

# TEHRAN TIMES

8 Pages | Price 100,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 46th year | No. 15309 | Sunday | April 26, 2026 | Ordibehesht 6, 1405 | Dhu al-Qadah 8, 1447

## Iran's Military Strength Shatters Washington's Narrative



People in Shiraz, Fars Province, gathered in main squares and streets on Tuesday evening to commemorate the martyred Leader and reaffirm their allegiance to Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, while expressing strong support for the country's defenders. The Sejjil missile was also proudly displayed among the crowd as part of the gathering.

### Qalibaf: Financial war is main frontline against US

TEHRAN – Iran's Parliament Speaker, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, has said that the primary arena for confronting the United States is financial warfare, stressing that economic resistance remains key to weakening Washington's global influence.

In a post published early Saturday on X, Qalibaf referred to recent remarks by Scott Bessent regarding the activation of certain currency swap arrangements. The measures, according to US officials, are intended to prevent what they described as the disorderly liquidation of American assets. ▶ Page 2

### Billion-dollar quake: How an invasion is reshaping global order

TEHRAN- What begins as a military confrontation in the Persian Gulf never stays there. Two months into the second joint American and Israeli campaign against Iran, the world is waking up to a harsh reality: the shockwaves have escaped the energy markets and are now tearing through global supply chains, food security, and the economic stability of nations.

According to exclusive analysis reported by the Financial Times, the conflict has already triggered an energy supply disruption without parallel in modern history, one that could permanently erase one billion barrels from world markets. This is not just another geopolitical crisis; it is a systemic fracture. ▶ Page 4

### Amal Khalil wrote the final report with her own blood

By Maedeh Zaman Fashami

TEHRAN – The martyrdom of Amal Khalil once again draws the attention of regional and global public opinion to one of the most significant dimensions of the recent wars in Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories: the systematic targeting of journalists on the battlefield.

We view this incident not as an isolated case, but as part of an ongoing and analyzable pattern in which journalists standing on the front lines of truth-telling have themselves become targets in the war conducted by Israel. In this context, the martyrdom of Amal Khalil must be understood within a broader reality: an effort to restrict, control, or eliminate narratives emerging directly from the field of conflict.

Under established rules of international law, particularly the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, journalists and media workers present in conflict zones are considered civilians and are entitled to full legal protection. This principle is one of the most fundamental pillars of media freedom and the right to access information in wartime conditions. ▶ Page 5

▶ Pages 2-3

### Turkish academics condemn US-Israeli attacks on Iranian universities

TEHRAN- Hundreds of Turkish scholars have strongly condemned recent US-Israeli strikes on Iranian universities, calling the attacks an act of "epistemicide" – a crime against knowledge and humanity's intellectual heritage.

In a joint statement, 239 professors from top Turkish universities, including Bogazici, Istanbul, and Ankara, said the bombings violate international conventions that protect educational facilities during conflicts. At least 30 Iranian universities and research centers have been attacked since the war began on February 28, 2026.

The academics accused Western academic communities of silence and double standards. They urged UNESCO and the UN to establish an emergency mechanism to safeguard universities in conflict zones. The scholars also expressed readiness to host displaced Iranian researchers and students and proposed forming an international network of academic bridges to sustain collaborative research.

### Iran acting in self-defense, will continue until guarantees are secured: envoy

TEHRAN- Iran is not waging war but will continue to defend itself until hostilities fully cease and credible guarantees are secured to prevent their recurrence, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva said.

In an interview with BBC Radio 4's World at One aired on Friday, Ali Bahreini said questions about the duration of the conflict should be directed at the United States, which initiated the war.

"Iran does not wage war and is acting in self-defense, and defense has no end point," he said, adding that Tehran's actions will continue as long as necessary to ensure the conflict is fully halted and will not resume in the future.

Bahreini emphasized that Iran's defensive measures are tied to conditions on the ground, including a complete cessation of hostilities and the establishment of assurances against renewed aggression.

### From Madrid to Tehran: Spain's flag emerges as a symbol of principle in Iran's wartime rallies

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – Since the joint US-Israel war on Iran began on February 28, Iranians have gathered nightly across the country to denounce the aggression. These demonstrations, marked by chants, speeches, and the waving of flags, have become a vivid expression of defiance. Iran's national flag and religious banners dominate the rallies, but the unexpected sight of a European flag has captured wide attention.

The Spanish flag, carried by demonstrators, reflects appreciation for Spain's government, which has openly opposed the war. Its presence has become a defining feature of the gatherings, signaling respect for Spain's stance and underscoring the impact of international solidarity.



### Iran's Araghchi meets with Pakistani officials in Islamabad to advance diplomatic solutions to regional tensions

TEHRAN- Abbas Araghchi arrived in Islamabad late Friday to advance diplomatic consultations on escalating tensions in West Asia and the ongoing war in the Persian Gulf, embarking on a regional tour that also includes planned visits to Oman and Russia.

The Iranian foreign minister began his engagements on Saturday with a high-level meeting at the Prime Minister's House, where he held talks with Shehbaz Sharif. The meeting was attended by senior Pakistani officials. ▶ Page 3

**Exclusive**

*Art Bureau's Ramadan War Situation Room for Cultural & Artistic Affairs: Connecting artists, raising global awareness through universal language of art*

By Mohamadreza Seyedagha

TEHRAN – After Iran was attacked by the United States and Israel on February 28, a committee was established at the Art Bureau in Tehran, focusing on the production and collection of artworks related to the war, which lasted for 40 days. ▶ Page 8

## TEHRAN PAPERS

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

## Trump paints the wrong picture again

In an analysis, Kayhan discussed the wave of expulsions and resignations in the United States and the unity in Iran. According to the newspaper, despite Trump's nonsense and instilling division in Iran, a wave of unity has swept the country, and a wave of expulsions and resignations has spread in the United States. Public opinion in the world has also mobilized against the United States and Israel. The failure to achieve any of the enemy's declared goals in the Ramadan War has confused and led them to resort to psychological warfare. The enemy, using fabricated words, pretends that there is division in "our Iran." Iran is united on all fronts and has found the secret of its victory in unity, and the enemy's nonsense about political divisions is only an echo of his confusion and defeat. But Iran stands as a powerful army and has been rising in the streets since the beginning of the war.

## Jam-e-Jam: Reasons for extending the temporary ceasefire

Jam-e-Jam, in a note discussing the reasons for extending the ceasefire, wrote: From Trump's perspective, extending the ceasefire has three general functions. First, the enemy needs breathing room to rebuild its military capabilities. Second, it helps contain the growing pressure of the US domestic economy. Third, it allows for managing political pressure and the role of Congress regarding authorization for war. Iran, while maintaining its position of strength, adopting intelligent stances, and remaining committed to preserving the principle of coordination between the battlefield and diplomacy, is continuously reviewing possible war scenarios with maximum situational awareness and a clear understanding of the American side's motives for extending the ceasefire. This means, first, it does not allow the enemy to redefine or alter the rules and meaning of diplomacy in a way that would strip Iran of its strategic decision-making power. At the same time, Iran is monitoring enemy movements and enhancing its defensive-offensive readiness to eliminate the possibility of being caught off guard and to ensure that any future blows it delivers are more painful.

## Arman-e-Melli: Why a one-sided ceasefire?

Arman-e-Melli examined why Trump announced a unilateral ceasefire. Trump's excessive demands have pushed the negotiations into a kind of deadlock, and getting out of that deadlock has become difficult for him. More importantly, Iran's upper hand in the conflict—due to the Strait of Hormuz and its control over

it—has shifted the balance of war in the region. These factors can be considered reasons for Trump moving toward a ceasefire. Another obstacle is Trump's political future and that of the Republican Party. Continuing the war and its political-military costs for Trump and the United States has become extremely difficult. Given this, he needs negotiations and some form of resolution to the conflict with Iran. However, in Tehran, it also appears that the 'negotiation vs. siege' duality is not acceptable. Therefore, the incompatibility of these two processes could once again impose costs on Washington and lead to an informal softening of its position.

## Siasat-e-Rooz: Europe's empty rhetoric

Siasat-e-Rooz devoted its headline to the meeting of European countries in Cyprus. European states once again repeated their nuclear demands and calls for reopening the Strait of Hormuz during the Cyprus summit, despite evidence and documentation showing the EU's military weakness and its severe economic crisis. Based on this, instead of issuing 'delusional prescriptions' against Iran, Europe's only real option is to accept Iran's conditions and rightful claims. The newspaper adds that Europe's growing isolation and deepening crisis are becoming increasingly visible to the world—especially since the Ramadan War and Iran's steadfast management of the Strait of Hormuz exposed the economic and political vulnerabilities of Europe, which it describes as dependent on the United States. It further claims that these countries lack the military capability to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and will ultimately have to yield to Iran's demands.

## Farhikhtegan: A world before the war and after the war

Farhikhtegan wrote that the US- and Israeli-imposed war against Iran demonstrated that a conflict in the Middle East—beyond affecting 20% of the global oil market—can also push global food-security equations to the brink by disrupting access to half of the world's chemical fertilizers and by seriously endangering the economic interests of the Arab states along the Persian Gulf. According to the article, the world now is divided into two eras: before the Ramadan War with Iran and after it. Given that the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, and the Strait of Malacca are the three main maritime trade routes in Asia and the Middle East, the conflict has resulted in serious restrictions on one of these key routes—namely, the Strait of Hormuz.

## Trump administration has turned war with Iran into an insider trading scheme



TEHRAN- As the war with Iran drags on in the Persian Gulf, a new analysis argues that the Trump administration has turned the conflict into an insider trading scheme — with the president's family and allies getting rich from high oil prices and prediction markets.

Writing for CounterPunch, Matthew Stevenson says Trump views the presidency as a casino. "Wars are now fought so that Trump insiders can get rich quick," he writes.

According to the analysis, both Washington and Tehran benefit from expensive oil. Iran blockades the Strait of Hormuz; the US blockades Iran. The result? Oil prices are over \$100 a barrel. "Make that win-win kaching sound," Stevenson adds.

The article claims Trump uses his power to manipulate global energy markets. In exchange for billions flowing into Trump fam-

ily businesses from oil-exporting states like Saudi Arabia and Persian Gulf sheikdoms, the president does "his insane best to drive the price of oil over \$100 a barrel by turning the Persian Gulf into a shooting gallery."

Stevenson also points to insider trading rings among White House staff who "predict" Trump's military moves. He notes that Trump can pardon anyone caught, including family members who cashed in cryptocurrency positions.

The piece draws parallels with Trump's other ventures: a Gaza development scheme, a Venezuela oil takeover, and his meme coin \$TRUMP.

"The template is there," Stevenson concludes, "to monetize splendid little wars — clearly with more to follow."

## From Madrid to Tehran: Spain's flag emerges as a symbol of principle in Iran's wartime rallies

From page 1 ▶ At a rally in Tehran's central Valiasr intersection, the Spanish colors stood out vividly. Amid the roar of motorcycles and cars, one man wrapped himself in Spain's flag, turning it into a personal symbol of gratitude. His gesture showed how voices abroad can echo strongly on Tehran's streets, transforming the flag into an emblem of resistance and connection.

This moment, captured by Tehran Times, illustrates how a single act can embody both national pride and international recognition, making the Spanish flag an unexpected yet powerful symbol in Iran's nightly demonstrations.

Since the outset of the conflict, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has repeatedly stated that his government views the assault on Iran as a violation of international law. "We reject the unilateral military action by the United States and Israel, which represents an escalation and contributes to a more uncertain and hostile international order,"



At Tehran's Valiasr intersection, a man drapes himself in Spain's flag during nightly rallies, a gesture of gratitude for Spain's opposition to the US-Israel war on Iran.

Sánchez wrote on X on February 28. He has also described the war as a "big mistake," "unjustified," and "dangerous."

Spain became the first Western country to restore a diplomatic presence in Iran after a two-week ceasefire between Iran and the United States took effect on April 8. In addition, the

Spanish government banned US warplanes from using jointly operated military bases or Spanish airspace to attack Iran, a move that drew the ire of President Donald Trump.

