false premises."

Diplomacy alongside deterrence

Iran says its military actions are legitimate self-defense under the United Nations Charter. Tehran has also reaffirmed its policy of good neighborliness, while warning that any country allowing its territory or facilities to be used for attacks against Iran would be considered complicit in aggression.

For Tehran, the issue is not merely procedural but fundamentally about trust and credibility. Iranian officials argue that any ambiguity surrounding the ceasefire's scope risks eroding the fragile diplomatic opening created by Pakistan's mediation. From Iran's perspective, a ceasefire that excludes Lebanon would amount to a selective pause rather than a genuine de-escalation, allowing continued instability in the region.

Iranian policymakers maintain that their 10-point framework was designed precisely to prevent such loopholes. They describe it as a comprehensive roadmap that addresses not only the cessation of hostilities but also broader guarantees intended to prevent a relapse into war. Tehran insists that a meaningful diplomatic process must be built on concrete actions — including sanctions relief and respect for

Iran's sovereign rights — rather than rhetorical commitments.

A decisive moment for Islamabad talks

Officials in Tehran also point to Iran's demonstrated resilience during the 40-day conflict. They argue that despite sustained military pressure, the Islamic Republic preserved its defensive capabilities and national cohesion. In this context, Iran portrays its willingness to engage in talks as a sign of confidence and responsibility, not weakness.

At the same time, Iranian leaders emphasize that diplomacy and deterrence go hand in hand. While expressing readiness for constructive dialogue in Islamabad, Tehran has reiterated that it will respond decisively to any renewed aggression. This dual message reflects Iran's long-standing strategic doctrine: openness to negotiation combined with firm defense of national interests.

The upcoming Islamabad talks therefore represent a critical diplomatic test. Tehran insists that sustainable peace requires full implementation of the ceasefire in all theaters, including Lebanon, alongside tangible confidence-building measures.

Whether Washington aligns with the terms articulated by Pakistan's mediation efforts may determine whether the negotiations advance — or stall before they begin.

IRGC rejects allegations of attacks on Persian Gulf states during ceasefire

From Page 1 ▶ The denial comes after several news agencies published unverified reports claiming drone and missile attacks on facilities in nations on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

Ceasefire violations by Israel

Iran's assertions of adherence to the truce stand in stark contrast to the repeated breaches committed by the Israeli regime since the announcement of the ten-point ceasefire by Tehran. Immediately after the ceasefire was declared, Israeli forces launched heavy bombardment on parts of Lebanese territory — areas explicitly covered under the terms of Iran's ten-point proposal — killing and wounding hundreds of civilians.

In parallel, the spokesman for the Iranian Armed Forces has publicly stated that Tehran harbors no trust in the enemy or the ceasefire itself, citing the regime's consistent pattern of aggression.

Khatam al-Anbiya headquarters says the armed forces remain fully prepared, with control over the Strait of Hormuz firmly

maintained.

Warning to Trump and Netanyahu to remember their defeat in the 40-day war, the body said, "any attack on Hezbollah or Lebanon will face a crushing response."

The statement urged Iranians to stay united against enemy plots.

The current hostilities trace back to February 28, when the US and the Israeli regime launched a large-scale, unprovoked military campaign against Iran following the assassination and martyrdom of the then-Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, along with several senior military commanders and civilians.

In a decisive retaliatory operation, Iranian Armed Forces struck American and Israeli positions across the region, inflicting heavy damage on enemy military assets and demonstrating Iran's formidable defensive capabilities. Contrary to initial expectations of a swift victory by the attackers, Iran's response proved significantly more potent, rallying national unity and resistance.

Subsequently, following an ultimatum issued by the US president, Pakistani mediation led to a two-week ceasefire agreement, with negotiations set to take place in Islamabad. Iran has put forward a ten-point plan as the basis for talks, demanding the withdrawal of US forces from the region, the lifting of sanctions, and the establishment of Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz.

A historic victory for Iran

On April 8, the Supreme National Security Council of Iran emphasized that the war has resulted in a historic victory for the Islamic Republic, compelling the United States to accept negotiation terms — including a binding non-aggression guarantee and the cessation of all hostile actions against the nation.

As the ceasefire holds under mounting tensions, Tehran continues to warn that any further provocations by the Zionist regime or US forces will be met with an immediate and decisive response.

LATEST NEWS

■ Kerry: US and Israel are losing against Iran

Former US Secretary of State John Kerry acknowledged in a television program that the United States and Israel have been defeated by Iran in the recent war.

He stated that Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA and the attacks on Iran were a pure mistake, and now the Strait of Hormuz is under Iran's control, while the United States is faced with chaotic and uncoordinated actions.

■ Iran's 10-point plan agreed as basis for talks, deputy minister says

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht Ravanchi announced that Tehran's 10-point proposal has been agreed upon as the basis for negotiations with the United States.

He said the US and Israel launched military aggression against Iran while the Geneva talks were underway, martyring Iran's leader and several commanders. He stressed that Iran welcomes diplomacy but does not want a ceasefire that allows the enemy to rearm and attack again.

■ Hormuz control, nuclear enrichment likely Iran's red lines in talks: analyst

Iran will likely insist on control of the Strait of Hormuz and the right to enrich-

ment as red lines in upcoming US talks, according to Ali Vaez of the International Crisis Group. He told Al Jazeera that Tehran views the strait as a "lifeline" for revenue and reconstruction, given deep distrust over sanctions relief.

■ Strait of Hormuz transit fees to be paid in Iranian currency, Iran proposes

The head of Iran's Parliament National Security Commission, Ebrahim Azizi, says that under a parliamentary proposal, transit fees through the Strait of Hormuz would be paid in Iran's national currency, the rial, according to an X post from Iran's consulate general in Mumbai on Friday.

■ Iran thanks Spain for opposing US-Israeli aggression

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi praised Spain's principled stance against US-Israeli military aggression and war crimes committed against Iranians during a call with his Spanish counterpart, José Manuel Albares. Araghchi said Iran responsibly accepted a ceasefire but urged the US to fulfill its commitments and halt Israel's warmongering in Lebanon. Spain reaffirmed its opposition to war and support for international law.

■ Ghalibaf warns foes: Time is running out

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has warned enemies that the time is running out.

In a post on his X account on Thursday, Ghalibaf warned, "Time is running out."

Referring to Washington's acceptance of Tehran's 10-point proposals as part of the truce, he cited his previous post by saying, "Lebanon and the entire Resistance Axis, as Iran's allies, form an inseparable part of the ceasefire."

■ US-Israel war against Iran exposed dollar weakness: Report

The US weaponization of the dollar has backfired, as Iran found alternatives amid the war, according to a Financial Times report. The new status in the Strait of Hormuz has turned America's geopolitical tool into "a weakened stick." Iran now demands cryptocurrency tolls for tankers, signaling the dollar's diminishing global supremacy.

■ Iran forced Israel to halt Beirut attacks: source

A senior security source told Press TV that Iran pressured Israel to stop its attacks on Beirut. Tehran made the cessation of strikes on Lebanon a precondition for ceasefire talks with the US.

Iranians mark 40th day since martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei



TEHRAN — Iranians from all walks of life held solemn ceremonies on Thursday to mark the 40th day since the martyrdom of the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

He was martyred during the first day of the US-Israel aggression against Iran on February 28. The attack, targeting his office in central Tehran, also claimed the lives of several top military commanders who stood as guardians of the nation.

Millions of Iranians flooded streets across the country to honor the memory of the late Leader, elite commanders, and other victims of the brutal US-Israeli terrorist assault. In Tehran, processions commenced at Jomhuri Square and culminated at the site of Ayatollah Khamenei's martyrdom, becoming a powerful demonstration of national unity and unwavering loyalty to his revolutionary path. Mourners chanted slogans, recited elegies, and reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the Islamic Revolution, highlighting the enduring influence of the late Leader's vision.

Similar ceremonies were held in major cities including Mashhad, Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Ahvaz, as well as smaller towns across

Iran. In each location, participants paid tribute to the late Leader's lifelong dedication to justice, resistance against oppression, and defense of Iran's sovereignty. The nationwide gatherings reflected the profound respect and admiration Iranians hold for Ayatollah Khamenei, whose leadership inspired generations to uphold the values of independence, resistance, and steadfastness in the face of foreign threats.

Ayatollah Khamenei, a symbol of revolutionary resolve, dedicated his life to the service of his nation, guiding Iran through turbulent times and defending the rights and dignity of its people. His martyrdom, alongside the sacrifice of elite military commanders, has further strengthened the Iranian people's resolve to resist aggression and safeguard the principles of the Islamic Revolution.

Thursday's ceremonies, marked by fervent displays of loyalty and national pride, reaffirmed that the late Leader's legacy continues to inspire and unify the Iranian nation against external pressures. Across Iran, citizens once again demonstrated that the spirit of the Islamic Revolution and the path of Ayatollah Khamenei remain alive in the hearts of millions.

40 days after Leader's martyrdom: A powerful symbol of national unity in Iran

By Mansureh Shushtari

TEHRAN — The late Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, who consistently emphasized national unity and viewed division as a deep wound to Iran's long-standing identity, has now—through his martyrdom—become a central symbol of empathy and solidarity for all Iranians. He sacrificed his life to preserve the integrity of Iran.

He was martyred at the very first moment of the US and Israeli attacks on February 28th. On Thursday, the people of Tehran mourned the fortieth day of his absence, marking one of the most emotional days since his loss.

Over the past 40 days, these same people have endured severe assaults, lost loved ones, and witnessed the destruction of hospitals, schools, and universities. Yet they gathered together to ease the weight of this grief and to show that they have understood his teachings and will honor his legacy—above all, unity.

