

The Next Round, Beyond West Asia

The IRGC warned that any renewed US or Israeli aggression would push the conflict beyond West Asia, as Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran has “many more surprises” if war resumes



US Senate advances resolution to curb Trump's authority over Iran conflict

TEHRAN - The United States Senate has moved forward with a War Powers Resolution aimed at limiting President Donald Trump's ability to use military force against Iran without congressional approval, amid growing political and legal controversy over the conflict.

On Tuesday, senators voted 50-47 on a procedural measure to advance the resolution, marking a rare break within Republican ranks as a small group joined Democrats in challenging the president's war powers. The vote, while not final, signals increasing unease in Congress over a conflict that critics say has drifted without clear authorization or exit strategy.

“This president is like a toddler playing with a loaded gun,” Democratic Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said before the vote. “If there was ever a time to support our war powers resolution to withdraw troops from hostilities with Iran, it's now,” he said. ▶ Page 2

Qalibaf warns US of ‘another hillbilly’ and vows enemy will regret renewed aggression

TEHRAN - Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has issued two stark warnings: the United States is heading toward “another hillbilly” era of unwinnable wars, while any renewed aggression against Iran will be met with bitter regret.

In a post on his X account, Qalibaf cited a passage from Chapter 11 of Hillbilly Elegy, the memoir by US Vice President JD Vance, which describes how disadvantaged American communities disproportionately bore the burden of past US wars. The speaker argued that the same pattern is repeating itself, denouncing wealthy elites and Washington's “war merchants” for pushing America toward another costly conflict. ▶ Page 2

Putin and Xi denounce US-Israeli war on Iran as breach of ‘international law’

TEHRAN - Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping have condemned the US-Israeli war on Iran, which initially began more than 80 days ago.

“US and Israeli military strikes on Iran violate international law and the basic norms of international relations, significantly undermining stability in the Middle East,” according to a joint statement issued after talks on Wednesday between the two presidents in Beijing.

The statement also called for negotiations to bring a permanent end to the US-Israeli war on Iran. ▶ Page 3

The crimes of the US and the usurping Israeli regimes in the genocide of the Iranian people

By Dr. Saied Reza Ameli

Professor of the Department of Communications and Global Studies at University of Tehran, and Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Introduction: The Grand Deceptions, the Inversion of Perpetrator and Victim, and the Great Instigation of Chaos

On the evening of 6 January 2026, as the streets of Tehran and several other Iranian cities were engulfed in terrorist violence that ultimately claimed the lives of more than three thousand people, ▶ Page 2

Inside the obsessive-compulsive loop of Trump's digital noise machine

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN — Donald Trump's Truth Social feed is a daily ledger of strategic exhaustion that mistakes noise for authority. The feed functions as a round-the-clock psychological stage where the American presidency is performed in public view.

What it preserves is not the posture of a confident commander, but a map of status anxiety. It shows a leader trying to drown out real-world limits with synthetic spectacles, treating global geopolitics as an ongoing test of personal dominance.

The telemetry of midnight compulsion

The most telling metric of this digital presidency is its relentlessness. Wall Street Journal data shows Trump has logged over 8,800 posts in his second term.

This features 44 episodes where a dozen or more posts erupted between 8:00 PM and 6:00 AM. On one Monday, the account fired off 55 messages in under three hours.

Life in Gaza after the “Yellow Line”

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) continued to maintain a high level of activity, primarily in eastern Gaza City and Khan Younis, resulting in civilian casualties and damage to critical facilities.

That's according to the OHCHR's report for April 2026, which has documented that in one month alone, at least 111 Palestinians, including at least 18 children and seven women, were killed in attacks by the IOF, amid continuing airstrikes, artillery and naval shelling, drone attacks, and gunfire.

The so-called “Yellow Line” marking the illegal Israeli-militarized zone in the Gaza Strip was significantly extended eastward, with IOF tanks advancing. As a result of the expansion, five UNRWA installations are now in proximity of the militarized zone, including two schools-turned-shelters hosting displaced families.