Trump's anger was reflected in a leaked Pentagon email suggesting Spain could be penalized for not supporting the war

by having its NATO membership suspended. Sánchez dismissed the threat. "The Spanish government's position is clear: absolute cooperation with our allies, but always within the framework of international law," he told POLITICO upon arriving at a summit of EU leaders in Cyprus on Friday.

Iranian media have hailed Spain's policy toward Iran, in the shadow of the US-Israel war, as both dignified and principled. Commentators argue that Madrid's decision to speak with clarity and conviction during a period of global tension has struck a deep chord inside Iran. Many believe Spain's position will be remembered as a historic example of independent leadership—steady, courageous, and unafraid to break with prevailing currents—at a time when sober judgment is scarce. By openly opposing the war, Spain has set itself apart from other Western capitals, earning admiration among Iranians who view its stance as a rare display of integrity and moral resolve.

## Pezeshkian warns of US-Israel schemes to drive a wedge between Iran and other Muslim nations

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has warned that the United States and Israel are hatching plots to sow divisions between Iran and other regional Muslim countries.

"We should not allow the Zionist regime and the United States to drive a wedge between the Iranian nation and other Muslims in the region through political and security schemes, because if Iran is targeted today, it does not mean that other countries in the region will be safe," Pezeshkian said during a meeting with provincial governors from across the country at the Interior Ministry

on Saturday.

He highlighted the so-called "Greater Israel" vision, urging Muslim countries to set aside their differences and confront the "malicious ambitions of the enemy."

"The expansionist project of Zionism will not stop, and the open and shameless circulation of so-called maps of 'Greater Israel' reflects this clear and overt ambition," Pezeshkian said.

Pointing to the nearly 40-day US-Israeli aggression, Pezeshkian said the Iranian peo-

ple did not give in to US bullying and threats and stood up against the enemy with a unified voice.

He also expressed appreciation for the support of neighboring and Islamic countries for Iran during the conflict.

"Various countries in the region, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Turkey, have maintained effective cooperation with Iran and did not allow enemies to use their territories to advance scenarios aimed at fueling tensions."

## Iran acting in self-defense, will continue until guarantees are secured: envoy



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Addressing reports about the detention of vessels from countries not directly involved in the conflict, he said Iran's adversaries had used the Strait of Hormuz to support military operations and pursue "illegitimate objectives" in the region. He added that Iran has consequently stepped up monitoring and oversight of maritime traffic through the vital waterway.

The envoy also dismissed claims of internal divisions within Iran's leadership, insisting that there is no contradiction in the country's high-level strategy. Instead, he criticized Washington for inconsistency, saying the United States alternates between calls for negotiations, military action, and threats.

According to Bahreini, Iran's responses are calibrated to U.S. behavior, reflecting what he described as "strategic adaptation" rather than inconsistency.

## Qalibaf: Financial war is main frontline against US



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Quoting and interpreting the remarks, Qalibaf suggested that the policies effectively impose limits on some institutional investors seeking to sell US assets. He pointed to "implicit caps on sales" by major holders, warning that such restrictions could tighten further if market conditions deteriorate. "Their frontline is the yield curve," he wrote, framing financial mar-

kets as the central battleground.

Qalibaf added that the reported measures reflect underlying sensitivities within the US financial system, particularly regarding large-scale bond sell-offs. He also referenced what he described as informal thresholds observed by state-linked or institutional investors when managing their holdings.

He warned that in the event of worsening market instability, some investors could face greater constraints in liquidating their assets, urging bondholders to remain cautious amid growing uncertainty.

The remarks come amid heightened tensions following the US-Israel war on Iran, which erupted on February 28. In response, Tehran closed the Strait of Hormuz, a key global shipping route, triggering significant repercussions across international markets and raising concerns over global economic stability.

## Mearsheimer warns: Failure to make peace with Iran will dramatically widen Middle East war

TEHRAN- A renowned political scientist says the US is expanding the conflict while alienating Europe

Professor John Mearsheimer, one of America's most prominent international relations scholars, has warned that the failure to reach a peace agreement with Iran risks dramatically widening the war in the Middle East.

In a recent address at the University of Chicago, Mearsheimer — the R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science — argued that the United States is not only expanding its military confrontation

with Iran but also deepening a dangerous rift with European allies.

According to Mearsheimer, the combination of an escalating Iran war and a widening transatlantic divorce places the US in a strategically vulnerable position. He suggested that without a diplomatic off-ramp, the conflict could spiral far beyond its current borders, drawing in more actors and creating prolonged instability.

The professor, known for his realist theory of international politics and his critical views on US interventionism, has long argued

that Washington's posture toward Tehran is counterproductive. He reiterated that making peace with Iran — rather than pursuing regime change or military pressure — is the only viable path to avoiding a larger regional conflagration.

Mearsheimer also noted that Europe is increasingly breaking away from US policy on the world stage. He described this growing divorce as a strategic blunder that weakens the Western alliance precisely when coordinated action is most needed.

# Iran's military strength shatters Washington's narrative

By staff writer

TEHRAN - The administration of President Donald Trump has repeatedly claimed that the United States has destroyed Iran's military capabilities during the nearly 40-day war that began on February 28. Trump and his Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, have argued that the joint US-Israeli strikes have effectively crippled Iran's military capacity.

"We've taken out their navy, we've taken out their air force, we've taken out their leaders," Trump said on Tuesday.

Hegseth has further amplified the assessment of the US operation titled 'Operation Epic Fury'. Speaking at a Pentagon press briefing on April 8, he said: "Operation Epic Fury was a historic and overwhelming victory on the battlefield, a capital V military victory. By any measure, Epic Fury decimated Iran's military and rendered its combat ineffective for years to come."

## Trump administration inconsistencies

Hegseth made the comments after the US president declared a two-week ceasefire with Iran. Hours before the expiration of the truce, Trump unilaterally extended it to receive a "unified proposal" from Iran to end the conflict. However, shortly before announcing the extension, he had said he opposed prolonging the truce, warning Iran that time was running out before the US launched a major attack on the country's infrastructure.

In addition to the claims made by Trump and Hegseth, the Pentagon spokesman has described the war on Iran as a success.

Sean Parnell said that with more than 13,000 Iranian targets struck, "the United States military delivered a crippling series of blows" to Iran. He also claimed that more than 90



Women take a selfie at the IRGC Aerospace Force Museum in Tehran, November 12, 2025.

percent of the Iranian Navy's largest vessels had been destroyed.

Nonetheless, US media reports citing American officials contradict the Trump administration's claims.

## Iran's military might

CBS News, quoting multiple US officials, reported that Iran "maintains more military capabilities than the White House or Pentagon has publicly admitted."

Three officials with knowledge of the intelligence told the news outlet that about half of Iran's stockpile of ballistic missiles and associated launch systems remain intact. They added that roughly 60 percent of the naval arm of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) is still operational, including fast-attack boats. The officials further noted that about two-thirds of Iran's air force is still believed to be functional.

A Defense Intelligence Agency assessment has also challenged claims that Iran's Air Force has been "wiped out" and its Navy is "at the bottom of the sea."

"Iran retains thousands of missiles and one-way attack UAVs that can threaten US and partner forces

throughout the region, despite degradations to its capabilities from both attrition and expenditure," Marine Lt. Gen. James Adams, the head of the agency, said.

Iran's continued control over the Strait of Hormuz since the start of the war indicates that US claims of severely degrading its military power do not hold up. Throughout the conflict, Iran has not allowed vessels affiliated with its adversaries to transit the strategic waterway. After the ceasefire and following the collapse of talks between Tehran and Washington, the US imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports to force Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, but to no avail. Instead, Iran has tightened its control over the waterway and seized at least two ships that attempted to pass without coordination.

In addition to the US failure to eliminate Iran's military capabilities, the broader consequences of the war for the United States are becoming evident.

## Iran war drains US munition stocks

According to The New York Times, "The Iran war has significantly

drained much of the US military's global supply of munitions, and forced the Pentagon to rush bombs, missiles and other hardware to the Middle East from commands in Asia and Europe."

The report said the US military used about 1,100 JASSM-ER missiles during 39 days of war with Iran, each costing roughly \$1.1 million, leaving about 1,500 in its inventory.

It added that the US military fired more than 1,000 Tomahawk cruise missiles, which cost about \$3.6 million each—roughly ten times the number it currently purchases annually. The report also said the Pentagon used more than 1,200 Patriot interceptor missiles during the war, at more than \$4 million each. Overall, it estimated the cost of the US campaign against Iran at up to \$35 billion.

## Iran retains significant missile capability

Iran carried out 100 waves of missile and drone strikes against Israel and US positions in the region during the war. Iranian military and political officials stress that the country is open to negotiations, but that its armed forces remain fully prepared to respond decisively to any new act of aggression.

Iran has indigenized its military capabilities and is now capable of producing both defensive and offensive weapons domestically. The spokesman of Iran's Defense Ministry said on Saturday that the country's weapons production capacity is the result of more than two decades of investment in its defense industry.

Brigadier General Reza Talaei-Nik noted that a significant portion of Iran's missile capability remains unused.

## Iran's Araghchi meets with Pakistani officials in Islamabad to advance diplomatic solutions to regional tensions

From Page 1 ▶ including Ishaq Dar, as well as Asim Munir, underscoring the strategic importance Islamabad attaches to the visit.

Discussions focused on the evolving regional situation, particularly efforts to secure a ceasefire and bring an end to 'a US-Israeli imposed war'. Araghchi presented Iran's key considerations and conditions for terminating the conflict, while emphasizing the need for coordinated regional efforts to restore stability.

In separate talks with Field Marshal Asim Munir, the Iranian foreign minister elaborated on Tehran's position regarding the ceasefire and the conclusion of hostilities. He praised Pakistan's diplomatic role, particularly its mediation efforts and support in facilitating negotiations, and called for continued coop-

eration to strengthen peace across West Asia.

Munir, for his part, welcomed Iran's trust in Pakistan's role and reaffirmed Islamabad's readiness to continue mediation efforts until a final resolution is achieved.

During his meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Araghchi also highlighted Iran's commitment to expanding bilateral relations with Pakistan across political, economic, and regional domains. He stressed that strengthening ties with neighboring countries remains a top priority in Tehran's foreign policy, a stance is backed by 'Iran's leader'.

Sharif, in turn, expressed confidence in the continued growth of bilateral relations, noting the shared interest of both countries in enhanc-

ing cooperation at both regional and international levels.

The Iranian foreign minister further addressed broader regional developments, including the situation in the Palestinian territories and Lebanon, while commending Pakistan's positions in support of Palestine and its efforts to uphold ceasefire arrangements in Lebanon.

Araghchi's visit to Islamabad follows a recent trip by Pakistan's army chief to Tehran and is seen as part of an intensifying diplomatic push to de-escalate tensions and consolidate a ceasefire. His ongoing regional tour is expected to continue with stops in Oman and Russia as Tehran seeks to align positions with key regional and international actors.

## LATES NEWS

Iran-US negotiations, particularly in the nuclear file, could be resolved soon as talks resume.

### Iran, Turkey open new customs post at shared border

Iran and Turkey have inaugurated the Gürbulak Customs Post on their common border. Officials said the new facility will significantly boost bilateral economic cooperation and transit capacity. Around 200,000 trucks pass through the Bazargan crossing annually.

### US State Department confirms Israel dragged US into Iran war

The State Department has admitted that the US entered the war on Iran at Israel's request, contradicting President Trump's repeated denials. A government release detailed how the US is "engaged in this conflict at the request of its Israeli ally." Reports indicate Netanyahu's pressure following a February 11 White House meeting pushed Trump to launch the aggression.

### Senator Murphy: Kushner and Witkoff incapable of negotiating with Iran

Senior Democratic Senator Chris Murphy has sharply criticized the Trump administration's lead negotiators on Iran, stating that Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff lack the diplomatic experience needed for complex talks. Murphy also accused both men of having "massive conflicts of interest," noting their wealth is tied to 'Middle Eastern dictators'.

### Iran ready for cooperation on Chabahar port: Ambassador

Iran's Ambassador to India, Mohammad Fa-

tali, stated that cooperation on the strategic Chabahar Port continues despite sanctions. He described Chabahar as vital for connecting India to Central Asia.