From the early hours of the ceremony, beginning at 9:40 a.m., Jomhuri Square in

central Tehran was filled with mourners. They moved eastward toward the site of the attack, the Leader's house and office. Chants of "Ya Hussein" and "Hayhat Minna al-Dhilla" echoed through the streets. Some sat on the ground in tears, while others walked, chanted, and waved Iranian flags.

As time passed and more people approached the neighborhood surrounding the Leader's residence and office, the crowd grew so large that by the end of the ceremony, major streets in Tehran were overwhelmed with traffic.

The people of Tehran mourned the fortieth day of their Leader's martyrdom together—he who always warned against polarization and urged unity among Iranians. He is no longer here to witness how his martyrdom has strengthened the nation's cohesion.

Now, more than ever, people understand that the identity called Iran and the concept of the Islamic Republic can only endure through unity. If even for a moment this unity is neglected, Iran's enemies will seize the opportunity to exploit divisions and attempt to tear apart this ancient civilization.

Iran's Leader: Kharrazi's martyrdom a shameful testament to US-Zionist arrogance

TEHRAN — Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has offered condolences on the martyrdom of Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, the former foreign minister and head of the Strategic Council for Foreign Relations.

In a message, the Leader described Kharrazi as a distinguished scholar and an experienced diplomat, calling his martyrdom "a badge of honor for Iran's academic and political elite" and "a shameful testament to US-Zionist arrogance."

Kharrazi, who also served as Iran's ambassador to the UN and headed the Institute for Cognitive Sciences, was martyred after being injured in US and Israeli strikes. His wife was also martyred in the same attacks.

Earlier President Masoud Pezeshkian offered his condolences over Kharrazi's assassination describing him as a "prominent, committed, and influential figure" in Iran's diplomatic apparatus, highlighting his decades of service following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

"He spent many years of his noble life in critical responsibilities such as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, with sincerity, tact, and deep adherence to the ideals of the Islamic Revolution," Pezeshkian said.

Judiciary Chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei also issued a statement. He said the late diplomat was an "influential weight" across various political arenas.

Annual non-oil export from Golestan province increases 4%

TEHRAN- The Director General of Golestan Province Customs, referring to a four-percent increase in the value of exported goods from the province's customs offices in the past Iranian calendar year 1404 (ended on March 20), said: "Last year, 858,000 tons of various non-oil goods were exported from Golestan's customs checkpoints."

Shahriyar Shahriyari stated in an interview: "Last year, 858,000 tons of various non-oil goods were exported from the province's customs checkpoints, with the value of these goods amounting to approximately \$481 million."

He added: "The export of this volume of non-oil goods saw a 19-percent increase in weight and a four-percent increase in value compared to the previous year."

Shahriyari further noted: "Golestan's most important export items included pipes and profiles, various types of pistachios, cheese, ready-to-use aquatic feed, iodine, eggs, iron or steel rods, particleboard, and polystyrene, most of which were exported to Central Asian countries."

He also reported the import of 58,000 tons of various non-oil goods into the country through Golestan's customs last year, saying: "The value of imported goods exceeded \$111 million, marking a 24-percent increase in value and a 70-percent increase in weight compared to the previous year."

According to him, the most significant imported non-oil goods included "diesel generators, gas cogeneration units (producing electricity and heat simultaneously), crude soybean oil, fuel oil, diesel generators, and ozone chloride," which entered the country from Asian and European countries via Golestan's customs checkpoints.

The Director General of Golestan Customs also addressed the transit situation at the Incheh Borun border customs last year, stating: "In total, 115,000 tons of goods worth \$346 million were transited through this border point last year, showing a 45-percent increase in weight and an eight-percent increase in value compared to the previous year."

Shahriyari also reported a 129-percent growth in Golestan's customs revenues last year.

According to him, overall last year, Golestan's customs indicators for exports, imports, transit, and revenue experienced acceptable growth.

Golestan Province, situated in northeastern Iran along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, is a region of significant agricultural wealth and growing strategic importance in trade and transit. Its economy, trade dynamics, and geographic position create a unique profile within Iran's national framework.

The cornerstone of Golestan's economy is its robust and diverse agricultural sector. The province benefits from fertile plains, a humid subtropical climate in the north, and ample water resources, making it one of Iran's most vital food baskets. It is the country's leading producer of oilseeds, a major contributor of wheat, and a key region for fruits like oranges, kiwis, and cotton. Livestock, poultry, and fisheries (especially from the Caspian Sea) further strengthen the agro-sector.

This agricultural dominance shapes the province's industrial landscape, which is heavily oriented towards agro-processing. Numerous factories are engaged in cotton ginning, edible oil extraction, flour milling, meat processing, and dairy production.

Golestan's trade flows are a direct reflection of its economic output. The province is a net exporter of agricultural and processed food products to other Iranian provinces and international markets. Key exports include vegetable oils, cereals, meat products, citrus fruits, and textiles. Imports are generally limited to machinery, fertilizers, and consumer goods not produced locally. The province engages in cross-border trade with Turkmenistan via the Incheh Borun border crossing, which facilitates the exchange of goods, though its volume is modest compared to Iran's western borders.

Golestan's most transformative potential lies in its geostrategic location for international transit. The province is a critical node in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), the multi-modal route



connecting India, Iran, Russia, and Europe. The key infrastructure unlocking this potential is the Gorgan Railroad, which extends northeast to the border. This rail link allows cargo from Indian Ocean ports like Chabahar to travel across Iran, through Golestan, into Turkmenistan and Central Asia, and onward to Russia and beyond. The Gorgan-Mashhad railway also enhances north-south connectivity within Iran.

Furthermore, the province is integral to the "East-West" transit corridor along the Caspian Sea littoral, linking Central Asia to the Caucasus and Turkey. The port of Gorgan, although small, serves as a Caspian Sea gateway for regional trade. The development of the Gorgan-Bojnurd railway will further solidify this east-west link. These corridors position Golestan not just as an agricultural producer, but as a vital transit bridge, offering Iran significant opportunities to earn revenue from cargo movement and logistics services.

As the capital and administrative heart of Golestan Province, Gorgan functions as the central commercial, service, and distribution hub for the entire region. Its economy is intrinsically linked to the province's agricultural wealth. The city hosts numerous food processing plants, textile factories (especially cotton), and edible oil refineries, processing raw materials from the surrounding farms. Gorgan's wholesale markets are critical nodes for distributing agricultural products like citrus, soybeans, and wheat to national markets.

The city is a major center for trade and services, including banking, education, and healthcare. Its strategic location on the main north-south highway connecting Tehran to Mashhad and the border with Turkmenistan reinforces its role as a key logistic and transit point. While not a major industrial city by national standards, Gorgan's economic strength lies in its agro-industrial sector and its central role in coordinating the trade and commerce of one of Iran's most fertile provinces.

Iran's non-oil trade has grown increasingly vital as the country seeks to reduce its dependence on crude oil revenues.

Despite persistent international sanctions, Iran has diversified its export basket, with petrochemicals, steel, copper, cement, and various agricultural products leading the way.

Key non-oil exports include liquefied propane, methanol, polyethylene, pistachios, saffron, dates, and carpets—goods that command global recognition.

Major trading partners include China, Iraq, Turkey, the UAE, and India.

China remains the top destination, absorbing significant volumes of Iranian petrochemicals and minerals. In recent years, Iran has also boosted exports to neighboring states through preferential trade agreements and border markets, enhancing regional economic integration.

Challenges such as banking restrictions, logistics hurdles, and volatile exchange rates continue to affect non-oil trade. Nevertheless, Iranian authorities are actively promoting export incentives, supporting knowledge-based companies, and investing in transit corridors like the INSTC (International North-South Transport Corridor) to bypass traditional maritime routes.

Efforts to increase non-oil exports are central to Iran's broader strategy of building a resilient economy, with targets set to reach over \$50 billion annually.

While obstacles remain, the steady growth of non-oil exports demonstrates Iran's capacity to adapt and thrive, turning sanctions into drivers of domestic production and export diversification.

De-dollarization gains unprecedented momentum as US-Israeli war against Iran reshapes global economy

TEHRAN- The US and Israel launched wide-ranging strikes on February 28, and Iran responded by launching attacks on Israel and US-allied states in the Persian Gulf.

The US-Israeli attack was widely condemned by regional neighbors including Iraq, Turkey, and Pakistan, while global powers urged restraint. This military confrontation has not only threatened to ignite a full-scale regional war but has also sent shockwaves through international trade and finance — as explored in the analysis below by China's CGTN.

CGTN wrote in an analysis that the war of the US and Israel against Iran, in addition to causing extensive human and economic costs, is creating fundamental transformations in the main structures of the global economy — structures that for decades have been considered the main pillars of the international financial system.

Strait of Hormuz disruption and its global ripple effects

The Chinese media outlet emphasized that "de-dollarization," as a process aimed at reducing countries' dependence on the dollar, has now become one of the main axes of change in the global economy, and the recent war is playing the role of a catalyst in accelerating this process.

According to this analysis, the sharp decline in ship traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and the significant increase in oil and gas prices have exerted considerable inflationary pressure on the global economy. The Strait of Hormuz is not only a vital route for energy transit but also one of the most important arteries of international trade.

CGTN also reported that Iran's action of charging tolls from some ships in currencies other than the dollar, including the Chinese yuan, could create a practical challenge for the dollar-based financial system and lead to the formation of new models of regional transactions.

Need for Strait of Hormuz smart management, port cooperation with neighbors revision

TEHRAN- The Minister of Transport and Urban Development, referring to the elimination of cumbersome processes and the continued breaking of records at ports, emphasized the need for smart management of the Strait of Hormuz and a revision of port cooperation with neighboring countries.