The expansion of the IOF's militarized area is expected to affect humanitarian interventions and further squeeze the population, increasing the risks posed by violence in this area, OHCHR reported.

Persian Gulf war raises risk of environmental disaster

TEHRAN - The dangerous war that the U.S. and Israel jointly started against Iran at the end of February has incredibly increased the risks of an environmental disaster, a Princeton University researcher warns.

“The recent military confrontations in the Persian Gulf have significantly increased risks of environmental catastrophe, including oil spills, destruction of marine ecosystems, and contamination of fisheries and coastal infrastructure,” says Seyed Hossein Mousavian.

Experts have warned the shallow, semi-enclosed nature of the Persian Gulf makes its marine ecosystems, including coral reefs, mangroves, and fisheries, highly vulnerable to the severe, prolonged, and transboundary contamination caused by military conflicts.

Mousavian also proposes a “four-point” proposal for exiting the crisis surrounding the Strait of Hormuz through which a fifth of the global energy supplies passed before the war of aggression on Iran.

Writing on the NDTV, the former Iranian diplomat asks: “If the world depends on Hormuz, why does Iran bear the primary burden of maintaining it?”

▶ Page 5

Minister urges WHA to condemn attacks on civilians, says health must remain a bridge for peace

TEHRAN - Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi has called on delegations attending the 79th World Health Assembly (WHA) to condemn attacks against civilians and health infrastructures, noting that ‘health can and must remain a bridge for peace’.

The WHA is being held from May 18 to June 23 in Geneva, Switzerland. An Iranian delegation led by the health minister is participating in the event.

“Today, I am speaking on behalf of a nation under an unprovoked attack not only against its army, but against its civilians, children, environment, and health infrastructure,” Zafarqandi said, addressing the 79th WHA Assembly. ▶ Page 7



Iran's Leader hails late President Raisi for his common touch and constructive diplomacy

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, has issued a message on the second martyrdom anniversary of former President Ebrahim Raisi. The late president, along with then Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and several other officials, lost their lives after a helicopter carrying them crashed in a mountainous area in northwestern Iran. Ayatollah Khamenei described Raisi as a president with the common touch who spared no effort to help preserve the country's independence. Here is the full text of the Leader's message: ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

How Iran endured

Resalat examined why Iran has endured in the current war and under Trump's naval blockade. Iran demonstrated in this war that even under security and military pressure, it can use its economic capacities as instruments of power. The rise in global oil prices and uncertainty in the energy market increased Iran's oil revenues. This showed that in an energy-dependent global economy, even a sanctioned country can shift part of the crisis pressure onto the global market. Despite the US naval blockade, rail and road routes were activated, effectively creating new channels for Iranian trade. The use of the yuan in oil transactions increased, non-dollar mechanisms expanded, and the North-South trade corridor became more active. These developments showed that sanctions, in times of crisis, do not necessarily mean a complete shutdown of trade.

Etemad: Iran's war; a turning point or a catalyst for a new world order?!

In an article on the emerging global order, Etemad wrote: The vulnerability of the Persian Gulf states to Iranian attacks, along with their history of entering negotiation tracks with Tehran, could lead to a scenario troubling for Israel and the United States: the formation of a regional order in which Iran emerges as a new economic hegemon and, alongside China and Russia, establishes a kind of security-economic guarantee mechanism for the Persian Gulf region—an order that directly redefines the traditional architecture of power in the Middle East. If the war ends in the near future, Iran will likely be presented as the victorious side, and the international order will reorganize itself accordingly.