### Satellite imagery reveals three oil tankers at Iran's Kharg Island

TankerTrackers data shows crude vessels amid Persian Gulf tensions

New satellite images have detected three crude oil tankers at Iran's Kharg Island, the country's main oil export terminal, according to TankerTrackers.

### Bloomberg: Loss of 1 billion barrels of oil nears tipping point for global demand

Analysis warns of potential collapse in oil markets

The shock from losing one billion barrels of oil that normally transit the Strait of Hormuz is approaching a threshold that could trigger a collapse in global demand, Bloomberg reported.

### NBC: Sanctioned ships continue to cross strategic Strait of Hormuz

Maritime data shows two vessels transited despite restrictions.

Two sanctioned vessels crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Friday night, according to maritime tracking data cited by NBC. The report confirms that ships under sanctions continue to navigate the vital waterway despite the ongoing US-led blockade and heightened military tensions in the region.

# SPORTS

## Participation in Asian Beach Games highlights commitment to peace: Alinejad

TEHRAN - Mahdi Alinejad, secretary general of the National Olympic Committee of Iran, said that they have participated in the 2026 Asian Beach Games to send a message that the Iranian people support peace and unity in the continent.

Not even a grueling trip of more than two days, violent disruption to their preparations and the heavy weight of concern for families back home could stop Iran's athletes from making their presence felt at the 2026 Asian Beach Games.

Their appearance in the coastal city of Sanya in South China's Hainan province, against long odds, has sent a strong message to the world.

"We think we should be here to show everybody that Iran is alive," Alinejad told China Daily on the sand while celebrating his country's opening win over the United Arab Emirates in the men's beach soccer on Thursday.

"We want to let everybody see that our athletes can compete. We want to come here to show that we support the peace and unity on our continent."

Despite life-threatening challenges caused by ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, which have brought severe damage to Iran's infrastructure, the country sent a 57-athlete delegation on a larger-than-sport journey that started two weeks ago, beginning with several bus rides that took more than 20 hours to travel from Tehran across the border to Ashkhabad, the capital of neighboring Turkmenistan.

From there, the athletes boarded a flight to Beijing, which involved another transfer of over six hours, before their connecting flight took off for Sanya, a destination new to most of the delegation.

The Iranians are contesting 10 out of the total 14 sports disciplines in Sanya, where the country's men's 2024 Beach Soccer World Cup third-place team, its two-time Asian Beach Games champion kabaddi squad and world-class beach volleyball team are among the favorites for their respective titles at the seaside sporting gala.

Preparation, however, has been far from ideal, due to the destruction of their original training base by an airstrike, and the logistical issues caused by the conflict.

Even having made it to Sanya safely, their thoughts remain at home, at times, with the gut-wrenching knowledge that every minute competing on the sand here is a moment away from families and friends who cannot escape the drums of war.

"It changed everything in our country, and changed our plan (for preparing for these Games)," Alinejad said of the conflict, which began exactly 40 days before the delegation's planned trip to Sanya.

"During the war, especially in Tehran, we couldn't train. So, we set up camps in the safest regions of Iran, such as the north near the Caspian Sea and in the east. It was completely different from before, but we tried to do our best," he said.

"Then, there were no flights from Iran, and then, we had a problem with the delivery of the (Games) ID cards, because there is no postal (service) available.

"Also, just about all of the facilities we should've had to prepare for this event, we suffered a problem with all of them. It was very difficult for us, but all of us are really happy that we are here, and really are proud of our teams," he said.

"You can see the quality of Iranian teams, in kabaddi, beach volleyball and beach soccer. And all of them, regardless of the bombing, have prepared themselves, and they came here to show their performance and also their courage."

A sentiment echoed by Alinejad: "Now we are here, and soaking up the sporting atmosphere, we can relieve some of the injury in

our souls."

"By participating, we want to send a message that the Iranian people support peace, follow the rules, and support unity in our continent," he added.

## Iran beach soccer team thrash Thailand: Sanya 2026

TEHRAN - The Iranian national beach soccer team put on an absolute clinic this Saturday, demolishing Thailand with a dominant 13-1 victory in their second group stage encounter at the Sanya 2026 Asian Beach Games.

This commanding win follows Team Melli's strong opening performance, where they triumphed over the UAE with a convincing 5-2 scoreline in Group B.

The goals rained down for Iran, with Mohammad Dastan, Mohammadali Nazari (three goals), Mohammadali Mokhtari (three goals), Mohammad Masoumizadeh (two goals), Davoud Shokri (two goals), Mehdi Mirjalili, and Movahhed Mohammadpour all finding the back of the net in a spectacular display of offensive prowess.

The sixth edition of the prestigious Asian Beach Games, now hosted by the dynamic city of Sanya, has made a triumphant return. Kicking off on Tuesday, the Games feature a vibrant showcase of athleticism across 14 sports, 15 disciplines, and a total of 61 thrilling events, all set to unfold from April 22nd to April 30th.

## Iran gear up for World Cup with friendly against North Macedonia

TEHRAN - As the countdown to the 2026 FIFA World Cup intensifies, the Iranian national team are sharpening their tools for the global stage. Amirmehdi Alavi, the official spokesman for the Football Federation of Iran, confirmed on Saturday that Team Melli will face a formidable test in Turkey, squaring off against the resilient North Macedonia in a high-profile friendly.

This fixture is a strategic masterstroke by the coaching staff. With Iran drawn into a challenging Group G alongside European powerhouses Belgium, African giants Egypt, and the disciplined New Zealand, the team need a litmus test against a side that mirrors European tactical rigors. North Macedonia, currently ranked 67th globally, have cultivated a reputation as "giant-killers." Their historic 1-0 upset of Italy during the 2022 qualifying playoffs remains one of the most shocking results in recent European football lore.

The Balkan side bring a blend of technical flair and grit, spearheaded by stars like Napoli's midfield dynamo Elif Elmas and veteran Valencia goalkeeper Stole Dimitrievski. For Iran, this match serves as the ultimate rehearsal for their clash with Belgium. By facing a team that navigated a tough qualifying group containing the Belgians with impressive resilience, Amir Ghalenoei's squad will look to fine-tune their defensive structure and transition play.

"This is about testing our mettle against European intensity," noted observers close to the team. For the players, the message is clear: the road to the World Cup is paved with rigorous preparation. Facing a tactically disciplined team like North Macedonia is exactly the high-pressure environment Iran needs to transition from the regional dominance seen at the Asian Beach Games to the elite standard of the FIFA World Cup.

As Team Melli prepare to leave their training base in Turkey, the mood is one of focused determination. If Iran can handle the tactical discipline of the North Macedonians, they will arrive at the World Cup with the confidence needed to make a statement on the global stage.

### Iran says Oman remains at forefront of regional friends

Iran's ambassador to Oman, Mousa Farhang, stated that Oman remains a leading friend of Tehran, with bilateral ties built on "trust, honesty, and standing on the right side of history." His remarks came as Foreign Minister Araghchi prepares to visit Muscat as part of a regional tour.

### Iran united against 'Hebrew-Arab-American front': Leader's advisor

Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior advisor to Iran's Leader, said that a united Iran is standing firm against the "Hebrew-Arab-American front."

In a post on X, Velayati pointed to tensions between the US and its traditional allies, including a dispute between Washington and London over the Malvinas, and European warnings about independence from America, as evidence of deep rifts in the opposite camp.

He emphasized Iran's unity and wrote: "The whole world is the body, and Iran is the heart."

### Iran judiciary chief: Enemy failed, unity is key

The head of Iran's judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni-Ejei, said the enemy has failed to achieve its plots against Iran. He urged continued unity among people and officials, warning that a "wounded enemy" may attempt new actions.

### Fidan: Key issues in Iran-US talks could be resolved soon

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan expressed optimism that one or two key issues in

## Iran, Turkey discuss ways to remove challenges in bilateral customs cooperation

TEHRAN- A joint meeting between the heads of the customs administrations of Iran and Turkey was held at the Bazargan-Gurbulak border.

According to IRNA's report from the Public Relations Department of the Iran Customs Administration, in this meeting attended by Forud Asgari, Deputy Minister of Economy and Head of the Iran Customs Administration, and Sezai Ucharmak, Head of the Turkish Customs Administration, the two sides agreed to increase the acceptance of trucks from both countries and to form an expert team between the customs administrations of Iran and Turkey to examine the challenges facing the two countries' customs.

Issues related to electronic exchange were also among the other topics of this meeting, which were discussed and examined, and proposals were put forward to remove obstacles.

The report adds that the Governor of West Azarbaijan Province, Iran's Ambassador to Ankara, the representative of the people of Maku, Showt, Poldasht, and Chaldoran, the advisor to the Head of the Iran Customs Administration and Director General of the Central Protection Office, the advisor to the Head and Director General of the International Cooperation Office of the Iran Customs Administration, the supervisor of customs offices in West Azarbaijan Province, and the Director General of the Bazargan Customs Office were also present at this meeting.

On April 17, Iran's Minister of Agriculture, referring to his trip to Turkey, announced an agreement to expand agricultural and border cooperation between the two countries.

According to IRNA, Gholamreza Nouri, speaking at the Bazargan border crossing and in a conversation with reporters, detailed his recent trip to Turkey and participation in the meeting of Agriculture Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Kyrgyzstan, stating: "During this multi-day trip, extensive meetings were held with Turkish officials, particularly the Minister of Agriculture."

He added: "Given the significant increase in Iran-Turkey agricultural relations over the past year, both sides emphasized the continuation of this trend and greater utilization of existing capacities. The Turkish side also declared its full readiness to expand cooperation."

Referring to his meetings with the governors of Turkey's Agri and Iğdir provinces during this trip, he said: "In joint meetings with officials of these two provinces, issues related to border and provincial cooperation were examined."

The Minister of Agriculture stated: "In these meetings, it was announced that measures would soon be taken to develop inter-provincial relations through free trade zones, and the Turkish side declared its readiness to cooperate in this area."

Nouri also reported that both sides emphasized the establishment of a joint free zone, saying: "This issue was seriously emphasized both in meetings with Turkish national officials and in meetings with border province governors."

Referring to the government's policies on developing border relations, he added: "The President places special emphasis on strengthening interactions between border provinces and neighboring countries, and the necessary authorities have been delegated to the provinces in this regard, which can help facilitate relations and develop cooperation, including border marketplaces."

According to a report released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Turkey was the third top destination of Iran's non-oil products in the past Iranian calendar year 1404 (ended on March 20).

In early December 2025, a Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) delegation, visiting the Plast Eurasia 2025 exhibition in Istanbul, met with a group of board members and managers of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce.

In this meeting, both sides, referring to the longstanding friendly, cultural, and economic relations between Iran and Turkey, emphasized strengthening connections through the exchange of trade delegations, participation



in exhibitions, and joint investment.

Munur Ustun, a member of the executive board of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, referring to the memorandum of understanding signed between the two chambers last year, described the presence of Iranian companies in Turkey and specialized exhibitions as valuable and stated: "The current volume of trade between the two countries falls short of the existing potential."

He then addressed the impact of global economic developments and the constraints caused by sanctions, and emphasizing the need to facilitate the foreign trade environment and create a secure path for private sector cooperation, said that direct meetings between merchants are an important step to compensate for shortcomings.

Addressing the meeting, Hervik Yarijaniyan, head of the TCCIMA Industry and Mining Committee, stated that with over 47,000 members, this chamber has extensive capacity for cooperation with Turkish economic actors, adding: "The social, political, and cultural relations between the two countries are at a high level, but the level of trade exchange does not correspond with these realities. Therefore, through the exchange of trade delegations, participation in exhibitions, and joint investment, cooperation between the two countries can be strengthened."

He also invited the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce to travel to Tehran as a trade delegation to further expand the grounds for joint cooperation.

Subsequently, Hesameddin Hallaj, deputy for international affairs and trade development at the TCCIMA, referring to the continuous dispatch of trade delegations in recent years and the active presence of the Tehran Chamber at Plast Eurasia 2025, said: "Face-to-face dialogues between Iranian and Turkish actors can lead to the development of economic relations."