According to a report by IRNA on Thursday from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, during a meeting with members of the board of directors of the Ports and Maritime Organization and a webinar with port managers across the country, highlighted the importance of the Strait of Hormuz and stated: "Smart management of the Strait of Hormuz, as well as the legal regime related to this strait, are important issues that must be addressed."

Sadegh added: "A portion of the

Islamic Republic of Iran's interactions with neighboring countries in this region pertains to shared waters and maritime issues, which are directly related to the missions of the Ports and Maritime Organization."

Need to revise port relations and cooperation with neighboring countries

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development also commented on the effects and consequences of the war on regional relations, stating: "In the type of interactions and relations with neighboring countries, revisions are necessary, and some approaches must be adjusted according to the new circumstances."

Referring to her trips to Pakistan, she continued: "We do not consider the port of Karachi as a rival to the port of Chabahar, but the manner of interaction



Challenging petrodollar-BRICS Plus and alternative payment systems

The report states that the financial power of the United States is largely dependent on global demand for the dollar— a position that was solidified after World War II when the dollar became the dominant global reserve currency.

However, developments in recent years, including the war in Ukraine and increased efforts within the framework of the BRICS group and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to use alternative currencies, have increasingly challenged this position.

In this context, the development of alternative financial systems to SWIFT — including China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) and Russia's System for Transfer of Financial Messages (SPFS) — is expanding as tools to reduce dependence on the Western financial system.

This analysis also emphasizes that the expansion of "BRICS Plus" and the accession of major energy-producing countries could lead to the weakening of the "petrodollar" system, especially if oil and gas transactions are conducted in currencies other than the dollar.

According to analysts, the continuation of this trend may confront the United States with declining global demand for the dollar — an issue that could ultimately lead to higher interest rates and even economic recession in that country.

At the end of its report, CGTN says that de-dollarization is a gradual but already-be-gone process that, in the long term, could lead to a reduction in US financial influence and, in contrast, strengthen the economic position of the so-called "Global South" countries — a process that, according to the media outlet, the recent war against Iran has accelerated to an unprecedented degree.

and cooperation between these ports, as well as the maritime and land connections between them, must be designed in such a way that they serve as a support for the development of the country's ports, especially Chabahar."

Sadegh also highlighted the importance of the country's northern ports and said: "Port and transport relations with neighboring countries in the north of the country must also be addressed with a new approach and redefined within the framework of diplomatic and transport relations."

Process reform and strengthening coordination within the ministry

In another part of her speech, the Minister of Transport and Urban Development emphasized the necessity of reforming certain executive processes and stated: "Some of the processes that

existed in the field of ports and cargo clearance, through reform or redefinition, have led to the recording of new records in this area."

She added: "Some of these issues relate to the government and supervisory bodies, but part of it also relates to internal coordination within the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development and the communication between different sectors of this ministry."

Sadegh continued: "The connection of the Ports Organization with the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization, the Railway Company, and the Construction and Development of Transport Infrastructure Company of the country are among the issues that must be pursued with greater coordination and synergy."

Train movements on most routes continue, Zanjan-Tabriz line damaged section under reconstruction

TEHRAN- The Deputy Director of the Railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran, stating that passenger and freight trains continue to operate on many axes of the rail network, said: "Except for the Zanjan-Tabriz axis, whose damaged infrastructure facilities are under reconstruction, from this afternoon onwards, with the completion of repairs to the lines damaged during the war, passenger train movements on the country's rail network will continue steadily."

Mir-Hassan Mousavi Dizaji, speaking to IRNA on Thursday while condemning the attack on the country's essential infrastructure, stated: "From February 28, 2026, when the brutal aggression of the American-Zionist coalition against our country began, until today, the operation and movement of passenger trains has continued steadily and around the clock thanks to the efforts and dedication of our colleagues at the Railways."

He said: "In the early days of the war, due to flight suspensions, we scheduled extraordinary trains on most routes and added carriages at train departure points, and we were able to provide good services."

The Deputy Director of the Railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran, emphasizing that throughout these 40 days of war the railway has not been closed for even a moment, stated: "All colleagues have been and remain active across the rail network, and even when

areas near rails and railway lines came under attack, all colleagues remained on duty so that we could witness the stable movement and operation of trains."

Referring to the direct attack on some railway facilities on Tuesday (April 7) and damage to several railway lines, he continued: "From the very first hours after the attacks, we prioritized the mobilization and preparation of machinery and equipment. The private sector and contractors stepped in, and the initial work to clear blocked lines was carried out."

Mousavi noted: "With the measures taken, by the end of today we will witness the temporary or permanent reconstruction of most of the damaged lines, allowing the full operation and movement of trains."

He stated: "Today, passenger trains will continue their movement on all other lines of the network except the Zanjan-Tabriz axis."

The Deputy Director of the Railways recalled: "On some axes, due to reconstruction work, we were forced to cancel certain train movements, and in this regard, necessary notifications are sent to passengers via SMS."

He said: "People and passengers can obtain information about train schedules through the system at 021-5149."

Mousavi Dizaji emphasized: "From this afternoon onwards, with the completion of the

majority of reconstruction work, we will witness train movements on all axes including Zahedan, Kerman, Yazd, Isfahan, and Bandar Abbas to Tehran and Mashhad. Additionally, the Shiraz-Mashhad and Shiraz-Tehran trains are also operating."

He said: "The movement of southern trains, which was canceled yesterday (Wednesday) due to reconstruction work, will resume operations today."

The Deputy Director of the Railways added: "Furthermore, yesterday several trains on the Tehran-Mashhad route faced cancellations. In this regard, by launching the Mashhad-Varamin train, we attempted to alleviate some of the problems."

He noted: "With the repair of one of the two Tehran-Mashhad lines, from this afternoon onwards we will witness train movements on the Rasht-Mashhad, Qazvin-Mashhad, and Karaj-Mashhad routes."

Mousavi also reported on the operation of the Tehran-Sari-Gorgan train and clarified: "Based on the above, train movements will continue steadily on almost all routes and across the network."

He expressed hope that with the gradual and principled reconstruction operations on the Zanjan-Tabriz route, passenger train movements on this route will also resume within the next few days.

Hezbollah strikes Zionist regime after Lebanon massacre

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Hezbollah has intensified its attacks on the Zionist regime, launching non-stop rocket barrages and long-range missiles.

Scores of operations, documented and detailed by the Lebanese resistance movement, have highlighted how its continued prowess challenges military equations with the Israeli regime.

Hezbollah emphasized that its operations are “In defense of Lebanon and its people, and in response to the enemy’s violation of the ceasefire agreement, after the Resistance had adhered to the ceasefire while the enemy did not.”

The Lebanese resistance movement announced 72 operations on Thursday. This is the largest number of retaliatory attacks on the Zionist regime’s bases, military and settlements since the regime expanded its attacks in Lebanon on March 2.

The wave of Hezbollah operations on Friday indicates a similar, if not larger, number of attacks by the resistance in the face of the Zionist regime’s aggression, even though Lebanon was included in the ceasefire agreement between Iran and the United States, a key clause that Tehran added on Tuesday.

Among notable operations by Hezbollah are the targeting of 31 settlements and cities, one military point, one military barracks, three border sites and 36 operations confronting advancing Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF).

In addition, the weapons used by Hezbollah in these operations included 61 rocket barrages, three artillery shells, two guided and direct missiles, six drones and gliders, one qualitative weapon, and light and medium weaponry.

Furthermore, the Lebanese



resistance documented Zionist regime losses that included two trenches and fortifications, 29 settlement units, two bulldozers, one tank, one armored personnel carrier, and three gatherings of Israeli occupation forces.

Following these announcements on Friday, Hezbollah continued its resistance operations targeting a gathering of IOF soldiers in the Al-Khiam detention center with a rocket barrage.

Other gathering points of IOF soldiers in the courtyard of Al-Marj site and the courtyard of Branit barracks were targeted with loitering drones. In separate operations, IOF soldiers east of al-Khiam detention center and Khirbet Yaroun site were struck with a qualitative missile.

Hezbollah fighters targeted the regime’s military naval base at Ashdod port with qualitative missiles. Another long-range missile was launched that reportedly interrupted operations at Tel Aviv’s Ben Gurion Airport. Hebrew media also reported that long-range missiles were detected being launched from Lebanon toward the Ashdod coastal area.

The infrastructure belonging to the IOF in the city of Safed was damaged by a rocket barrage.

An IOF Merkava tank was tar-

geted southeast of the al-Khiam detention center with a loitering drone, achieving a direct hit. An IOF artillery bunker in Ne’ot Mordechai settlement was struck with a swarm of loitering drones. An IOF Humvee vehicle in Al-Taybeh town was attacked with a loitering glider, achieving a direct hit.

Hezbollah further announced gathering points for IOF soldiers were targeted in Rashaf town and Wata al-Khiam area with rocket barrages. The IOF’s Ya’ara barracks was struck with a swarm of loitering drones.

The settlements of Kiryat Shmona (several times), Metula (multiple times), Misgav Am (several times), Dovev, Avivim, among others, were attacked with rocket barrages. Shlomi, Goren and Margalioth settlements were struck with rocket barrages as well as a swarm of loitering drones. The Ghajar site also faced a rocket barrage on Friday.

This comes as Hezbollah fighters engage the IOF in ongoing clashes on the outskirts of Bint Jbeil, thwarting the IOF’s attempt to capture the town located around four kilometers from the Lebanese border.

As the Lebanese resistance continues its response to the U.S.-backed Zionist regime’s ag-

gression and its violation of the ceasefire agreement, condemnations have poured in over the regime’s massacre of Lebanese civilians on Wednesday.

The Lebanese Health Ministry reported that at least 303 people were killed and 1,150 injured in the Israeli airstrikes across Lebanon on Wednesday alone, following what it described as barbaric attacks on the capital Beirut, the south, and the east.