Arman-e-Melli: Trump's three-part strategy toward Iran

In an interview with international affairs analyst Ali-Asghar Zargar, Arman-e-Melli examined Trump's three-part strategy to-

ward Iran. Since taking office, Trump has pursued a three-pronged policy. The first is information dissemination and the use of mass communication—he skillfully uses media to announce his policies and spread his lies. The second is the military threat against Iran. The third approach is negotiation diplomacy. Through these three channels, he seeks to achieve his goals. He says he wants a good deal with Iran and claims Iranians are willing to negotiate with him. At the same time, he strengthens the military posture of his forces day by day. He uses the media to create psychological pressure. The opposing side must remain alert and assess how far it can counter and neutralize this psychological warfare. Ultimately, the situation depends on how much resilience and endurance Iran's military and society can maintain.

Jam-e-Jam: Four possible paths for Iran's post-war economy

A ceasefire should be seen as an opportunity for fresh decision-making, not merely the end of a period of tension. After the start of the third imposed war, Iran's economy moved from the direct shock of war to emergency management and then to a ceasefire phase. But it remains far from predictability, investment, stability, and trust. In the coming months, Iran's economy will move along one of four paths: limited stabilization, prolonged suspension, renewed tension, or a transition to conditional economic peace. The desirable path is the fourth—but it will not materialize automatically or through political declarations alone. If the ceasefire is transformed into economic rule-making, fiscal discipline, targeted support, and the rebuilding of public trust, it can mark the beginning of a new era for Iran's economy—one in which the goal is not merely to survive the war, but to build an economy that is predictable, resilient, and ready for reconstruction.

US Senate advances resolution to curb Trump's authority over Iran conflict



From page 1 ▶ On Tuesday, senators voted 50-47 on a procedural measure to advance the resolution, marking a rare break within Republican ranks as a small group joined Democrats in challenging the president's war powers. The vote, while not final, signals increasing unease in Congress over a conflict that critics say has drifted without clear authorization or exit strategy.

"This president is like a toddler playing with a loaded gun," Democratic Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said before the vote. "If there was ever a time to support our war powers resolution to withdraw troops from hostilities with Iran, it's now," he said.

Lawmakers backing the resolution argue that the US Constitution clearly assigns Congress—not the president—the authority to declare war, and that the executive branch has exceeded its mandate. They warn that continued military engagement risks entrenching the United States in a prolonged regional conflict with severe global consequences, particularly for energy markets and inflation.

However, the measure faces significant procedural and political obstacles. Three Republican senators were absent during the vote; their participation could have altered the outcome and may still block final passage if they maintain their support for the administration's approach. Even if the resolution clears the Senate, it would still need approval from the Republican-controlled House of Representa-

tives and would require two-thirds majorities in both chambers to override an expected presidential veto.

Republicans have already blocked seven similar attempts in the Senate this year, while the House has also rejected multiple war powers initiatives by narrow margins.

Despite these setbacks, Tuesday's vote reflects growing bipartisan concern over the direction of the Iran conflict, which began with US and Israeli military operations in late February. Critics argue the war has escalated without a defined strategy, while supporters of the resolution insist Congress must reassert its constitutional role in decisions of war and peace.

The Trump administration maintains that the president's actions are lawful under his constitutional authority as commander in chief, describing the operations as limited and necessary for national security.

Under the 1973 War Powers Resolution, a president may conduct military operations for up to 60 days without congressional authorization, after which hostilities must be ended or formally approved. Trump stated on May 1 that a ceasefire with Tehran had effectively ended active hostilities within that timeframe.

Opinion polls suggest widespread public opposition to the war, and legal scholars continue to debate whether the military actions comply with international law and US constitutional limits on executive military power.

Iran's Leader hails late President Raisi for his common touch and constructive diplomacy

From page 1 ▶

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

The commemoration of the martyrs of the Ordibehesht [May] Flight – foremost among them the martyred President, Hujjat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen Raisi – serves as a reminder of the vast multitude of devoted servants who have been martyred in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Individuals such as Motahari, Beheshti, Rajai, Bahonar, Raisi, Ale-Hashem, Amir-Abdollahian, Larjani, and hundreds of other outstanding figures – all schooled in the intellectual school of the Great Khomeini and the Beloved Khamenei (may God elevate their noble stations) – have adorned the record of sincere, diligent service by the officials of the Islamic Republic with their own blood-stained signatures.