He also announced the continuation of cooperation between the two chambers based on last year's memorandum of understanding and expressed hope that the Tehran Chamber would soon host a delegation of Turkish merchants.

During this meeting, Kamran Davari-Nikou, Consul General of Iran in Istanbul, referring to the increase in the trade between the two countries to \$19.4 billion, said the diversity of Iran's export goods to Turkey has increased from 700 items in previous years to 1,383 items.

Referring to the presence of 45 Iranian companies at the Plast Eurasia exhibition and several dispatched trade delegations, he described this trend as a sign of the high potential for economic cooperation between Iran and Turkey.

Uzcan Tokul, Deputy Secretary General of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, in his remarks, deemed the current trade volume between Iran and Turkey insufficient and stated that the Istanbul Chamber would seriously continue its policy of receiving and supporting Iranian trade delegations.

At the end of this meeting, it was also decided that the Tehran Chamber of Commerce would prepare the groundwork for a trade delegation from the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce to travel to Tehran through official correspondence.

The TCCIMA delegation, visiting the Plast Eurasia 2025 exhibition, also met with senior officials of the Istanbul Chamber of Industry, proposing strategic partnerships between Iranian and Turkish private-sector companies, particularly in technology-driven sectors.

During the joint session, both sides highlighted the long-standing commercial ties between Iran and Turkey and agreed to strengthen industrial cooperation through B2B meetings and reciprocal expert delegations.

# Billion-dollar quake: How an invasion is reshaping global order

TEHRAN- What begins as a military confrontation in the Persian Gulf never stays there. Two months into the second joint American and Israeli campaign against Iran, the world is waking up to a harsh reality: the shockwaves have escaped the energy markets and are now tearing through global supply chains, food security, and the economic stability of nations.

According to exclusive analysis reported by the Financial Times, the conflict has already triggered an energy supply disruption without parallel in modern history, one that could permanently erase one billion barrels from world markets. This is not just another geopolitical crisis; it is a systemic fracture.

At the heart of this turmoil lies the Strait of Hormuz, the world's most vital maritime chokepoint, behind which nearly all global spare production capacity is trapped.

Since late February, daily oil output has collapsed by roughly 12 million barrels. In total, the world stands to lose at least one billion barrels of crude and refined products, equivalent to ten days of global consumption. To put that number in perspective, that loss is



more than double the volume that governments have collectively released from strategic stockpiles to calm prices.

Senior oil industry executives describe the situation as historically unprecedented.

Unlike the 1990 oil shock, when significant spare capacity existed elsewhere, today that capacity is concentrated precisely where bombs are falling.

Consequently, the transmission of economic pain has been faster, deeper, and more direct than in any past crisis.

Even under the most optimis-

tic ceasefire scenarios, analysts warn that repairing damaged infrastructure will take months, rendering much of the lost supply essentially permanent.

Current estimates suggest that between 600 and 700 million barrels have already been destroyed or blocked.

Yet the suffering is not equal. Asia, Africa, and Australia, regions heavily dependent on imported energy and lacking deep financial buffers, are bearing the brunt. In contrast, wealthy nations can deploy fiscal firewalls and subsidies to shield consumers, much like Europe did during the 2022 gas

crisis, when losing one-third of gas supplies led to soaring prices but not outright shortages.

For poorer countries, however, the equation is crueler: high prices will crush demand, stall growth, and widen global inequality.

If the Strait of Hormuz remains closed through the end of July, several economists forecast a global recession.

History teaches a merciless lesson: energy shocks leave permanent scars.

The second invasion of Iran is not a distant war, it is a trillion-dollar disruption rippling through every factory, farm, and household on the planet.

From the eurozone's struggling manufacturing sector to the empty fuel depots in sub-Saharan Africa, the evidence is unmistakable.

As nations scramble to adapt, one truth becomes clear: in an interconnected world, a spark in the Persian Gulf becomes a fire everywhere else.

The question is no longer whether the global economy will feel this blow, but how many will be left standing when the smoke clears.

## Facilitating processes, designing alternative corridors: Government's strategies for managing trade in wartime

TEHRAN- Since the beginning of the third war of aggression, the government has placed the facilitation and acceleration of the country's trade on its agenda, so that while removing obstacles related to import facilities for essential goods, it has also replaced traditional methods with new trade corridors.

As reported by IRNA, approximately two months have passed since the start of the American-Zionist coalition's aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran. These circumstances have prompted trade sector authorities to streamline administrative procedures in order to neutralize, as a form of passive defense, some of the enemies' plots against the country's commercial affairs.

Key measures implemented during the recent war of aggression include: extending the validity of trade cards, extending deadlines for fulfilling export and import currency obligations, extending order registration validity periods, lowering the threshold for applying currency obligation restrictions, extending the percentage customs clearance approval, the continuous operation of service desks at the Trade Promotion Organization, paying export incentives related to the past Iranian calendar year 1404 (ended on March 20),

and banning the export of domestically needed goods such as chemical, polymer, and petrochemical products.

Furthermore, restrictions on trade routes — particularly the American terrorist army's naval siege of Iran — have forced merchants to use new routes to import essential goods.

In this regard, preparations have been made to utilize the infrastructure and port capacities of neighboring countries in the northeast and west, including Turkey and Pakistan.

### Identification of 10 new trade routes

Identifying new trade routes is another measure being pursued by the Trade Promotion Organization to reduce trade costs and vulnerability for merchants, while also potentially increasing cross-border trade volume.

In this connection, Amir Roshanbakht, Deputy for International Business Promotion at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, has announced that 10 distinct corridors have been identified to supply essential goods, production necessities, food, medicine, medical equipment, and other items.

According to Roshanbakht, under current circumstances, new routes must be defined and

mapped for the main southern corridor.

He stated: "We have now identified 10 new routes that can replace the southern corridors. Without a doubt, these routes will also help trade in the post-war period, reducing trade costs and decreasing the country's vulnerability along this path."

### Utilizing Eurasia's capacities to meet domestic needs & conduct exports

One of the most important actions taken during the Fourteenth Government was the implementation of Iran's free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, which created new market opportunities and trade corridors.

With the development of Iran's economic and trade diplomacy with Eurasian Union member states, new trade corridors have now become available to Iran, allowing greater focus on the Central Asian route and enabling the country to meet some of its needs through these alternative pathways.

Moreover, Iran's alliance with Eurasian Economic Union members not only allows Iran to supply its needs from these countries but also enables those countries to benefit from Iran's high-value-added goods and commercial products.

## Over 8m tons of goods loaded, unloaded in Hormozgan ports during war

TEHRAN- The Governor of Hormozgan has reported over eight million tons of cargo loading and unloading operations in 12 ports of the province during the third war of aggression.

According to IRNA, Mohammad Ashouri stated during a visit to Shahid Bahonar Port in Bandar Abbas: "During this period, more than 4.2 million tons of goods were exported from Hormozgan's ports, and nearly 3.8 million tons of goods were imported into the country."

Referring to the operation of all 12 commercial ports of the province during this time, he described the uninterrupted continuation of exports and imports of essential goods as the result of three key factors: the effective performance of the province's economic headquarters, the optimization and shortening of port and customs processes, and the close cooperation of executive bodies, organizations, and cargo owners in achieving this record.

The Governor of Hormozgan emphasized the important role of transportation in loading and unloading this volume of goods, stating: "The General Department of Road Maintenance and Railways of Hormozgan Province played a significant role in creating this record, which deserves apprecia-

tion."

Ashouri continued: "The strategic reserves of Hormozgan Province are stable, and necessary forecasts have been made for at least the next six months, so people should not worry about securing their essential goods."

He added: "This achievement demonstrates the success of an integrated management approach and inter-sectoral coordination under sensitive economic and sanctions conditions."

According to IRNA, Shahid Bahonar Port — a port with a long-standing heritage in the heart of the Persian Gulf — remains one of the vital pillars of the country's maritime trade network. This port, which before the construction of Shahid Rajaei Port was the main commercial terminal of Hormozgan and even the entire country, still plays a key role in the trade exchanges of the eastern province with an annual cargo handling capacity of 2.5 million tons.

Situated along the northern shores of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, Hormozgan Province is the undisputed maritime heart of Iran's economy.

Home to the Strait of Hormuz — one of the world's most vital energy chokepoints — the province

serves as the primary gateway for both Iran's crude oil exports and its non-oil trade. Its strategic location, coupled with advanced port infrastructure, makes Hormozgan indispensable to the nation's commercial and industrial life.

At the core of Hormozgan's economic role are its two major ports: Shahid Rajaei and Shahid Bahonar.

Shahid Rajaei is Iran's largest and most modern container terminal, handling over 80 percent of the country's containerized cargo. Shahid Bahonar, with an annual capacity of 2.5 million tons, remains a key asset for regional trade, especially for the eastern provinces. Together with ten other commercial ports, these facilities form a dense maritime network that connects Iran to global markets.

The province's economic significance extends far beyond oil. It is a major hub for the import and export of essential goods, including food, pharmaceuticals, construction materials, and industrial equipment. During periods of external pressure — such as sanctions or military conflict — Hormozgan's ports have proven resilient.

Hormozgan is also an emerging industrial zone. The province hosts numerous petrochemical plants, steel mills, and mineral processing

facilities, benefiting from proximity to both raw materials and export routes.

Free trade zones such as Kish and Qeshm, administratively linked to the broader regional economy, further enhance Hormozgan's appeal for foreign and domestic investment.

In summary, Hormozgan is far more than a provincial economy — it is the linchpin of Iran's international trade. Its ports, industrial capacity, and strategic location enable the country to withstand economic sanctions, military threats, and global supply chain disruptions.

As Iran continues to develop alternative trade corridors and strengthen ties with neighboring states, Hormozgan remains at the forefront, ensuring that the flow of goods — and with it, the nation's economic survival — never stops.

Meanwhile, considering the country's current wartime conditions, it should be noted that Iran's northern ports in the Caspian Sea have served as alternative routes, compensating for some maritime restrictions in the south. This dual-port strategy allowed the country to reroute critical shipments through Central Asian neighbors, preventing a complete halt in trade flows during the peak of hostilities.

# The catfights Trump can't hide

While lecturing Tehran's imaginary "new regime" on alleged turmoil, Washington's internal wars, purges, and military misadventures reveal the true source of American disorder.

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN — When President Trump sneered that Iran's leaders "are fighting like cats and dogs" because the U.S. has "created a real mess for them," it was meant as a gotcha line, proof of American triumph. Instead, it hangs in the air like an unwitting self-portrait.

Right now, the real clawing and hissing echoes through Washington's corridors, from a Pentagon ripping itself apart over the unpopular campaign of aggression Trump started.

His approval sits at a grim 39 percent, the lowest ebb of his second term, with two-thirds of Americans calling the country hopelessly off track. This is Trump's lashing out at Iran to distract from its own regime unraveling.

## A mandate on life support

Poll after poll paints a president adrift. Nate Silver's tracker pegs approval at 39 percent, a net negative unseen since his first term's darkest days. NBC and AP-NORC hover in the mid-30s, blaming sky-high gas prices and the Iran war mess, where 67 percent of the public sees bungled handling.

Without broad consent, Trump leans on bombast, enemy lists, bashing the judiciary, and promises of quick wins that never materialize. It's governance by tantrum in a nation where 72 percent scream wrong track and faith in institutions scrapes historic lows.

## MAGA's bloody civil war

The fracture lines run deepest in Trump's own camp. Picture this: On one side, Vance and Gabbard are obsessed with their own political survival, trembling at the economic fallout of a closed Strait of Hormuz and the MAGA base's reaction to the failed war. On the other side,



figures such as Rubio and Hegseth have abandoned any pretense of restraint, their aggressive rhetoric proving that the administration's vow to avoid new conflicts was a lie from the start.

Trump stokes the feud like a reality show producer. Then came the Truth Social bloodbath: Carlson, Owens, Greene, and Jones, all branded low-IQ nut jobs for daring to call out the war as neoconservative folly.

"I hate this war and the direction that the U.S. government is taking. I feel betrayed," said Carlson after being sidelined. He had earlier apologized "for misleading people" and had said that he "will be tormented for a long time" because he helped Trump get elected.