The indiscriminate attacks against Lebanese civilian buildings reportedly took place within a timeframe of ten minutes.

According to the United Nations children’s agency UNICEF, the bombardments killed 33 children and injured 153 within minutes. UNICEF said the latest bloodshed adds to a “staggering” total of about 600 children killed or injured in Lebanon since March 2.

The deputy spokesperson for United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Farhan Haq, said the UN strongly condemned the attacks on Lebanon “that resulted in significant civilian casualties.”

Ireland’s Foreign Minister, Helen McEntee, said she is “appalled” by the regime’s “brutal attacks across Lebanon” and called for the U.S.-Iran ceasefire to be extended to the country.

A spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry said “Lebanon’s sovereignty and security should not be violated.”

The European Union said the U.S.-Iran ceasefire agreement should include Lebanon.

Spain’s Foreign Minister echoed those words saying Lebanon must be included in any ceasefire agreement, and France’s President Emmanuel Macron stressed the need to respect the ceasefire in all areas.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Why the war on Iran will dictate the next era in American politics

On Washington’s deepening fissures, the economic backlash, and the right’s good-cop, bad-cop routine

By Garsha Vazirani

TEHRAN — The fragile two-week ceasefire that took effect around April 8, decidedly not a victory for Washington or Tel Aviv, has forced Iran’s adversaries to confront the limits of their military pressure and the internal rivalries that both fuel the war and are now being reshaped by its possible fallout.

The indications of this reality have been increasingly visible, whether in the market manipulations to stabilize the U.S. economy, or the Trump administration’s frantic search for an off-ramp to salvage its polling numbers before the 2026 midterms.

This shift is underscored by high-profile fissures within the American security state, most notably the resignation of Joe Kent as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center.

A flurry of calculated leaks to media outlets such as the New York Times reveals a growing rift among the elite, with political leaders and their backers now leaking narratives of their supposed dissent to avoid being tethered to a failing war.

Also, Trump’s recent vitriolic tirades on Truth Social against Tucker Carlson, Candace Owens, and Alex Jones, labeling them “troublemakers” for their skepticism of the intervention, reveal a political scene deeply rattled.

The economic backlash and the midterm reckoning

The economic fallout of the war has hit home, taking a direct swipe at American wallets. With oil prices jumping from a pre-war low of \$67, the resulting spike at the pump has fueled a cost-of-living crisis, one that Democrats are now using as a political cudgel against Republicans.

Arms manufacturers and energy interests have pocketed billions, a stark reminder that the conflict enriches a narrow corporate-financier class while ordinary Americans bear the burden.

The elite faction of the Democratic party has largely stuck to its traditional pro-Israel, anti-Iran stance. They offered no serious War Powers challenge when Trump started



his aggression, just as they enabled the Gaza genocide during the Biden administration.

Yet the same party is now running ads that tie the war to domestic priorities like healthcare.

Progressives such as Senators Bernie Sanders and Jeff Merkley and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have condemned the war as “unnecessary” and “illegal,” while others such as Senator John Fetterman praised it as “necessary.”

Party leaders have focused on economic messaging for the November midterms, but the war’s unpopularity and fallout in Midwest swing states could help Democrats flip House and Senate seats.

Polling and prediction markets already treat it as a potential reckoning, especially where independents resent foreign entanglements that contradict “America First” promises.

Mapping the Republican civil war

Inside the Republican Party, the war ignited an open succession battle for 2028.

Two factions have been pulled apart. Team A, the post-liberal realist camp anchored by Vice President JD Vance and billionaire Peter Thiel’s network, draws strength from the Rockbridge Network, 1789 Capital, Tucker Carlson, the Mercer family, Steve Bannon, former Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene, Candace Owens, Joe Kent, Megyn Kelly, Alex Jones, a circle of influential podcaster such as Joe Rogan, some realist scholars, and even some crossover voices like Max Blumenthal and Anna Kasparian.

Kent’s resignation as National Counterterrorism Center director was both protest and

power move; he argued Iran posed no imminent threat and that Israel had dragged the United States into an unnecessary fight, but his activities after resigning suggest he is auditioning for higher positions of power.

This group appeals to a growing base that opposes Israel based on moral and strategic reasons, as well as those who see endless Middle East wars as distractions from China and technological supremacy.

The group’s elite are not motivated by solidarity with Iran or opposition to Israel; they remain pro-Israel on pragmatic grounds. Their skepticism is purely tactical.

Thiel’s Palantir remains deeply embedded in the military-intelligence machinery that enables military atrocities in the Middle East and beyond.

Vance has defended the initial actions during the recent war on Iran while signaling openness to diplomacy.

Now leading negotiations in Islamabad alongside Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, he has called ceasefires “always messy” and dismissed Iranian objections over Lebanon as “misunderstanding,” despite Pakistani officials reiterating that Lebanon was actually a part of the ceasefire.

Trump has joked publicly that he will claim full credit if talks succeed but blame Vance if they fail.

Team B, the evangelical and ultra-Zionist wing embodied by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, relies on an older base of Christian Zionists, the Adelson family, Paul Singer, Bill Ackman, Senator Lindsey Graham, Ambassador Mike Huckabee, Mark Levin, Laura Loomer, and Ben Shapiro.

For them, the war carries near-biblical weight. Rubio has surged in early 2028 straw polls, positioning himself as the bridge to neoconservative tradition.

Public clashes, including Trump’s recent Truth Social tirade labeling Carlson, Kelly, Owens, and Jones as low-IQ troublemakers, suggest Trump has obsessively paid attention to Team A’s stances.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

APRIL 11, 2026

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

5

For Iran, Dahiyeh holds the weight of a capital

By Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati, Managing Director

TEHRAN — One might say, in undiplomatic language born of sheer necessity: “From the very beginning, Lebanon was never truly under a ceasefire.” One could ignore the Pakistani mediator’s X post and the historical record of these negotiations. One could, once again, adopt the breaking of promises as a standard operating procedure. But it is impossible to expect that while Beirut burns under a rain of bombs, Iran will remain silent or that dialogue with Tehran will yield any meaningful result.

The announcement by Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif regarding the mutual acceptance of a two-week ceasefire by Iran and the United States, and the imminent commencement of talks to reach a final agreement, contained several fundamental points.

Chief among them was the emphasis that the ceasefire had been accepted by Iran, the U.S., and their respective allies, and the explicit stress that this truce would encompass Lebanon.

Immediately afterward, a post by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was published on X.

While expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, the esteemed Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan, for their tireless efforts to end the war in the region, the Iranian top diplomat stated: “In response to the

brotherly request of PM Sharif in his tweet, and considering the request by the U.S. for negotiations based on its 15-point proposal as well as announcement by POTUS about acceptance of the general framework of Iran’s 10-point proposal as a basis for negotiations, I hereby declare on behalf of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council: If attacks against Iran are halted, our Powerful Armed Forces will cease their defensive operations.”

A screenshot of this statement was subsequently posted by Donald Trump on his Truth Social.

This exchange signaled a clear understanding rooted in the proposals of both parties as the foundation for the ceasefire and subsequent negotiations. Although Araghchi’s post did not explicitly name Lebanon, in every published version of the 10-point proposal, regardless of which one the U.S. chooses to adopt as its benchmark, the issue of Lebanon and Hezbollah stands at the very forefront.

Yet, only hours after these diplomatic exchanges, unprecedented and heavy aerial strikes were launched against Hezbollah in the Dahiyeh district of Beirut.

Some sources described these attacks as the most intense since 1982. According to the Lebanese Ministry of Health, over 300 people were martyred and over 1,100 wounded.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

“Strategic success beyond imagination”

TEHRAN — A senior expert says Iran’s control over the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy corridor, is a “strategic success beyond imagination.”

Saeed Leilaz makes these remarks as Iran and the United States agreed on a two-week ceasefire plan on April 8 after the U.S. and Israel launched an unprovoked and illegal war on Iran on Feb. 28 with the aim of toppling the Islamic Republic system in a very short time.

In response to the war started on Feb. 28, Iran closed the strategic Strait of Hormuz to commercial ships of the U.S. and its allies.

This is the third imposed war against Iran since the start of the Islamic Revolution in 1979. The first one was imposed by Saddam Hussein’s Iraq in Sept. 1980, and the second one by the U.S. and Israel in June 2025.

The two-week ceasefire, mediated by Pakistan, is intended to give time to negotiators from Iran and the U.S. to work on a 10-point plan proposed by Tehran which includes an abolition of UN sanction resolutions against Iran, a lasting deal between Iran and the U.S., a guarantee that no aggression will take place against Iran, and Iran’s control over the Strait of Hormuz among other things.

The U.S., which has said Iran’s 10-point plan is “workable,” has tacitly accepted Iran’s control over the Strait of Hormuz. The strait, which connects the Gulf of Oman to the Persian Gulf, is shared by Iran and Oman and does not fall into the category of international waters.

Negotiators from Iran and the U.S. are going to meet in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, on Saturday to work on the blueprint. However, analysts believe that the two-week time will not be enough to find a solution. Pundits and officials in Iran and the world, especially the West, are worried that Israel may even kill the ceasefire let alone let the negotiating sides make a deal.

The 2015 Iran nuclear deal, which was abolished by President Donald Trump in his first presidential term in 2018, was the result of two years of intensive talks between Iran, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany, and the European Union.

However, Leilaz says today’s condition is somehow different from those days.

“First, the number of negotiating partners has been largely reduced” and this facilitates the talks, Leilaz told IRNA.

To back up his opinion, he says Europe as an economic power and political powerhouse has actually lost its significance as in has been demonstrated in the Ukraine war. Probably, Leilaz adds, Europe’s influential role was during the time that led to the conclusion of the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“Secondly, the U.S. has almost used all means to weaken and overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran during the past years. From maximum economic



pressure, which in my opinion is unprecedented in history, to efforts to cause unrest and destabilize Iran’s economic, political and social structure. It has even tested internal divisions,” Leilaz underlines.