Among the most distinctive qualities of Martyr Raisi were his sense of responsibility, youth-oriented approach, dedication to justice, active and constructive diplomacy, and above all, his common touch. These



attributes were a source of encouragement for Iran's allies, including the fighters in the powerful Resistance Front, as well as many of the well-wishers of the Islamic system. Of course, all of these qualities were intertwined with a spirituality rooted in the very depths of his being. In the relationship between officials and the public, such impactful and positive traits foster mutual appreciation. It was for this reason that his farewell funeral procession to his final resting place, which is beside his mas-

ter, Imam Abi al-Hassan al-Reza (pbuh), was carried out with a unique, magnificent grandeur. The unfinished presidency of that martyr established a standard of hard struggle and compassion for the nation and the country, while maintaining the country's independence.

We're now witnessing the Iranian nation's historic, unprecedented epic of resistance against two global, terrorist armies. This reality places a heavier burden of responsibility on the officials of the Islamic

Republic – from the Leader and the heads of the three branches of government to managers at all levels. Today, being thankful for this blessing of the unity of the nation, the government, and all institutions of the Islamic Republic lies in increasing motivation and intensifying the diligent service of our officials. It means actively addressing the people's problems and concerns – particularly in the areas of economics and livelihood – through a widespread, direct presence and by defining a serious role for the people who have become active on the scene for them to strive on the path of the country's progress with hope toward a bright future.

May God's mercy and pleasure be upon the martyrs of the path of service. May God's assistance and the prayers of our Master [Imam Mahdi], may God hasten his reappearance, be a support for those who are serving the Muslim nation of Iran.

Sayyid Mojtaba Hosseini
Khamenei

Ordibehesht 30, 1405
[May 20, 2026]

Qalibaf warns US of 'another hillbilly' and vows enemy will regret renewed aggression

From page 1 ▶ "Hillbilly 2 incoming. America's poor and forgotten will foot the bill for the broligarchs, Dimon the demon, and the beltway war merchants," Qalibaf wrote, referring to Jamie Dimon, the CEO of JPMorgan Chase, whom he described as a key financial backer of the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran.

In a separate audio message to the Iranian

people, Qalibaf declared that Iran's military forces have used the ceasefire period to rebuild their capabilities. "The enemy is caught in a strategic dilemma," he said, noting that economic discontent in the United States has left President Donald Trump torn between ending the war as a perceived loser or resuming military action.

"We must correct the enemy's miscalcu-

lations by strengthening our preparedness for a powerful response to any possible attacks," Qalibaf said. "We must make the enemy lose hope in Iran's surrender, so that it is forced to accept the legitimate demands of the Iranian people in negotiations."

He concluded, "We will make the enemy regret any renewed aggression against Iran."

Pezeshkian: Old methods cannot solve Iran's current challenges

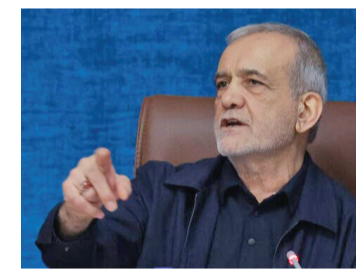
TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian has stated that Iran's current complex problems cannot be resolved only through old methods, emphasizing the need for new methods and a shift in managerial thinking amid escalating pressures.

Speaking at a meeting of provincial governors on Wednesday, Pezeshkian said that officials must rely on "creativity, the participation of elites in decision making, and the utilization of public capacities" to navigate the present conditions.

Referring to the pressures resulting from sanctions and the

enemy's efforts to impose an economic blockade on the country, Pezeshkian noted that the enemies believe they can force the Iranian nation to surrender through pressure and economic siege. He stressed that the prerequisite for neutralizing these pressures is trust in the people and the maximum utilization of the country's capable, creative, and innovative forces and elites.