## Purges hollow the war machine

No scene captures the madness like Pete Hegseth's Pentagon bloodbath. Over 20 top generals and admirals have been shown the door in a year (Army Chief Randy George, Navy Secretary John Phelan, and Joint Chiefs brass), swapped for loyalist lightweights like failed pols who couldn't lead a platoon. Intel chiefs such as NSA's Timothy Haugh got pink slips for inconvenient facts on Iran war risks.

It resembles a whisper from Stalin's ghosts: toe the line or vanish, competence be damned. The White House echoes it: Bondi out as AG, Noem bounced from DHS, Lutnick and Gabbard reportedly on the chopping block, Kent resigning directly over the war on Iran, a carousel of courtiers where fealty trumps know

how, leaving policy pocked with amateurs steering through live fire.

## Courts under siege, wallets on fire

The chaos doesn't stop at the executive branch. Trump and his allies have turned their fire on the judiciary, branding any federal judge who blocks executive actions on deportations, tariffs, or immigration as "rogue." Calls for impeachment have come from Senator Cruz and House Speaker Johnson, while Bondi, before her fall, filed misconduct complaints against judges whose rulings crossed the administration.

Chief Justice Roberts pushed back firmly, warning that impeachment is not an appropriate tool simply because a president dislikes a court's decision. Even prominent conservative legal voice J. Michael Luttig, a retired federal judge, condemned the effort as "contemptible," argu-

ing it strikes at the heart of constitutional checks and balances and undermines the independence of the judiciary.

Meanwhile, the Iran war's tab hits home, with gas at \$4.11 a gallon (up 38 percent), diesel nearing \$6, and food prices climbing as shipping surcharges bite. Working-class families, the very voters Trump has long claimed to champion, are seething at the pump and the checkout line, watching a foreign policy sold as strength translate into everyday economic pain.

America is not just divided left-right anymore. It's a multi-polar mess. Youth trust is at 15 percent, affective polarization has ballooned 30 points since 2000, and everyone is eyeing institutions as corrupt husks.

## Overstretch and the long decline

Zoom out, and the imperial overstretch stares you in the face. With military misadventures, a national debt now soaring over \$39 trillion, and a navy increasingly out-hulled by China's 370-ship fleet, the United States is spread dangerously thin. The war on Iran served as the ultimate stress test, and the facade has finally cracked.

Deep corruption and sweeping purges have gutted the government's competence and strategic expertise, internal factions have paralyzed its decision-making, and a weary, cynical public has largely tuned out.

While Tehran has displayed a level of strategic resilience and internal cohesion that has confounded Washington's hawks, the United States drifts toward a slow, mismanaged decline. History rarely delivers neat, glorious endings for empires; they fray from within.

## Tehran is following Ho Chi Minh's playbook in Vietnam: FP



TEHRAN - Michael Hirsh, a columnist for Foreign Policy, says Iran "is following Ho Chi Minh's playbook in Vietnam" in the face of the U.S.-Israeli war against the country.

In his article, titled "Iran Is Calling the Shots Now," published on April 23, Hirsh says as Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh and Le Duan repeatedly defied President Lyndon Johnson's increasingly desperate pleas for negotiations, Iran is also doing so and is now "humiliating Trump."

The columnist also says, "What feels most Vietnam-like right now may be the daily declarations of battlefield success" in the war against Iran by Trump's secretary of war, Pete Hegseth, who is "proving to be a cartoonish version of (Robert S.) McNamara (Johnson's secretary of defense)."

This is the text of the article:

No, Iran is not yet "another Vietnam." There are no U.S. ground forces taking unsustainable casualties, no headlines tallying the week's dead, no massive anti-war protests in U.S. streets. And of course, rather than a beaten-down Lyndon Baines Johnson, the current U.S. president is bragging that he's only been at this war a few months and, by the way, he would have won Vietnam "very quickly."

But the pressure that Tehran is applying to Donald Trump suddenly feels very much like what flummoxed LBJ in Vietnam. Specifically, it resembles the winning strategy so doggedly pursued by Ho Chi Minh, the iconic North Vietnamese leader.

By resisting talks to end the war quickly and forcing Trump to extend his cease-fire indefinitely—which the president insisted he wouldn't do only days ago—the Iranian leadership appears to be following Ho's playbook.

It was Ho and his successor in the 1960s, Le Duan, who defeated two Western imperial powers—first France, then the United States—by understanding what Tehran appears to understand: Aggressors from far away, no matter how powerful, will tire of war well before you do. As Ho told the French colonialists back in 1946: "You can kill 10 of our men for every one we kill of yours, but even at those odds, you will lose and we will win."

And it was Ho and Le Duan who repeatedly defied Johnson's increasingly desperate pleas for negotiations, just as Tehran is now humiliating Trump. In a letter written to LBJ in 1967, Ho made clear that he would not consider entering into negotiations until "the unconditional cessation of U.S. bombing raids and all other acts

of war," adding that the "Vietnamese people will never submit to force, they will never accept talks under threat of bombs."

During the 1960s, Johnson regularly fulminated in his councils of war about Hanoi's stubbornness, wondering why increased airstrikes and sustained bombing campaigns beginning with Operation Rolling Thunder had failed to force North Vietnamese leaders to the table. "I don't believe they're ever going to quit," he told his defense secretary, Robert McNamara, at one point.

Similarly in Iran, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the parliamentary speaker, declared that Tehran would "not accept negotiations under the shadow of threats." This week, Iranian negotiators left Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance waiting anxiously at the White House for a phone call that never came. For good measure, Ghalibaf said Tehran was using the cease-fire to prepare "to reveal new cards on the battlefield."

Trump's response on April 21 was to announce on Truth Social that he will "extend the Ceasefire until such time as their proposal is submitted." Translation: Iran now seems to be calling the shots.

"Fifty years after the Vietnam War concluded, once again the U.S. is repeating this history in the war with Iran," said Hai Nguyen, the co-founder and director of the Global Vietnam Wars Studies Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School.

"In an asymmetric war, similar to the Vietnamese during the Vietnam War, Iranians have advantages beyond what the Americans could comprehend," Nguyen told me. "They understand that the U.S. could drop thousands of tons of bombs, but it does not possess the patience to withstand a prolonged war. Like the Vietnamese revolutionaries, the Iranians appear ready to fight a protracted war with much sacrifice of national resources. Iran, in other words, understands the Achilles' heel of the U.S."

"This is what surrender looks like," wrote former U.S. Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder in a blog post. "It was Trump who wanted a cease-fire, seeing that further escalation wasn't bringing Iran around and fearing the economic and political fallout of continuing the war. If Trump now extends the ceasefire indefinitely, Iran is fine with that. Right now, all of the advantages are with Iran, not with Trump. The US president's only card is restarting a war he doesn't want. Meanwhile, Iran holds the rest of the cards."

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](https://tehrantimes.com))

## Amal Khalil wrote the final report with her own blood

From page 1 ▶ From the perspective of many media observers in the region, what is taking place in southern Lebanon and Gaza cannot be understood merely as a conventional military confrontation. This war is simultaneously a war of narratives. In this arena, the journalist is not only a transmitter of news but also a carrier of truth.

It is on this basis that many regional analysts believe the targeting of journalists in these areas—particularly in southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip—does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it happens within a framework in which the expansion of independent, on-the-ground reporting is seen as costly by the party seeking to control global public opinion.

Within this critical perspective, which is also reflected in a significant portion of independent regional media, Israel is seen as attempting to limit access to the real image of the war, thereby preventing the full exposure of its human and legal dimensions. In other words, concern over the internationalization of war crimes and violations of international law is viewed as one of the factors intensifying pressure on journalists in the field.

The killing of Amal Khalil cannot be separated from this framework. She was not only a field reporter, but also part of a network of southern Lebanon correspondents who for years sought to present a direct and unmediated account of reality. Such presence in a complex war environment has always involved high risk, one that, unfortunately, in multiple cases, has cost journalists their lives.

In recent years, numerous cases of journalists being targeted in Lebanon and Palestine by Israeli forces have been documented. Among them are Ali Shaib, Fatima Fotuni, and other journalists who were struck while covering events in border

areas or conflict zones. In Gaza, as well, dozens of journalists have been killed in recent wars, an issue that international human rights and media organizations have repeatedly expressed concern about.

In addition to the loss of life, media infrastructure has also been damaged in these conflicts. Media offices, broadcasting centers, and even press-related emergency teams have, in some cases, come under direct fire from Israeli forces. This situation raises serious questions regarding Israel's compliance with the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, particularly the protection of civilians and media workers.

The martyrdom of Amal Khalil represents for her colleagues at Al-Akhbar and other active media outlets in southern Lebanon not merely a personal loss, but a sign of increasing professional risks in this domain. She embodied a generation of journalists who blurred the line between observer and witness.

Media analyses in the region have repeatedly emphasized that in modern warfare, control over narrative is as important as control over territory. In such a context, journalists operating in the field are directly involved in this battle of narratives, even if their primary intention is merely to document reality.

In this framework, the removal of the narrator can be interpreted as an attempt to narrow the world's visibility of what is happening on the ground.

At the same time, the role of local media structures cannot be overlooked. In southern Lebanon, journalists like Amal Khalil did not operate in isolated media environments, but within communities directly affected by the consequences of war. This proximity gave their reporting depth



and credibility, while also exposing them to direct danger.

It must also be emphasized that the collective memory of the region will preserve the martyrdom of these journalists as part of its contemporary history. Every name, every report, and every image becomes part of this memory, one that cannot be erased by the physical elimination of individuals.

Amal Khalil, in this sense, remains not only a journalist but part of this collective memory. Alongside other martyred journalists, she represents a generation that chose to witness the truth up close, even at a great cost.

In conclusion, we at Tehran Times, while expressing full solidarity with the newspaper Al-Akhbar and all journalists active in Lebanon, firmly believe that the responsibility of the regional media community today is more than ever the precise documentation of these realities and the prevention of their erasure.

The killing of Amal Khalil is a reminder of the painful fact that in certain war zones, even truth itself becomes a target. Nevertheless, as long as narration continues, efforts to silence the voice of truth will ultimately fail.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](https://tehrantimes.com))

## Lebanon's talks with Israel are a 'cunning deception'

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN — The head of Lebanon's Loyalty to the Resistance parliamentary bloc has lashed out at direct talks with the Zionist regime of Israel.

Mohammad Raad reaffirmed the bloc's stance against direct negotiations with Israel, denouncing any ceasefire that allows the regime to carry out attacks on Lebanese land.

"Any supposed truce that grants the occupying enemy in Lebanon a special exemption to open fire or

carry out any movement or field action in confrontation zones and within Lebanese territory, whether to secure a position, plant explosives, carry out an assassination, demolish a house or facility, or bulldoze land, is not a truce at all," Raad warned.

He emphasized that such a truce is "a cunning deception and a way of misleading others, serving as a cover for Israeli regime aggression and turning a blind eye to the enemy's continued violations and breaches."

The ambassadors of Lebanon and Israel to the U.S. have so far held two rounds of direct talks in Washington. The first round was held on April 15 with the mediation of U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The second round was held on April 23. This time, Rubio was not present.

Raad said, "The authorities should be ashamed before their people and withdraw from what has been called direct negotiations with the Zionist enemy," expressing concern over insistence on "this mistake and

dragging the country into something worse than the ill-fated May 17 agreement of the early 1980s."

The MP from the Hezbollah faction added, "Any official communication or meeting between a Lebanese and an Israeli party during the ongoing war between Lebanon and the Zionist entity will never gain national consensus and will constitute a clear constitutional violation that cannot be justified by any pretext or alleged interest."

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](https://tehrantimes.com))

## Eiffel Tower vigil



A diverse crowd stood in quiet resolve to honor the martyrs of Minab and the other children lost to the recent U.S.-Israeli war on Iran. Amidst the sea of flags, hand-drawn maps labeled Iran with virtues such as "Puissant" (Powerful) and "Résistant," while portraits of the martyred Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and the martyred Iranian children served as solemn focal points.