It is not still clear whether the talks on April 11 between Iran and the U.S. will be face-to-face or not.

“These negotiations are bilateral, and I hope that negotiations be direct because when the number of interlocutors is less, the talks will be more transparent and naturally lesser time will be needed to reach an agreement,” opines Leilaz, a graduate of history who is mostly referred to as an economic theorist.

The expert also says the U.S.-Israel aggression on Iran was preplanned and all its details were fully studied.

“In the first days of the war incidents happened that are unprecedented in the history of the world. For example, direct attack on the political leader of the country and simultaneously targeting certain sensitive centers... are among the moves that seems have been done with calculations and full awareness.

“They imagined that the Islamic Republic has been under pressure for years and faced serious domestic challenges and will fall down in the first hours of the war, similar to what happened in the June 1967 war between Israel and Arab states, and the fate of the war will be determined in a short time. But this scenario failed miserably.”

Leilaz, the professor of history from Shahid Beheshti University, says Iran even did not allow the aggressors to have a gain in the war of narratives. “In fact, Iran won the war of words in this conflict.”

The U.S. Central Command has announced that it has singlehandedly conducted over 13,000 military operations against targets in Iran until ceasefire was announced. Israel also conducted more than 10,000 airstrikes against Iran by the American-supplied advanced fighter jets.

“In my opinion, this strategic victory is even beyond the imagination of many observers. I myself have always been among the most optimistic analysts about Iran’s resistance and believed that that Iran resists against all kinds of pressure, but I did not imagine that this resistance be so ‘quick and resolute’. To some extent, it can also mitigate the bitter memories of the Battle of Chaldiran” and others.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Extent of damage to Isfahan's historic sites unclear, UNESCO academic says

ISFAHAN - A senior Iranian academic affiliated with UNESCO said it is not yet possible to provide an accurate assessment of damage to historic monuments in Isfahan following recent air strikes, citing the need for detailed studies once conditions stabilize.

Mehrdad Hejazi, head of UNESCO's university network in Iran, made the remarks during a visit to several historical sites in the central Iranian city, ISNA reported.

Hejazi said the scale of destruction caused by the US-Israeli aggression was enormous, expressing hope that damaged structures could be restored as soon as possible.

"Providing a precise evaluation of the damage, both material and intangible, is not currently possible," he said, adding that comprehensive and standardized assessments would be required before reliable estimates could be made.

Hejazi said preliminary observations suggest that damage to heritage sites falls into two main categories: structural and decorative.

"Damage to structural components appears to be less extensive than to decorative elements, although this requires further detailed study," he said.

He added that decorative features, including tilework, wooden ornaments, glass elements and similar artistic details, were particularly vulnerable due to their lower resistance compared with core structures.

Experts are especially concerned about these elements, which are often central to the artistic and historical value of Iran's Islamic architecture.

Hejazi added that restoration efforts would need to follow a phased approach, beginning with detailed studies and followed by reconstruction and conservation work. He warned that the process would likely require substantial funding.

"Iranian specialists, particularly those in Isfahan, are capable of addressing this challenge," he said, adding that international assistance could also be sought if needed.

He said a medium-to-long-term plan would likely be required to repair the damage, while stressing that the destruction of sites with national and international significance remained unacceptable.

Hejazi also cautioned against premature estimates of damage.



"Determining which sites have suffered the most damage is complex," he said. "In some cases, restoring small but intricate decorative elements may take longer than repairing larger sections. Any figures based on speculation at this stage could lead to poor decision-making."

Isfahan, one of Iran's most historically significant cities, is renowned for its Islamic architecture, bazaars, gardens and museums. The city has long been known by the nickname "Nesf-e-Jahan," or "half the world," reflecting its historical importance as a center of culture, trade and diplomacy.

Hejazi said that across multiple sites, the level of damage appeared "significant" relative to the structures themselves, but expressed optimism that restoration was possible with the support of skilled Iranian experts and adequate national resources.

"We hope that, by mobilizing capable specialists and domestic support, these damaged monuments can be returned to their original condition in due time," he said.

Isfahan, once a bustling hub of international trade and diplomacy in Iran, has transformed into one of the country's premier tourist destinations for compelling reasons. Filled with architectural marvels, including unparalleled Islamic structures, vibrant bazaars, enriching museums, serene Persian gardens, and picturesque tree-lined boulevards, Isfahan beckons visitors to immerse themselves in its charm. Strolling through its labyrinthine bazaars, lounging in its enchanting gardens, and engaging with its friendly locals offer a glimpse into the rich tapestry of life in this extraordinary destination.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Old Town of Segovia and its Aqueduct

The Roman aqueduct of Segovia, probably built c. 50 CE, is remarkably well preserved. This impressive construction, with its two tiers of arches, forms part of the setting of the magnificent historic city of Segovia. Other important monuments include the Alcázar, begun around the 11th century, and the 16th-century Gothic cathedral.

The property comprises an array of monuments, which in terms of beauty and exemplary historical significance, are truly outstanding, with the Aqueduct, the Alcázar, and the Cathedral among its major structures. It is a prime example of the coexistence of different, cultural communities throughout time.

The Old Town of Segovia is located in the center of Spain, in the Autonomous Community of Castile and León. The center is crowded together on the rocky bluff delineated by the confluence of the Eresma and Clamores rivers.

Segovia is symbolic of a complex, historical reality. Its neighborhoods, streets, and houses are laid out in accordance with a social structure in which hierarchy was organized and dominated by belonging to one of the different cultural communities. Moors, Christians, and Jews coexisted for a long period of time in the medieval city and worked together during the 16th century manufacturing boom. The evidence of this cultural process can be seen in the large number of outstanding monuments in the city, among which, the Roman Aqueduct stands out. Other important monuments can be found in the property: the Alcázar, begun around the 11th century; several Romanesque

churches; noble palaces from 15th and 16th centuries; the 16th-century Gothic cathedral, the last to be built in Spain in this style; and the Segovia Mint, the oldest industrial building still existing in Spain.

The Roman Aqueduct of Segovia, probably built c. 50 BC, is remarkably well preserved. This impressive construction, with its two tiers of arches, forms part of the magnificent setting of the historic city of Segovia. It is an enormous construction of masonry, 813 m in length, consisting of four straight segments and two superimposed arcades borne by 128 pillars. At the lowest point of the valley, the Aqueduct stands at a height of 28.5 m above ground.

The 221 colossal pillars bear witness to the magnitude of the *Aquae Atilianae* in the province of Zaragoza while in other parts of Spain, only remnants of the Roman aqueducts of Segovia, Toledo, and Calahorra have survived. The impressive monuments that survive in Mérida, Tarragona, and Segovia illustrate the political determination, which following the steps of the victorious armies, greatly increased the number of aqueducts which Frontinus described as "the most solemn testimony of the Empire."

The Aqueduct of Segovia is the best known of these civil engineering feats due to its monumentality, its excellent state of conservation, and in particular, its stunning location in relation to the urban site. The Aqueduct is the symbol of the city and can in no way be separated from Segovia as a whole.

(Source: UNESCO)

Minister inspects damage at Sa'dabad palace complex after air strikes

TEHRAN - Iran's minister of cultural heritage visited the Sa'dabad Cultural-Historical Complex in northern Tehran on Thursday to weigh damage caused by recent air strikes.

Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri toured the damaged sections including the Green Palace, Mellat Palace, Omidvar Brothers Museum, and Royal Costume Museum, as part of a field evaluation of the impact of the attacks, Mehr reported.

Preliminary assessments indicate that parts of the complex sustained "significant damage" to infrastructure, buildings and some museum items. Authorities said the full scale of the damage would require detailed technical studies and planning for restoration.

Salehi-Amiri said protecting cultural heritage was integral to national identity and security, according to the report.

"Safeguarding these civilizational assets is part of the broader strategy to preserve national cohesion and protect the historical memory of Iranians," he said during the visit.

Covering roughly 110 hectares of wooded mountainside in northern Tehran, the Sa'dabad complex stands as one of Iran's most extensive royal estates. First developed in the 19th century, it served as a summer res-



idence for Qajar monarchs, who built the earliest structures on the site. The complex underwent major expansion in the 1920s after Reza Shah of the Pahlavi dynasty made it his residence, a role it maintained until his exile in 1941. His son, Mohammad Reza Shah, later occupied Sa'dabad in the 1970s, using it as one of the main royal compounds during the final years of the monarchy.

Sa'dabad also figured briefly

in modern political history. In 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter stayed in the palace during his visit to Tehran, a trip aimed at demonstrating American support for the Pahlavi government. Following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the complex was nationalized and transformed into a public museum.

Sa'dabad is managed by Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. Much

of the estate has been converted into museums that exhibit a wide range of royal belongings, including furniture, dishware, carpets, miniature paintings, and vintage automobiles. However, a number of buildings remain in use by the Office of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while the rest of the site welcomes visitors who explore its gardens, palaces, and collections.

Scholars condemn damage to Iran's cultural heritage

TEHRAN - A group of international researchers and heritage specialists has condemned the damage inflicted on Iran's cultural heritage during the recent US-Israeli military strikes, warning that the destruction threatens not only historical sites but also global scientific research and collective human memory.

In a statement, the scholars said that since Feb. 28, 2026, intense bombardments by the United States and Israel on Iranian territory, described by the signatories as violations of international law, have already caused "considerable" damage, despite a fragile ceasefire announced overnight on April 7-8.

"We express our solidarity with the Iranian people, who bear, and will continue to bear, the brunt of the consequences of this war," the statement said.