He further stated that under pressure and constraints, managers must either find a way or create new pathways so that the country can pass the current situation with strength



and dignity.

The meeting was attended by several ministers and focused on reviewing the latest conditions in the provinces, managing the consequences of the war, ensuring the supply of people's essential needs, and coordinat-

ing the continuation of public services.

Pezeshkian also praised the governors, local officials, the Interior Minister, and administrative staff for their round-the-clock efforts under wartime conditions.

"The fact that we have been able to continue the path of governing the country despite pressures and limitations, and to reduce problems as much as possible, is the result of the efforts, solidarity, and field presence of all managers and authorities," he added.

Iran's Foreign Ministry holds ceremony to honor martyred senior diplomats

TEHRAN – The Iranian Foreign Ministry held a ceremony on Wednesday to mark the 40th day after the martyrdom of Kamal Kharazi, a Leader's advisor, and the second anniversary of the martyrdom of former Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. The event brought together former and current foreign ministers as well as senior diplomats, all paying tribute to the legacy of the two martyred leaders.

In his address, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi reflected on the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the gathering. "On the day of my inauguration as minister, I said that I could already envision my own farewell ceremony," Araghchi stated. "Little did I imagine that within seventy days, we would be gathered to honor two martyred ministers."

Describing the late Kamal Kharazi, Araghchi said, "He was 'Mr. Kamal' a man who rarely laughed but was deeply ethical, humble, and serious. I believe he had reached the pinnacle of humanity." He added that both he and Amir-Abdollahian were apprentices

of Kharazi and former Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

Speaking of Amir-Abdollahian, Araghchi noted, "He was the epitome of ethics and commitment. He greeted everyone with a warm smile at the ministry's entrance."

Araghchi also reflected on the recent 40-day war against Iran, describing it as a real test of resilience. "Not a single one of our diplomats sought refuge or resigned. American officials have admitted that Iran won the public diplomacy war."

Emphasizing Iran's strategic approach, Araghchi declared: "We fight wherever necessary, and we negotiate wherever necessary. We are fully coordinated. If national interests require it, we will sit at the negotiating table with strength. And if the situation changed, we would sit behind missile launchers."

The event also had other speakers, and they were former foreign ministers.

Former Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki described Kharazi as a figure of



"prudence, patience, and deep thought" and called Amir-Abdollahian "an active person of the Islamic Republic's diplomacy."

Ali Akbar Salehi, former foreign minister and head of the Iranology Foundation, said both martyrs shared "sincere service" to Iran. He added, "Their martyrdom is a great loss, but their path and thought will remain eternal."

Mohammad Javad Zarif, another former foreign minister, stated, "The era of 'hit and run' is over. Iran, relying on its people and its own strength, has proven that any aggression is doomed to failure."

The crimes of the US and the usurping Israeli regimes in the genocide of the Iranian people

From page 1 ▶ Mike Pompeo, the former US regime's Secretary of State, posted an unconventional message on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter): "Happy New Year to every Iranian in the streets. Also to every Mossad agent walking beside them" (The Jerusalem Post, 2026). The significance of this statement lies in its explicit confirmation of the presence of Israeli regime's intelligence operatives at the heart of Iran's domestic unrest, inciting violence

and actively orchestrating the slaughter and martyrdom of innocent citizens. This admission was subsequently corroborated in even clearer terms during an interview Pompeo gave to the Israeli regime's Channel 13. When the host suggested that Washington's promises of support for Iranian rioters had never materialised, Pompeo countered: "The help did arrive... plenty of help... America is actively working to help them" (Fox News, 2026).

Shortly thereafter, Donald Trump went a step further in an interview, openly acknowledging the supply of weapons to the rioters in Iran. Trump stated: "We sent them a lot of weapons; we sent them through the Kurds" (The Telegraph, 2026). In another public remark, he reiterated: "We sent them a lot of guns. We sent them [...]" (Middle East Eye, 2026).