As the Eiffel Tower's golden framework glowed against a deepening sky on April 24, 2026, the green, white, and red of the Iranian flag billowed in the breeze, marking a profound moment of global solidarity. This was no ordinary vigil; a live audiovisual bridge linked the Trocadéro directly to Tehran's iconic Revolution Square, uniting two worlds in shared memory.

## Classic car rally in Tehran condemns damage to cultural heritage



TEHRAN – A rally and gathering of historical vehicles was held in Tehran on Friday to condemn damage to Iran's cultural and historical sites caused by airstrikes by the United States and Israeli regime, organizers said.

According to a statement from the Touring and Automobile Club of Iran, the event took place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. local time, at the Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex. Around 70 classic and historical vehicles participated in the gathering, which was held under the motto "Cultural heritage; the red line of history and human identity."

Participants displayed the Blue Shield emblem, an internationally recognized symbol for the protection of cultural property, along with the names of historical sites damaged during the war, which was commenced Feb. 28. Vehicles were also adorned with signs and messages condemning the attacks.

Following the gathering, the vehicles drove through several streets in Tehran as part of a rally tour aimed at drawing public attention to the issue.

Organizers said the event was designed to highlight Iran's commitment to preserving its civilizational identity while raising global awareness about the importance of protecting cultural heritage sites, including those recognized internationally.

They added that the initiative sought to mobilize international sensitivity and encourage broader recognition that the protection of cultural heritage extends beyond national borders.

"Safeguarding human heritage is a responsibility that transcends borders," the statement said, adding that such events could contribute to strengthening global calls for the protection of cultural assets and help prevent similar incidents in Iran and elsewhere.

## Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Chartres Cathedral

Notre-Dame de Chartres Cathedral, located in the Centre-Val-de-Loire region, is one of the most authentic and complete works of religious architecture of the early 13th century.

It was the destination of a pilgrimage dedicated to the Virgin Mary, among the most popular in all medieval Western Christianity. Because of the unity of its architecture and decoration, the result of research of the first Gothic era, its immense influence on the art of Middle Age Christianity, Chartres Cathedral appears as an essential landmark in the history of medieval architecture.

The outstanding stained-glass ensemble, monumental statuary of the 12th and 13th centuries and the painted decorations miraculously preserved from the ravages of humankind and time, make Chartres one of the most admirable and the best-preserved examples of Gothic art.

The west façade built around the middle of the 12th century, with its three portals whose spays are decorated with statue columns (Royal Portal), its two towers, its southern spire and its three large incomparable stained-glass windows, comprise an authentic and complete example that remains with us of this art created at St Denis, and which marked the advent of an original mode of plastic expression, known as the Gothic style.

A little later, the nave and the choir, reconstructed as of 1194, effected for the first time an architectural formula which would be widely employed throughout the 13th century.

The monumental sculptures of Chartres Cathedral are valued both for their abundance and for their quality: the large ensembles, reliefs and statues, of the Royal Portal at the entrance to the nave, the six portals and two porches dating from 1210 at the north and south entrances to the transept, offer a complete panorama of Gothic sculpture from the moment when it broke from Romanesque traditions to attain the subtle balance of idealism and realism that characterizes its apogee. In this cathedral, seat of a renowned school, technical and artistic mastery were at the service of a highly developed iconographic science.

Finally, Chartres Cathedral has almost totally conserved its homogeneous decor of stained-glass windows executed between approximately 1210 and 1250. To this must be added the three stained-glass windows of the 12th century above the Royal Portal and the large roses of the 13th century on the three façades: on the west, the Last Judgement; on the north, the Glorification of the Virgin; on the south, the Glorification of Christ.

(Source: UNESCO)

## Global travel is surging, but tourists aren't coming to the US

Despite more people taking international trips globally, the United States is losing ground as a top destination, according to new data.

Last year was one of the best years for the travel and tourism sector, with a 4.1% increase in gross domestic product growth, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council's latest economic impact research, sponsored by Chase Travel.

There were 80 million more international travelers in 2025 than in 2024. But many of them are skipping the United States for other locales.

In 2025, North America was the slowest-growing market globally, with the United States rising by less than 1%, WTTC's research found. Meanwhile, the Asia-Pacific region skyrocketed by 8.2% in 2025.

"The U.S. is losing market share, and China could replace it as the world's largest tourism market within four years if it continues its own rapid growth," Gloria Guevara, president and CEO

of WTTC, told USA TODAY. "The US can maintain its leading position if it increases investment and overseas promotion, rebuilds international demand and changes perceptions with a warmer welcome at border entry points."

In early 2025, increased scrutiny at US borders, along with reports of detentions and deportations, created a chilling effect that made international visitors rethink trips to the United States, according to foreign arrival numbers comparing March 2024 to 2025 from the Department of Commerce's National Travel and Tourism Office. Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Finland also warned their citizens about the potential risks of trying to enter the United States.

Recent data by the NTTO also showed a 20% decline in Canadian travelers, or 4.2 million fewer visitors, once a major market for the United States.

(Source: USA Today)

# Ilam province draws visitors with lush spring landscapes

TEHRAN – In western Iran, along a 425-kilometer border with Iraq, Ilam province emerges each spring as one of the country's most compelling seasonal destinations.

Covering more than 20,000 square kilometers and bordered by the provinces of Kermanshah, Lorestan, and Khuzestan, the region combines deep historical roots with a striking natural landscape. By the month of Ordibehesht (late April to late May), Ilam reaches the height of its beauty, transforming into what many describe as a "paradise of tourism," where nearly every corner offers a scene worth exploring.

Spring has always been a favorable season in Ilam, but in years of abundant rainfall the province takes on an exceptional character. Mountains and plains become densely carpeted with pasture plants, while trees regain their vivid green foliage. Vast oak forests, interspersed with wild pistachio and other native species, spread across the mountainous terrain, forming shaded landscapes where local communities have long lived in close connection with nature. These forests are not only ecological treasures but also part of the cultural identity of the province.

Recent heavy rains have amplified this natural appeal. Seasonal rivers that are often dry for much of the year begin to flow again, and dormant springs burst back to life. Across Ilam, water redefines the landscape: streams run through valleys, wetlands reappear, and agricultural lands flourish. From the seasonal springs of Eyvan, stretching from Khouran to Chalanji, to the revived Chavar river flowing between Haji Bakhtiar and Abza, the sense of renewal is visible everywhere. The Mishkhas River, a permanent watercourse, gains added vitality along its route from Toulab to Jafarabad, while countless smaller streams and springs contribute to the province's lush scenery.



This seasonal transformation extends across a wide geographical range. In Mehran, green plains stretch from Salehabad to Seyed Hassan; in Dehloran, fertile lands from Meymeh to Abu Ghoeyr are revitalized; and in Abdanan, dense forests span from Sarab Bagh to Murmuri. The landscapes of Chardavol, Holilan, Malekshahi, and Sirvan counties each present their own variations of springtime beauty, from rolling hills and cultivated fields to rugged mountains and forested valleys. In Darreh Shahr, the Kabirkuh heights rise above a patchwork of greenery, while the Zardalan plains of Holilan display wide expanses of vibrant vegetation.

Among the province's most notable natural attractions are several sites that reach their peak appeal in spring. Raziane Gorge stands out with its dramatic rock formations and flowing water, while Zinegan Canyon offers a cooler microclimate and shaded pathways carved by streams. The twin lakes of Siah Gav provide a rare and picturesque aquatic landscape, and the slopes of Ghalaghiran near the provincial capital offer sweeping views over the surrounding terrain. Other highlights include Ilam Dam and the nearby village of Ama, the scenic village of Zifel, and the agricultural fields of Dasht Abbas in Dehloran, where uniform rows of blooming cano-

la create striking yellow vistas against the green backdrop.

What distinguishes Ilam in this season is not only the presence of famous landmarks but the accessibility of beauty throughout the province. Visitors do not need to undertake long journeys or reach remote, heavily promoted sites to experience its appeal. Even near the provincial capital, destinations such as Maleseh, Chaghakabout in Chavar, or the villages of Kini Day (Cheshmeh Davoudi) and Ghajar provide immediate contact with nature. In the Sivan district, for example, travelers can walk through orchards in the village of Meydan and sit beside the Mishkhas River, experiencing a blend of rural life and natural scenery.

Spring in Ilam is also marked by a strong culture of outdoor living. During the Nowruz holidays, many residents set up tents in natural areas and spend extended periods immersed in the landscape. In particularly lush years, some continue this practice well beyond the holiday period, taking advantage of the mild weather and abundant greenery. This tradition reflects both the suitability of the environment for recreation and the deep-rooted relationship between local communities and their surroundings.

Officials in the province underscore that during Ordibehesht, the entirety of Ilam effectively

becomes a tourism destination. With ecosystems revitalized and landscapes at their most dynamic, visitors can explore a wide range of environments within relatively short distances. The availability of rural accommodations, including eco-lodges in various villages, further supports tourism by allowing travelers to stay within these natural settings.

Beyond its natural attractions, Ilam's historical depth adds another dimension to its appeal. The province takes its name from Elam, the ancient civilization that once dominated much of southwestern Iran. Archaeological evidence indicates human settlement in the area dating back to around 5000 BC. Over millennia, the region has been shaped by successive empires, from the Assyrians and Medes to the Achaemenids and Sasanians, owing in part to its strategic location near major cultural and political centers such as Susa and the Zagros highlands.

Today, this combination of history and seasonal natural beauty makes Ilam a distinctive destination. In spring, when rainfall has revived its ecosystems and landscapes, the province offers an immersive experience of Iran's western highlands, one defined by greenery, flowing water, and a sense of renewal that extends across both nature and tradition.

## Minimal intervention key to preserving authenticity of historical sites, expert says

TEHRAN – An Iranian conservation expert has called for a shift toward minimal intervention in the restoration of historical structures, warning that recent war-related damage to heritage sites requires urgent and carefully planned responses.

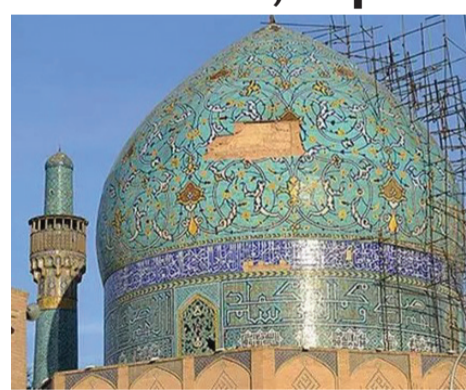
Javid Imanian, a specialist in the restoration of historic buildings and urban fabrics, on Saturday said that maintaining the authenticity of cultural heritage must remain central to all restoration efforts, particularly as more than 140 historical sites across Iran have been damaged by US and Israeli airstrikes since Feb. 28.

Speaking to Mehr news agency, Imanian outlined the current state of restoration practices, highlighting both evolving approaches and persistent challenges in the field.

He said that a recent event to commemorate the International Day for Monuments and Sites offered an opportunity to underscore the goals of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), including raising awareness, strengthening conservation efforts, and reinforcing the link between heritage and identity.

"This occasion can help improve public understanding of the importance of protecting cultural heritage, historical buildings, and archaeological sites," he said, adding that awareness is a necessary first step toward the restoration and revival of damaged monuments.

Imanian noted that advances in technical knowledge and resources have influenced restoration methods in recent years. However, he expressed concern that some projects, including those involving nationally and internationally recognized sites, have involved excessive intervention that undermines conservation principles.



"Proper restoration is carried out with minimal intervention and the least possible alteration, so that a historical structure or fabric does not lose its original authenticity," he said, calling for a fundamental shift in restoration practices.

Referring to the northern province of Golestan as an example, Imanian said that local climatic conditions and architectural typologies require specialized construction techniques and materials. Traditional elements such as clay roof tiles and timber sourced from forested areas are integral to historic buildings but are increasingly difficult to obtain.

"This creates challenges both in sourcing materials and in making accurate technical assessments during restoration," he said.

Imanian identified three main categories of damage affecting historical structures in Golestan: natural factors, human activities, and non-expert interventions. He said natural factors, such as weathering and environmental conditions, remain the leading cause of deterioration, followed by human impact and unprofessional restoration work.