The researchers cited repeated warnings issued in March by UNESCO about the risks to Iran's cultural heritage, as well as concerns raised by other international bodies including Europa Nostra, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the US Committee of the Blue Shield.

According to the statement, more than 120 heritage sites have been affected to date. Among the damaged locations are major UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Golestan Palace in Tehran and Naqsh-e Jahan Square and Chehel Sotun Palace in Isfahan.

The scholars said that while some destruction may be attributed to "collateral damage," other strikes appear to have deliberately targeted cultural institutions and universities in Tehran and Isfahan, raising concerns about attempts to erase historical records and un-

dermine academic infrastructure.

They also pointed to a March 8 strike in Khorramabad, in western Iran's Lorestan province, which destroyed offices of the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization. The attack injured staff and left the fate of archaeological archives and scientific documentation stored at the site uncertain. Nearby landmarks, including the historic Falak-ol-Aflak Citadel and a museum, were also damaged.

"These buildings had been identified and their coordinates transmitted to the belligerents by UNESCO to prevent such attacks," the statement said.

The signatories stressed that Iran's cultural heritage spans tens of thousands of sites, including 29 on UNESCO's World Heritage list and around 40,000 registered nationally. They highlighted the country's significance for global history, citing archaeological evidence dating back more than 300,000 years and major contributions to early agriculture, writing systems and urban development.

"Iran occupies a central place in world history," the researchers said, warning that the loss of sites, archives and collections would have "irreparable" consequences for the study of ancient, medieval and modern societies.

They also warned of broader environmental damage caused by the conflict, noting that Iran's diverse landscapes, from mountain ranges to deserts and coastal regions, offer key insights into how past societies adapted to climate change.

The statement called for increased international coordination to monitor and document damage, backing initiatives such as an

atlas project by the Society of Iranian Archaeology (SIA) and the Center of Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL). However, the researchers said such efforts are being hampered by communication disruptions, with internet access in Iran reportedly cut for weeks.

The scholars urged governments, research institutions and universities to support efforts to protect Iranian heritage and maintain academic collaboration. They called for expanded funding, digitization of archives, and increased opportunities for Iranian researchers to work abroad.

"Research that is obstructed is also research in danger," the statement said.

The signatories also emphasized France's potential role, citing its long-standing academic cooperation with Iran and its network of regional research institutes. They warned that continued conflict across the Middle East, from Afghanistan to Lebanon, has already constrained research but underscored the need to sustain scholarly work despite such challenges.

Beyond the immediate damage, the researchers warned that attacks on cultural heritage contribute to the erosion of shared historical memory and risk deepening global divisions.

"Such destruction contributes to the dehumanization of societies by obliterating their long, rich and interconnected histories," they said.

The statement was signed by researchers and academics including Sébastien Gondet, Camille Rhoné-Quer, Sandra Aube Lorain, Marjan Mashkour, Hossein Davoudi and Zahra Hashemi, among others.

Iran urges ICESCO to act on threats to cultural heritage

TEHRAN - Iran has formally called on an international cultural body to take urgent action to protect its historical sites, citing growing threats to some of the country's most significant cultural landmarks.

According to Mehr news agency, Ali Darabi, the deputy minister for cultural heritage, sent an open letter on Tuesday to Salim M. al-Malik, head of ICESCO, urging immediate legal and diplomatic measures to safeguard Iran's cultural assets.

"Iran, as one of the world's oldest civilizations, holds a vast array of tangible and intangible heritage," Darabi said in the letter, according to the report, adding that much of it forms part of humanity's shared historical

memory.

Official figures cited in the report show that more than 34,000 historical sites are registered on Iran's national heritage list. In addition, over 100 Iranian sites are inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list across 29 entries.

Among the sites highlighted as particularly vulnerable are Golestan Palace, Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Shah Mosque, Falak-ol-Aflak Citadel, Chehel Sotun Palace and Safiabad Palace.

Experts warn that damage to such sites—some of which are UNESCO-listed—could have far-reaching cultural and international consequences.

In the letter, Darabi referred several international le-

gal frameworks, including the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1972 World Heritage Convention, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347, all of which emphasize the protection of cultural heritage during crises.

He outlined four key demands: a formal international warning against any attacks on Iranian heritage, the establishment of legal deterrence mechanisms, pursuit of international claims against those responsible for potential damage, and the use of diplomatic channels for immediate preventive action.

Cultural heritage experts say such appeals highlight the global dimension of the issue.

"When a country with Iran's historical depth faces such threats, it is not only about protecting a few monuments, but about preserving regional and global historical identity," one expert said.

They added that international organizations such as ICESCO and UNESCO can play a crucial role through official statements, monitoring mechanisms and expert missions, which in past cases have helped deter destruction.

Analysts note that many of Iran's most important heritage sites are located in densely populated or strategically sensitive areas, increasing the complexity of protecting them.

International community is not indifferent to Minab tragedy: UN envoy

TEHRAN – Jean Arnault, the UN special envoy, has said the international community has not remained indifferent to the Minab school tragedy that occurred by the US and the Zionist regime of Israel, saying that the genocide will be recorded in history.

On February 28, the US launched a missile attack to Shajarah Tayyebah school in the city of Minab, southern Hormozgan province, massacring almost 170 people, mainly students aged seven to twelve.

Arnault has paid a visit to Iran to witness the war crimes committed by the aggressors against the country over the past 40 days.

Holding a meeting with the head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), Pirhossein Kolivand, Arnault said, "The world hears your voice."

Lauding the IRCS efforts, he noted, "The performance of your colleagues is a clear sign of sacrifice, carried out under extremely dangerous conditions over the past five weeks.

You have certainly seen and felt that the international community has not remained indifferent to this tragedy. Public opinion in many countries, reflected in numerous surveys, has condemned this war and regards its consequences as extremely grave," he added.

"Due to the crimes committed and the hardships suffered by women and children as a result of this war, our colleagues in Iran and at the United Nations are making significant efforts to bring this war to an end," the official emphasized.

For his part, Kolivand called on the UN envoy to be the voice of the suffering of the Iranian nation, and take actions to uphold



the rights of those who have lost their lives in this war.

Elaborating on the latest report on the damage inflicted on civilian areas and facilities, Kolivand stated that, "So far, six weeks into this war, 857 schools and educational facilities, 338 hospitals, clinics, and emergency centers, 49 relief logistics facilities, 43 ambulances, 20 Red Crescent centers, and three Red Crescent helicopters have been hit by missiles, damaged, or destroyed."

During the aggressions, four aid workers were killed and many others were injured while carrying out search and rescue, and relief missions for the affected people during humanitarian operations in this war, he added.

The official went on to say that "you are well-aware of the laws that, under all circumstances, prohibit attacks on these areas and classify targeting them as war crimes. Yet those who enact these laws are the very ones who violate them."

The IRCS, as an independent institution, has submitted and reported its documentation and observations of these crimes to

the United Nations (UN), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Criminal Court (ICC), and all relevant international bodies, he further noted.

The official presented a map of the targets struck in civilian, residential, and commercial areas, along with videos showing Red Crescent rescuers saving people trapped under the rubble, to the UN Special Envoy.

Sharing a video of consecutive airstrike explosions near Khatam al-Anbiya Hospital in Tehran, which depicted the panic of patients and the efforts of nurses and medical staff to evacuate them and transfer newborns out of the hospital, Kolivand stated that at the time of these attacks, 21 patients were simultaneously undergoing cardiac surgery, and 16 operating rooms were active, and that the hospital sustained damage comparable to a 7.5-magnitude earthquake.

"How long should international organizations remain silent in the face of these crimes? We provided humanitarian assistance under these conditions. Who can

challenge these documents? I ask you, since you have come here and are witnessing these events first-hand, to awaken the consciences of the world and fulfill your legal responsibilities, as well as those of other organizations."

Indiscriminate warfare is indefensible and incompatible with law

Meanwhile, the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mirjana Spoljaric, in a statement on hostilities in Middle East, has underlined that indiscriminate warfare is indefensible and incompatible with law.

Deliberate threats, whether in rhetoric or in action, against essential civilian infrastructure and nuclear facilities must not become the new norm in warfare.

Any war fought without limits is incompatible with the law. It is indefensible, inhumane and devastating for entire populations.

Across the Middle East, our teams are seeing the destruction of infrastructure essential for civilian life. Power plants, water systems, hospitals, roads, bridges, homes, schools, universities have come under fire.

Most alarming are potential threats to nuclear facilities. Any miscalculation can cause irreversible consequences for generations to come.

I urgently call on parties to spare civilians and civilian objects in all military operations. It is their obligation under international humanitarian law.

States must respect and ensure respect for the rules of war in both what they say and what they do. The world cannot succumb to a political culture that prioritizes death over life.

Turkey condemns US-Israeli strikes on Iranian universities

TEHRAN – Turkey's council of higher education and universities have denounced the terrorist attacks on Iran's sovereignty, and the bombardment of Iranian universities by the United States and the Zionist regime of Israel.

In separate statements, they voiced their deep concerns over airstrikes targeting academic and scientific centers, IRNA reported.

The Turkey's council of higher education (YÖK) expressed worries over military aggressions and assaults on Iran.

The universities have always been the hub of peace, security, and conversation; any warmongering that target the stability of the region is condemned.

The YÖK condemned violence, saying that the current geostrategic deadlock can be resolved only through diplomacy. Military attacks that threaten civilian infrastructure, and regional stability are the biggest barrier to academic and scientific progress.

All Turkish universities are required to cooperate with and support students from other countries which are involved in conflicts, particularly those from Iran. These include facilitating registration process, extending educational deadlines, and resolving economical problems facing the banking system.

The YÖK urges all student unions to sympathize with the oppressed, and prevent actions that would endanger the safety of the universities or trigger clashes.