He added that the sector faces several structural challenges, including limited funding, shortages of traditional materials, and a lack of skilled professionals. These gaps ex-

tend to both academic experts and traditional craftsmen, whose knowledge is essential for authentic restoration.

"To overcome these issues, it is necessary to secure sufficient funding, establish workshops for producing traditional materials, recruit specialists, and train craftsmen through apprenticeship systems," he said.

Addressing damage caused during what he described as a recent phase of conflict, Imanian said war-related destruction differs significantly from gradual deterioration caused by natural or human factors.

"In wartime conditions, parts of structures and architectural decorations can be destroyed suddenly," he said. "This requires immediate actions such as emergency stabilization and the preparation of precise restoration plans."

He said Iran possesses much of the technical expertise needed to restore damaged sites, but emphasized the need for coordinated planning to establish and activate restoration workshops nationwide. In some cases, he added, international expertise could also be utilized.

Imanian concluded by stressing the importance of public education in safeguarding cultural heritage.

"The most important issue in protecting cultural heritage is education and raising public awareness," he said. "The more people and officials understand the value of heritage, the greater their participation in its preservation will be."

He recommended strengthening educational programs within the cultural heritage sector through continuous and practical initiatives, saying such efforts would contribute to more effective protection and restoration of historical assets.

# International Sociological Association strongly condemns US-Israeli attack on Iran

TEHRAN - The International Sociological Association (ISA) has issued a statement, strongly condemning military actions carried out by the United States and Israel against Iran.

In accordance with its Statutes and its commitment to the defense of human dignity, academic freedom, and the advancement of sociological knowledge, ISA strongly condemns the escalation of military actions carried out by the United States and Israel in the Middle East, particularly those affecting Iran and Lebanon, the statement reads.

"Ongoing military actions, including attacks on civilian populations and critical infrastructure—such as schools, hospitals, universities, historical monuments, and energy infrastructure—are causing severe human suffering and undermining the conditions necessary for social and academic life.

As highlighted by sociological communities in the region, these events are directly affecting the capacity to teach, research, and sustain institutional life under conditions of extreme uncertainty and risk.

The ISA recalls that the use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states violates fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

In this regard, United Nations human rights experts have characterized recent military actions carried out by the United States and Israel as violations of international law and acts of aggression, warning of the risks of impunity for powerful states and the devastating consequences for civilian populations.

These assessments underscore the urgency of reaffirming international legal principles and protecting human life in the face of escalating militarization.

The normalization of such actions poses a grave threat not only to regional stability but to the basic conditions of human coexistence globally.

From a sociological perspective, these dynamics are embedded in long-standing global inequalities and asymmetries of power, as well as in geopolitical and economic interests that shape contemporary conflict.

The persistence of militarized and interventionist strategies reflects deeper structural conditions that reproduce violence unevenly across regions, disproportionately affecting populations already exposed to multiple vulnerabilities.

These dynamics are further entangled with Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories and the Syrian Golan Heights—as recognized



Shajareh Tayyebeh elementary school in the city of Minab was hit by a US missile attack on February 28, killing at least 168 students, most of them aged between 7 and 12.

by international humanitarian law (notably the Fourth Geneva Convention) and by multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions (including Resolutions 242 and 2334)—which has been identified as a contributing factor to recurring cycles of violence and instability.

In light of this situation, the ISA:

- condemns the ongoing military actions carried out by the United States and Israel in the region;

Attacks on civilian populations and critical infrastructure—such as schools, hospitals, universities, historical monuments, and energy infrastructure—undermine the conditions necessary for social and academic life.

- calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities and for measures to protect civilian populations;

- urges all parties to comply with international law and humanitarian principles;

- stresses the necessity of dialogue, diplomacy, and peaceful conflict resolution as the only legitimate path forward.

The ISA further calls upon sociological associations worldwide to uphold and promote the values of peace, dialogue, and international cooperation, and to contribute, through research, teaching, and public engagement, to the defense of human life and the strengthening of democratic and peaceful societies.

The ISA also emphasizes the need for all countries to critically examine the structural conditions that enable such conflicts, including global inequalities,

economic interests, and enduring forms of domination that shape contemporary warfare.

As a global community of sociologists, we reaffirm our commitment to the defense of life in all its dimensions—human, social, and ecological—and to the promotion of more just, peaceful, and sustainable societies."

The statement was in response to a letter from the Iranian Sociological Association to ISA in March, calling for the condemnation of the US-Israeli aggression.

Below is the full text of the letter.

We hereby bring to your attention that on February 26, 2026 (9 Esfand 1404), the armed forces of the United States and Israel, for the second time in less than nine months, illegally launched extensive military attacks against the territory of Iran.

These assaults occurred amid ongoing negotiations between Iran and the United States and have resulted in large-scale civilian casualties and severe destruction of the country's infrastructure, medical and educational centers, and cultural and historical sites.

In accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, Iran has no way to engage in legitimate self-defense. The nature and scope of these attacks constitute clear and serious violations of fundamental principles of international law, the Geneva Conventions, and peremptory norms of international humanitarian law.

The most evident breaches include: Violation of Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity (Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the UN Charter); Bombing of an elementary school in Minab, killing 168 children (contrary to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child); Bombardment of medical and humanitarian facilities; Attacks on civilian areas,

resulting thus far in the destruction of over 17,000 residential units and injury to thousands of non-combatants; Damage to UNESCO-listed cultural heritage sites; Destruction of vital infrastructures resulting in large-scale environmental harm.

These actions not only threaten the foundations of peaceful coexistence among nations but also erode freedom, equality, and human dignity—the essential pillars of modern societies.

Needless to say, amid this maelstrom, Iranian social sciences scholars alongside other academics are suffering as members of the broader society.

From their very inception, Iranian Sociological Association and the Union of Iranian Social Science Associations have been addressing and analyzing societal challenges, including those pertaining to democratic governance and public welfare, through the tools available to them within a public sphere already riddled with risks and constraints. As such, we have always contributed to critical and constructive interventions.

Yet, the war further diminishes our capacity to remain a critical, constructive and socially relevant influence, particularly because of the serious interruption in the academic activities.

From a sociological perspective, indifference toward actions that undermine the very possibility of human and social life is unacceptable.

Therefore, Iranian Sociological Association together with the Union of Iranian Social Sciences Associations call upon the International Sociological Association to:

1. Issue an official statement condemning the war imposed by the United States and Israel;

2. Encourage sociologists—particularly those in the involved countries—to analyze the social and ethical consequences of these acts and to advocate for their cessation;

3. Support the establishment of an impartial international fact-finding commission to investigate the killing of civilians, especially children;

4. Emphasize the necessity of protecting cultural heritage and preventing further destruction of historical monuments;

5. Endorse international efforts to achieve a ceasefire, prevent the recurrence of aggression, and ensure compensation by the aggressors.

We are confident that sociologists around the world, guided by their scientific conscience and ethical responsibility, will not remain silent in the face of such a grave threat to the human and social foundations of life.

## Water management needed to secure water rights for wetlands: DOE chief

TEHRAN – Although the increase in precipitation has increased hope to secure water rights for wetlands, it does not obviate the need for water management, the head of the Department of Environment has said.

Without sustainable management of water resources and consumption patterns, the temporary rise in water supply cannot prevent environmental crises, IRNA quoted Shina Ansari as saying.

Iran is an arid and semi-arid country that is always affected by climate change. Heavy rainfall this spring should not result in discarding the implementation of water management plans, Ansari noted.

To handle climate change impacts mid-term and long-term plans to reduce water consumption in agriculture and industry sectors, as well as manage water consumption, water recycling, and wastewater treatment systems, should be put on the agenda, she added.

Moreover, current rainfalls increase greenery and vegetation growth, which in turn enhances the possible frequency of fires in summer. Therefore, it is essential to be ready for any difficult situations in the future, the official highlighted.

Precipitation in the first month of the spring contributed to compensating for the lack of rainfall; currently, the recorded aver-

age rainfall is seven percent above the normal figure, the head of the Meteorological Organization has said.

Rainfall in spring significantly increased. Compared to the last year, the amount of rainfall doubled in most areas located in the northwest and west of the country, IRIB quoted Ahad Vazifeh as saying.

"Overall, the country has received 13 mm more rain in comparison to the long-term period of 30 years, the distribution of precipitation has been unequal, though," Vazifeh noted.

Despite light snowfall in winter, low temperatures along with abundant rainfall increased the amount of snow in Alborz and Zagros heights, as well as the amount of water saved in dams.

Precipitation in the last month of winter and the first two weeks of spring was unprecedented in some provinces; in Ilam province, the received rainfall was the highest amount recorded over the past 76 years. The rainfall has been above normal in South Khorasan, Kerman, Hormozgan, south of Fars, and Bushehr provinces, he added.

In Tehran province, the lack of rainfall has dropped from -55 percent to -35 percent.

Rainfall is forecast to restart in the second month of the spring, particularly in the western half of the country.

## Iran will rise stronger to serve global health: minister

TEHRAN – Despite the destruction of scientific centers in Iran by the US-Israeli aggression, the country will turn into a more influential player in the global arena, Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi has said.

The bombardment of scientific centers would not deter the country from making scientific progress, IRNA quoted the official as saying.

"Attacking scientific centers like the Pasteur Institute of Iran makes our job harder," Zafarqandi wrote in his X account on Thursday.

"But the missile launchers don't know: knowledge lives in the minds of our scientists! With this knowledge, we will rise stronger than ever to serve global health," the official added.

According to Hossein Kermanpour, the deputy health minister, the United States and the Zionist regime jointly attacked global public health by launching strikes on the Pasteur Institute of Iran.

"Several facilities severely damaged or decimated by the US and Israeli bombardments are not merely national assets, but global heritage," he wrote on his X account.

"These countries have attacked global public health by targeting institutions such as the Pasteur Institute of Iran – a key member of the Pasteur Network and a WHO Col-

laborating Centre.

The international community has a collective responsibility to rebuild it; we will rebuild it better than before, provided that the aggressors stop violating international law."

Founded in 1920, the Pasteur Institute of Iran is a longstanding member of the Pasteur Network. The Institute contributes to national, regional and global public health through its national reference laboratories, WHO Collaborating Centers, disease surveillance and diagnostics, biobanks, and essential medical countermeasures production. The Institute was targeted by the aggressors on April 2.

Following the attack, Mario Moreira, President of the Pasteur Network, expressed concern over the destruction of the Pasteur Institute of Iran, and warned of the potential regional impacts as it disrupts the major role of this century-old pillar of global health in the prevention and control of existing and rising health threats in the region.

"The reported damage to the Pasteur Institute of Iran is deeply concerning. This institution plays an important role in supporting the health of populations in Iran and the region. When such capacities are disrupted, diagnostics, surveillance, and response to ongoing and emerging threats may be affected, with potential implications for health security beyond national borders," Moreira highlighted.

## Triops cancriformis, known as 'living fossil', spotted in Iran's Hamoun Wetland

TEHRAN – A species of aquatic crustacean named triops cancriformis or tadpole shrimp, known worldwide as 'living fossil', has been spotted in Hamoun International Wetland, southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province.

Dating back approximately 200 million years, triops cancriformis is considered a living fossil whose detection is of significant ecological and scientific importance, particularly for biodiversity assessment and conservation efforts.

Hamoun International Wetland is considered one of the most important habitats of aquatic and terrestrial migratory birds and has been a shelter for many rare and endangered species for years.

Measuring between 2 and 11 centimeters in length, triops cancriformis belongs to the class Branchiopoda. Its drought-resistant eggs are capable of remaining dormant in the soil for over two decades and hatch once temporary ponds or dams are replenished with water.

The Hamouns are transboundary wet-

lands on the Iran-Afghan border made up of three lakes: Hamoun-e Helmand, which is entirely in Iran, Hamoun-e Sabari on the border, and Hamoun-e Puzak, almost entirely inside Afghanistan. The three lakes are linked and fed by water from the Helmand River which starts in the Hindu Kush Mountains in Afghanistan.

Iran is a rich country in terms of biodiversity, with about 37,500 animal species and more than 8,000 plant species. In addition, it is home to 579 bird species, 214 mammal species, 284 reptile species, 23 amphibian species, 309 freshwater fish species, and 763 marine fish species in the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, and the Caspian Sea.

Also, some 35,283 species of invertebrates have been identified in the country, out of which more than 32,600 species are arthropods. Over 94 percent of the country's animal species diversity belongs to invertebrates and less than 6 percent to vertebrates. Insects, with at least 26,800 species, account for more than 70 percent of the country's total species.

## IRCS receives Turkish consignment of humanitarian aid

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has received a consignment of humanitarian aid from Turkey, including medical supplies and serum.

The shipment was transported in 16 trucks to the Bazargan border, with coordination from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ankara.

Upon arrival, the shipment will be handed over to the Food and Drug Organization for targeted distribution across pharmacies and healthcare centers nationwide.

The aid aims to support essential medical needs and improve patient access to critical treatments.

Following the outbreak of war on February 28, humanitarian shipments from different countries have been sent to Iran.

"We did not ask for aid from any country, but many countries volunteered to help us. The countries that volunteered for help consider its spiritual value more than its material value, and they say that the spiritual message of this aid is that we are together

and we want to have a share in this defense," IRNA quoted Pirhossein Kolivand, the head of the IRCS, as saying.

These countries included China, Tajikistan, Iraq, Turkey, India, Russia, Azerbaijan, Dagestan, and Uzbekistan.

Iran had also received the first consignment of humanitarian relief items from the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ICRC).

The shipment included 171 tons of essential items such as blankets, water containers, kitchen sets, tarpaulin cloths, hygiene parcels, solar lamps, buckets, and mattresses that were delivered by five trucks, IRNA reported.

The second supplies involving 9 trucks of essential goods are expected to be delivered to the Iranian Red Crescent Society in the coming weeks.

Moreover, 200 generators and 100 water pumps, purchased from the country's market, were donated to the IRCS.

The two shipments will provide for the ba-



sic needs of 25,000 families.

The ICRC hopes to send more medical and essential assistance. The organization has also voiced readiness to boost cooperation with the IRCS in providing relief services and assistance to the people in need.

"We aim to extend support for the humanitarian efforts of the Iranian Red Crescent Society. Their committed response, particularly during difficult situations, is amazing. We are still committed to support their critical activities," IRNA quoted, the ICRC representative to Iran, Vincent Cassard, as saying.



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APRIL 26, 2026

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Best way to defend Islam, is to practice Islam.*  
**Prophet Muhammad (S)**

Prayer Times > Noon:12:02 Evening: 19:05 Dawn: 3:47 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:18 (tomorrow)

## Labkhand Theater reviews Royal National Theatre's "Fleabag"

TEHRAN – Labkhand Theater Complex in Tehran screened a stage recording of the 2019 Royal National Theatre's production of "Fleabag" on Saturday evening.

The screening was followed by a review session by Iranian theater critics Abbas Ghafari and Ramtin Shahbazi.

Directed by English theater director Vicky Jones, this National Theater production stars Phoebe Waller-Bridge as the main character.

"Fleabag" is much more than a theatrical production; it is a cultural phenomenon that offers a vibrant, jagged, and hilariously candid glimpse into the life of a woman navigating the exhausting complexities of modern existence in London.

Originally conceived as a ten-minute sketch before evolving into a full-length fringe play, this one-woman show achieved staggering box office success during its 2019 West End and off-Broadway runs. It did not just sell out; it broke records and captivated a global audience, proving that there is a profound hunger for stories that refuse to polish the messy edges of womanhood.

The protagonist, known to us only as Fleabag, is a master of the "fourth wall" break, inviting the audience into her internal monologue with a wit that is as sharp as it is unapologetically blunt. As she grapples with the dizzying intersections of love and loss, she is visibly haunted by a personal tragedy—the death of her best friend, Boo—for which she carries a silent, crushing weight of guilt. Despite the undercurrents of anger and grief that threaten to pull her under, Fleabag struggles to embrace the vulnerability required for healing. Instead, she often weaponizes her humor, pushing away those who genuinely care for her as a defense mechanism. Yet, she maintains a façade of hyper-confidence, navigating her chaotic life with

an unyielding bravado that masks a deep-seated loneliness.

At first glance, some critics argued that "Fleabag" appeared overly sexualized, emotionally raw, and perhaps even self-absorbed. However, this portrayal only scratches the surface of Waller-Bridge's intricate writing. The character's obsession with validation is revealed to be a distraction from a life that is rapidly unraveling. Fleabag faces a myriad of challenges, from a strained, passive-aggressive relationship with her sister and a narcissistic godmother to the slow financial decay of her failing guinea pig-themed café. These pressures leave her feeling as if she has nothing to lose, leading to the reckless honesty that makes the play so compelling.

The critically acclaimed play served as the fundamental blueprint for the BBC's multi-award-winning television adaptation, which solidified Waller-Bridge's place as a titan of contemporary storytelling. Fleabag's journey resonates because it refuses to offer easy answers; it is a visceral reminder of the complexities of human emotions, the desperate struggle for genuine connection, and the agonizing pursuit of self-acceptance in a world that demands perfection.

Recognizing its theatrical impact, "Fleabag" received two prestigious nominations at the 2020 Laurence Olivier Awards. It competed for Best Entertainment or Comedy Play, while Phoebe Waller-Bridge herself was nominated for Best Actress for her tour-de-force performance. Although the show ultimately failed to take home the statuette in those specific categories, its legacy was already cemented. The "Fleabag" effect had changed the landscape of modern comedy, proving that the most specific, painful, and "ugly" parts of the human experience are often the most universal.

## Cartoon of Day



Resignations  
Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

## Art Bureau's Ramadan War Situation Room for Cultural & Artistic Affairs



# Connecting artists, raising global awareness through universal language of art

By **Mohamadreza Seyedagha**

TEHRAN – After Iran was attacked by the United States and Israel on February 28, a committee was established at the Art Bureau in Tehran, focusing on the production and collection of artworks related to the war, which lasted for 40 days.

The Tehran Times conducted an interview with the head of the committee, Mohammad Zaruee Nasrabad, regarding the activities of the committee, or the "Situation Room for Cultural and Artistic Activities during and after the War," as Zaruee calls it.



Mohammad Zaruee Nasrabad

"The idea of forming this Situation Room actually began to take shape during the 12-day war last June, when the US and Israel had attacked Iran. When the war started, communication infrastructures were naturally disrupted, and our artists, who wanted to react quickly to the ongoing issues, faced numerous challenges. One of the main functions of this Situation Room was therefore to maintain connections among artists, to keep them informed about one another's activities, and to ensure that their efforts could be coordinated," Zaruee said.

"Our work is not limited to Tehran; it extends across the entire country. Artists from all over Iran are active and respond promptly when critical events occur. In addition to collecting artworks, the Situation Room has provided a creative environment where artists could continue producing new work," he added.

As an instance, Zaruee referred to a three-day painting workshop, which was organized on February 29, one day after the martyrdom of the Leader was announced. "Around 15 painters gathered in this space and created works centered on the theme of the Martyr Leader. Simultaneously, through the coordination facilitated by this Room, artists in various cities across the country began producing related artworks as well. Some of them even worked outdoors, in public places, alongside ordinary citizens, allowing people to see that artists were standing with them, creating cultural and artistic works in real time," he noted.

The US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28 and for 40 days, they martyred about 3,500 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.

During the 40-day war (also known as Ramadan War), 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.

Regarding the works seen in public places, Zaruee said: "You may have noticed some of these pieces around the city, the stencils and wall paintings. This activity is still ongoing. The works combine

visual graphics with meaningful messages, transforming public spaces and shaping the cultural atmosphere."

"The Situation Room is not limited to paintings and graphic designs. In the field of photography, from the very first day, a group of about 15 to 20 photographers from Iran Photographers House joined in. They went to the targeted sites as soon as incidents occurred and documented the scenes, often under dangerous conditions. Even a few were injured, not seriously though. We intend to include the photographs in upcoming exhibitions and eventually publish them in a book once the situation stabilizes," he asserted.

"In the field of architecture, our colleagues collaborated with the Beautification Organization to install symbolic or memorial structures in areas that had been hit. At Minab School, for example, they created the butterfly-book installation.

On the first day of the war, the Shajareh Tayyebeh elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan Province, became the site of a devastating massacre. 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. Authorities confirmed a final death toll of 156 people.

To honor the memories of the young students martyred in the tragedy, a conceptual art installation project featuring 2,000 red butterflies and symbolic crimson pages was organized at the ruins of Minab's Shajareh Tayyebeh Elementary School.

Another notable project, conducted jointly with the Municipality, involved producing two large city murals. These murals are continuously updated by artists in response to new developments. Meanwhile, poets, painters, pho-

tographers, and filmmakers are all contributing their work through this shared cultural framework.

Also speaking to the Tehran Times, Hamidreza Jafari, the media manager at the Situation Room, said: "Since the beginning of war, we have witnessed an outpouring of emotion among artists eager to create new works. Across the country, the volume of artworks, especially in the visual arts, has been immense, to the point that many pieces risked being overlooked. People often do not realize that we are dealing with a form of art that reacts instantly and powerfully to circumstances."

"Many artists needed support to help their works gain visibility. One of the most important tasks of this Situation Room has been to amplify visibility, ensuring that artworks are published and shared through official and informal media channels. Once artists saw that we were helping their work reach audiences, their motivation and quality of output increased noticeably," he added.

According to Zaruee, another key objective of the Situation Room is coordination. "It helps us be aware of what other cultural institutions are doing so that we can align our efforts. We have a great number of artists, but it is important to create a clear division of tasks and ensure that their energies complement one another rather than overlap."

Speaking about the ultimate goal of the Situation Room, he said: "We are pursuing a larger goal, that is to build a comprehensive archive of all the cultural and artistic works produced during this war. This would serve as a valuable resource for developing a range of derivative projects: books, documentaries, and other creative media."

As for the number of artists whose works have been collected from across the country so far by the Situation Room, Zaruee said: "The figures exceed one thousand across different disciplines. Thanks to the dedication and cooperation of our colleagues, this cultural movement for resistance is rapidly spreading. Awareness is growing, and artists everywhere are responding. So far, exhibitions have been held both in Iran and Iraq, displaying works by artists from Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Palestine, a testimony to shared cultural solidarity in the face of adversity."

In response to a question about whether there are plans to present these artworks to a broader international audience, he said: "By God's grace and through the efforts of our colleagues, this cultural movement for resistance is

expanding. Awareness has spread, and artists everywhere have reacted. So far, exhibitions have been held in Iraq and Iran, featuring works by Iranian, Syrian, Lebanese, Pakistani, and Palestinian artists."

"Today we are working under certain media and internet restrictions, which have made things more difficult. Despite that, some of our artists have managed to connect directly with foreign artists and share their works through those channels. One of our ongoing efforts is focused on creating artworks with an international perspective, pieces that audiences abroad can understand, connect with emotionally, and receive their intended message".

Regarding the same issue, Jafari said: "We are witnessing a remarkable growth in artists' insight during this period. The artworks produced now show that the language is becoming more global and more expressive, and they powerfully convey the meaning of war in terms of defense of the homeland and the suffering of the Iranian people. Through composition, line, color, and light, this message is now being communicated far more effectively to the world".

When asked about the relationship between art and war and the role artists can play in such conditions, Zaruee replied: "I see art and the artist as parts of a nervous system within a living body. When the body experiences illness, say a headache or fever, it sends out signals to warn us that something is wrong. I believe that is precisely what artists do: they raise awareness and send messages when society is in crisis".

"If the artist does not play that role, the illness, meaning the social or moral decline, will quietly spread and harm the body of society. In this way, the artist's alarm, communicated through the universal language of art, works like a nervous alert system, making the entire world aware of what is happening," he underlined.

Looking at it from a different angle, he said: "In times of soft war, I see the artwork itself as a weapon, and the artists as fighters. If you want to reach the heart of an adversary, graphic works can act like long-range high-precision weapons. When an event occurs and an artist immediately creates a work in response, that artwork can rapidly circulate across the world, informing, moving, and awakening global audiences. In general, both the artist and the artwork form one of the wings of war. Across history, art has always been used in wartime communications and propaganda".