Education in Turkey will go on ceaselessly; needed measures are taken up to ensure the security of foreign students and in dormitories and colleges.

Also, the Middle East Technical University (METU), as an institution that has always supported social security and regional cooperation, expressed solidarity with its Iranian colleagues and students.

It announced that the recent assaults not only poses a threat to people, but also threatens intellectual development in the Middle East.

METU rejects the normalisation of military interventions, and calls on parties to

help protect universities in this unsteady situation.

METU remains a safe and open shelter for all the society members impacted by these incidents.

Meanwhile, Hacettepe University, as a world class research university in health and social science, highlighted that the war is a public health crisis that goes beyond borders.

Hacettepe university is committed to providing full psychological and administrative support for Iranian students.

The university ensures that no single student's educational status is threatened by foreign geopolitical conditions. Hacettepe university prefers 'science first' approach to regional issues, and believe that scientific bonds are stronger than decisive forces.

The university believes in science and diplomacy. It urges the international community to use their common sense and prefer peaceful solutions to military confrontation.

The university ensures to protect the rights of all Iranian faculty members and students in university will be protected in this challenging period. The universities are committed to provide needed administrative, financial, and logistic support to help them continue education.

On Saturday, Minister of Science, Research and Technology Hossein Simaei-Sarraf said over 30 Iranian universities had been directly attacked by the United States and Israel since the war began in late February.

Five university professors and more than 60 students had been killed in the strikes, added Simaei-Sarraf, describing attacks on Iranian infrastructure as "crimes against humanity."

"The main reason the enemy targeted this sensitive infrastructure was that they did not want us to gain access to this technology," he said, adding that many Iranians abroad have contacted the university, offering to help fund its restoration.

On April 7, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations accused the United States and Israel of committing "unprecedented barba-



ris" by deliberately targeting Iranian universities and scientific institutions, calling the strikes war crimes that no amount of threats or military pressure can extinguish.

In a series of letters to the UN Secretary-general and the Security Council this week, Ambassador Amir Saieid Iravani detailed a systematic campaign of state terrorism.

He cited an airstrike early on April 6 that severely damaged Sharif University of Technology in Tehran, including its faculties of civil engineering and electrical engineering, as well as research institutes for nanotechnology and environmental studies. That attack followed a similar strike on April 3 that hit Shahid Beheshti University, damaging its Laser and Plasma Research Institute.

"The intentional targeting of scientific institutions and universities constitutes a clear violation of international humanitarian law and amounts to a war crime," Iravani wrote.

The Iranian government's spokesperson, Fatemeh Mohajerani speaking at a news conference at Shahid Beheshti University, echoed that defiance.

"The enemies cannot extinguish the lamp of Iranian science," the spokeswoman said, adding that recent attacks were meant to undermine the achievements of the 47-year-old revolution and sever the bond between the nation and its homeland.

"These miscalculations are wrong. Iran is the common denominator of all Iranians. Those who have a homeland will stand behind their country, and Iranians living abroad will never give in."

Education for foreign university students to continue despite war losses

TEHRAN - The Ministry of Science has announced that educational programs for foreign university students present in the country will continue despite the unfavorable conditions caused by the imposed war.

All universities have been asked to ensure that all international students benefit from the educational facilities and capacities of the universities by adopting innovative measures, including preparing offline educational packages, developing intensive summer training courses, and anticipating the possibility of completing practical courses in the coming years, in addition to continuing online education, IRNA reported.

These measures and plans should be implemented in a way that ensures that international students do not suffer academic, training, or even financial losses due to the conditions resulting from the imposed war.

Before the US-Israeli war against Iran, nearly 60,000 foreign students from 101 countries, mainly from Afghanistan, India, Iraq, and Pakistan, were studying in Iran.

Since the beginning of the aggressive attacks by the US-Israeli coalition on Iran, a series of extensive assaults on Iranian scientific and academic centers including the Iran University of Science and Technology, Shahid Beheshti University, the Iranian Space Research Institute, Abbaspour University, and the Pasteur Institute of Tehran, have drawn global attention.

These attacks go beyond conventional military operations and carry broad strategic, cultural, and scientific implications. Analyzing these strikes highlights both the fear of foreign powers toward Iran's scientific progress and the necessity of emphasizing the resilience of local science and knowledge in the face of violence and bombing.

Targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure on such a scale can, according to credible legal sources, constitute clear violations of international humanitarian law. Under the Geneva Conventions and customary international humanitarian law, civilian locations, including schools and universities, are generally protected from attacks.

Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf has said over 30 Iranian universities had been directly attacked by the United States



and Israel since the war began in late February.

Five university professors and more than 60 students had been killed in the strikes, added Simaei-Sarraf, describing attacks on Iranian infrastructure as "crimes against humanity."

"The main reason the enemy targeted this sensitive infrastructure was that they did not want us to gain access to this technology," he said, adding that many Iranians abroad have contacted the university, offering to help fund its restoration.

Amir-Saeid Iravani, ambassador to the United Nations, has accused the United States and Israel of committing "unprecedented barbarism" by deliberately targeting Iranian universities and scientific institutions, calling the strikes war crimes that no amount of threats or military pressure can extinguish.

In a series of letters to the UN secretary-general and the Security Council, Iravani detailed a systematic campaign of state terrorism.

He cited an airstrike early on April 6 that severely damaged Sharif University of Technology in Tehran, including its faculties of civil engineering and electrical engineering, as well as research institutes for nanotechnology and environmental studies. That attack followed a similar strike on April 3 that hit Shahid Beheshti University, damaging its Laser and Plasma Research Institute.

"The intentional targeting of scientific institutions and universities constitutes a clear violation of international humanitarian law and amounts to a war crime," Iravani wrote.

Red Crescent, National Committee for Humanitarian Law condemn attacks on civilian infrastructure

TEHRAN - The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and the National Committee for Humanitarian Law (NCHL) have condemned the US-Israeli attacks on the country's civilian infrastructure.

In a joint statement issued on Wednesday, the IRCS and the NCHL warned about the Israeli attacks on civilian critical infrastructure carried out with the support of the United States, calling for the unconditional observance of the principles of international humanitarian law.

"At least eight railways and 59 airports, as well as public facilities, connecting roads, bridges, and transportation networks, have been targeted in the recent attacks," noted the statement.

"Furthermore, power substations, nuclear power plants, and petrochemical facilities have also been targeted, causing serious disruption to the supply of energy, vital services, and the basic needs of the population, and resulting in widespread and longterm consequences for the lives, health, and security of civilians.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society and the National Committee for Humanitarian Law emphasize that according to the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, especially the principle of distinction, any attack on civilian property and infrastructure is prohibited, and those responsible are accountable for serious violations of international obligations.

Targeting infrastructure that serves a predominantly civilian function constitutes a clear breach of these principles.

The IRCS and the NCHL call on international institutions such as the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross to conduct prompt, and independent investigations and documentation of the attacks, strengthen oversight of compliance with international humanitarian law, use all legal and diplomatic avenues to halt these attacks, and provide the

necessary grounds for accountability and prosecution of those responsible for these violations."

The statement also emphasized that ensuring safe and rapid access to humanitarian assistance and protecting vital infrastructure constitute fundamental responsibilities of the international community, and that any disruption in this regard will have irreparable humanitarian consequences.

It stressed the necessity of safeguarding the lives, dignity, and security of civilians under all circumstances and underscored that violations of these principles must not go unanswered.

Targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure on such a scale can, according to credible legal sources, constitute clear violations of international humanitarian law. Under the Geneva Conventions and customary international humanitarian law, civilian locations, including schools and universities, are generally protected from attacks.

The strike on the Pasteur Institute of Tehran, a research and public health center with over a century of history and a member of the international Pasteur network is a prime example of targeting scientific institutions as part of modern warfare. Established in the 1920s, the institute has been a regional pioneer in vaccine production and has played a key role in controlling deadly diseases, particularly plague originating from wildlife in the region.

In the context of modern warfare, destroying such institutions constitutes an attack on the human capital of the future. Education, research, and technology production form a continuous cycle of national development, and targeting universities, especially those engaged in research related to defense, energy, and strategic technologies is, in effect, an effort to dismantle national scientific infrastructure and knowledge production.



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**

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

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601

Email: info@tehrantimes.com

Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430

Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 43051505

Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430



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

APRIL 11, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The envy of a friend is a sign of the weakness of his friendship.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:05 Evening: 18:53 Dawn: 4:08 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:36 (tomorrow)

George Clooney calls Donald Trump's 'a whole civilization will die tonight' threat to Iran a war crime

The long-running war of words between George Clooney and the White House has ignited again after the Oscar-winning actor criticized Donald Trump's threat to Iran that "a whole civilization will die tonight".

On Wednesday, in a speech to 3,000 high school students in Cuneo, Italy, Clooney said the US president had committed a war crime with his threat.

"Some say Donald Trump is fine," the 64-year-old told the students at an event organized by the Clooney Foundation for Justice. "But if anyone says he wants to end a civilization, that's a war crime. You can still support the conservative point of view but there must be a line of decency, and we must not cross it."

In response, the White House communications director, Steven Cheung, told the Independent: "The only person committing war crimes is George Clooney for his awful movies and terrible acting ability."

In a statement to Deadline on Wednesday, Clooney said: "Families are losing their loved ones. Children have been incinerated. The world's economy is on a knife's edge. This is a time for vigorous debate at the highest levels. Not for infantile name calling. I'll start. A war crime is alleged 'when there is intent to physically destroy a nation,' as defined by the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute. What is the administration's defense? [Besides calling me a failed actor which I happily agree with, having starred in Batman and Robin?]"

Clooney, a longtime Democratic supporter and donor, has been outspoken about his politics for decades, often framing his frankness as a moral responsibility born from being raised by his journalist father and his marriage to the human rights lawyer Amal Clooney. In 2024 he made headlines when he wrote an op-ed in the New York Times urging the then-president, Joe Biden, to drop out of the presidential race.

Despite the gulf between their politics, Clooney has spoken about once being on good terms with Trump before his presidency, telling Variety



last year: "I knew him very well. He used to call me a lot, and he tried to help me get into a hospital once to see a back surgeon. I'd see him out at clubs and at restaurants. He's a big goofball. Well, he was. That all changed."

Trump, not known for having thick skin, often reacts to criticism that comes his way from Hollywood, a world he tried to enter via cameos and reality television. He has been particularly responsive to criticism from Clooney over the years, variously calling him a "second-rate movie star", a "third-rate actor", a "fake movie actor" who "never came close to making a great movie", and a "backstabber".

In January, Trump criticized France's decision to grant the actor and his family French citizenship, calling the Clooney "two of the worst political prognosticators of all time".

"Clooney got more publicity for politics than he did for his very few, and totally mediocre, movies," the president added. "He wasn't a movie star at all, he was just an average guy who complained, constantly, about common sense in politics."

In response, and referring to the US midterm elections on November 3, Clooney told the Hollywood Reporter: "I totally agree with the current president. We have to make America great again. We'll start in November."

Cartoon of Day



OilTanic
Cartoonist: Mahmoud Raifai from Jordan

Minab installation commemorates martyred students

TEHRAN- To honor the memories of the young students martyred in the recent tragedy and mark the 40th day of their martyrdom, a conceptual art installation featuring 2,000 red butterflies and symbolic crimson pages has been unveiled at the ruins of Minab's Shajareh Tayyeb Elementary School.

Reaching a height of nine meters amidst the wreckage, the installation serves as a visual narrative of ascension, designed to honor the children's memory and break the silence of the tragedy and transform it into a timeless narrative of innocence and ascension.

The project, titled the "Minab Martyr Children Memorial," is organized by the Center for Islamic Architectural Arts of the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization.

Mostafa Momeni-Rad, the director of the center, shared the vision behind the initiative. "Despite the challenges posed by the current wartime conditions and severe time constraints, we were determined to create a temporary installation that could offer solace to the grieving families and voice this immense sorrow through the language of art," he said.

Designing a memorial that could reflect the depth of a parent's grief in Minab was no simple task. Momeni-Rad explained that the creative team reviewed countless photographs and testimonies, considering ten different proposals before finalizing the current design.

"The core concept was inspired by the children's blood-stained books and notebooks," he noted. "The installation depicts these pages being drawn toward the sky, gradually transforming into 2,000 red butterflies. It creates a delicate contrast between the grace of the butterflies



and the harsh violence of the ruins."

The installation consists of 2,000 crimson translucent pieces suspended from 72 hanging strands, reaching a height of nine meters under the school's fractured roof. These red butterflies symbolize the names of the martyrs that refuse to be extinguished by the dust of tragedy.

He highlighted the emotional connection formed by the families of the martyrs who visited during the installation process.

"Seeing the families resonate deeply with the metaphorical expression of their children's ascension was incredibly meaningful for us," he said. "It confirmed that we were on the right path to documenting this event in the nation's collective memory."

The current installation is designed to be temporary, allowing for the eventual reconstruction of the school or its potential conversion into a museum, he added.

Negotiations have already begun with local authorities to commission a permanent monument in one of

Minab's public squares or plazas, he concluded.

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

While dozens of girls and boys aged between 7 and 12 were beginning their lessons, the school was targeted by a missile strike that caused the building to collapse, trapping children and teachers beneath the rubble. Iranian authorities confirmed a final death toll of 168 people, with at least 95 others wounded, marking one of the most harrowing incidents of the conflict's opening day.

Despite attempts by US and Israeli authorities to distance themselves from the carnage as images of the tragedy spread across social media, detailed forensic and digital investigations have painted a starkly different picture.

An analysis by Al Jazeera's digital investigations unit, utilizing over a

decade of satellite imagery and recent video clips, revealed that the school was a clearly distinct civilian facility, separated from any adjacent military sites for at least ten years. Furthermore, witness accounts and satellite-based analyses confirmed that the school was triple tapped by three separate, deliberate strikes, leaving no doubt about the nature of the attack.

The international community has faced mounting evidence regarding the responsibility for this atrocity, with investigations from major global outlets including The New York Times, BBC Verify, CBC, and NPR all concluding that the United States was responsible for the strike.

These findings have raised fundamental questions about the intelligence used to justify the bombing, as the patterns of the strike suggest a direct targeting of a civilian educational institution. The Minab school tragedy now stands as a somber testament to the immense human cost of the aggression and a focal point for those demanding international accountability.

Farhadi's "Parallel Tales" to premiere at 79th Cannes Film Festival

TEHRAN - The Cannes Film Festival has announced the auteur-driven competition lineup for its 79th edition including the new film by the celebrated Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi.

Titled "Parallel Tales," Farhadi's 10th feature film will vie for the coveted Palme d'Or with the latest films by well-known figures including Polish filmmaker Pawel Pawlikowski, Japanese writer-director Ryusuke Hamaguchi, American filmmaker Ira Sachs, Spanish director Pedro Almodovar, and Romanian filmmaker Cristian Mungiu among others, Honaronline reported.

"Parallel Tales" marks Farhadi's second French-language film after "The Past" with Berenice Bejo, who won the Best Actress award for her performance at Cannes in 2013.

The new film by the two-time Oscar-winning filmmaker was shot in Paris during fall 2025. Its stellar cast includes Isabelle Huppert, Vincent Cassel, Virginie Efira, Pierre Niney, Adam Bessa, and Catherine Deneuve.

Written by Farhadi, the story deals with a young man who falls madly in love with an older woman, leading him into a dangerous obsession.

A French-Italian-Belgian coproduction, the film is produced by longtime collaborator Alexandre Mallet-Guy alongside Farhadi and David Levine. The prestige project will be launched by Charades and UTA Independent Film Group at the upcoming Cannes Film Market. Charades will handle international sales, while UTA Independent Film Group will rep U.S. rights. Memento will handle distribution in France.

It is the fifth collaboration between Farhadi and Memento Production after "The Past," Oscar-winner "The Salesman," "Everybody Knows," and "A Hero".

The 79th annual Cannes Film Festival will take place from May 12 to 23. South Korean filmmaker Park Chan-wook will serve as jury president for the main competition section.

One of Iran's most prominent cin-



Asghar Farhadi (R) is seen, with his crew, while shooting "Parallel Tales" in Paris, France, during fall 2025.

ematic voices, Farhadi, 53, is known for his thought-provoking films that explore social issues. He earned a bachelor's degree in dramatic arts from the University of Tehran in 1988 and later a master's degree in theater direction.

Farhadi won the Best Foreign Film Oscar in 2012 for "A Separation" (which was also nominated for Best Screenplay) and once again in 2017 for "The Salesman".

He has been selected four times in competition in Cannes with "The Past," "The Salesman," "Everybody Knows," and "A Hero".

"The Salesman" won Best Screenplay and Best Actor awards at Cannes in 2016 and "A Hero" scooped the Grand Prize at the 2021 festival.

"Everybody Knows," Farhadi's Spanish-language debut starring Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem, opened and competed at Cannes in 2018.

Farhadi was also selected twice in Berlin. He was awarded the Silver Bear for Best Director in 2009 for "About Elly" and the 2011 Golden Bear for "A Separation".

Last week, when Iran was fighting an imposed war by the US and Israel, Asghar Farhadi, in a message, called on artists and filmmakers around the world not to remain silent in the face of the destruction of Iran's civilian infrastructure and be a voice for stopping the aggression against

Iran.

His message was a reaction to the US President Donald Trump who had threatened to decimate Iran's power plants, bridges and other vital infrastructure.

Farhadi emphasized that the destruction of these centers is a direct blow to the life and human dignity of Iranian citizens.

"I appeal to artists and filmmakers everywhere in the world, in these sensitive days and hours, to use every possible means to be a voice for stopping the devastating aggression that has increasingly led to the destruction of civilian infrastructure," he said in the message.

"These infrastructures belong to the people of Iran and are related to their basic daily needs. The destruction of infrastructure is not just the destruction of buildings; it is a blow to human life and dignity," he added.

"Attacking a country's infrastructure is a war crime. Regardless of any belief or perspective, let us unite our voices to stop this inhumane, illegal, and devastating process," he noted.

The US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28 and for 40 days martyred about 3,000 people including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, several officials, and military commanders as well as numerous civilians, including women and children.

The aggressors claimed at the beginning that the attacks were aimed at preventing Iran's nuclear program but they later revealed their real objectives. For Israel, the maximalist goal was the regime change in Iran and the US sought to seize the oil and gas resources of the country.

Therefore, besides some military targets, the US and Israel launched organized attacks against civilian infrastructure, including residential homes, hospitals, refineries, power plants, schools, universities, art and cultural spaces, bookstores, museums, and ancient sites in several cities, causing total or partial damages and injuring innocent people, in an attempt to force the country to surrender to their illegitimate demands.

The attacks prompted a swift response from the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), with missile and drone launches targeting Israel and several U.S. bases in the region, which were gradually intensified.

Iran, the US and Israel agreed to a two-week ceasefire on April 8. The Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced in a statement that Iran had achieved a great victory and forced the US and Israel to accept its 10-point plan.

Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote on X: "Considering the request by the US for negotiations and acceptance of the general framework of Iran's 10-point proposal as a basis for negotiations, I hereby declare on behalf of Iran's Supreme National Security Council: If attacks against Iran are halted, our Powerful Armed Forces will cease their defensive operations. For a period of two weeks, safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible via coordination with Iran's Armed Forces and with due consideration of technical limitations".