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

The next round, beyond West Asia

The IRGC warned that any renewed US or Israeli aggression would push the conflict beyond West Asia, as Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran has “many more surprises” if war resumes

TEHRAN - Iran has warned the United States of far-reaching consequences in the event of any renewed act of aggression, amid President Donald Trump's repeated military threats and deadlines.

The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) warned on Wednesday that any renewed aggression against Iran would expand the current conflict far beyond the West Asia region.

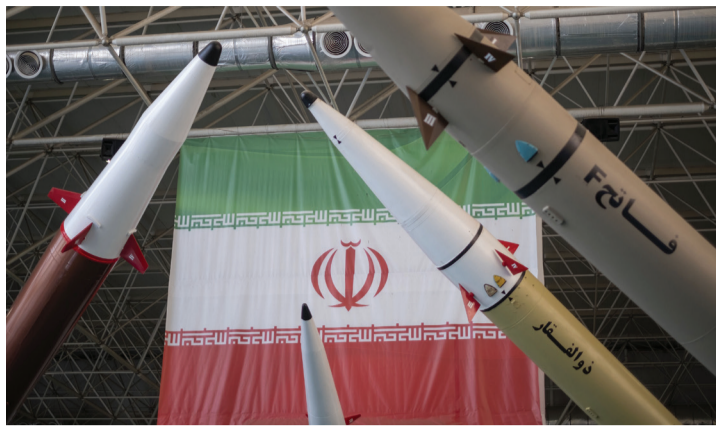
“Although they (the US and Israel) attacked us using all the capabilities of two of the world's most expensive armies, we did not employ all the capacities of the Islamic Revolution against them,” the statement said.

“If aggression against Iran is repeated, the regional war that had been promised will this time extend beyond the region, and our crushing blows will cast you into ruin in places you cannot imagine,” it added.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also said Iran has “many more surprises” if the US and Israel renew the war on Iran.

“Months after initiation of war on Iran, US Congress acknowledges loss of dozens of aircraft worth billions. Our powerful Armed Forces are confirmed as 1st to strike down a touted F-35. With lessons learned and knowledge we gained, return to war will feature many more surprises,” he wrote on X on Tuesday.

According to the US Congress report referenced by Araghchi, the US Air Force has lost dozens of aircraft during the recent war launched by the US and Israel against Iran on February 28. The destroyed or damaged aircraft include several F-15E Strike Eagle warplanes and one F-35A Lightning II.



During the 39 days of war, which was paused by a ceasefire on April 8, Iran not only targeted Israeli strategic and military sites but also struck US military bases in the Persian Gulf region.

Iran says Washington's excessive demands are the main obstacle to diplomatic efforts aimed at permanently ending the war, and that the US must agree to certain conditions to move forward.

Trump's threats ring hollow

Over the past weeks, Trump has repeatedly threatened Iran with renewed war and has each time retreated from those threats.

On Monday, Trump said he was postponing a military strike on Iran planned for Tuesday. He said he made the decision at the request of Persian Gulf Arab states, because “serious negotiations are now taking place.” However, The Wall Street Journal reported that these states were unaware of any plan for an imminent attack on Iran.

A US military official also told the New York Times that Iranian commanders have meticulously analyzed the flight patterns of American fighter jets and bombers. Referring to Iran's previous downing of advanced US aircraft,

the official noted that American flight tactics have become increasingly predictable, allowing Iran to defend against them with enhanced capabilities and foresight.

At least based on US media reports, Trump stepped back from attacking Iran due to concerns over the far-reaching consequences of a new war. The US is also aware that renewed conflict with Iran would increase economic pressure domestically, including rising inflation and fuel prices.

Global repercussions of renewed aggression

Yemen's Ansarullah has already warned that any expansion of the war against Iran by a US or Israeli military escalation could lead to the activation of new fronts in the Red Sea region, including the Bab al-Mandab Strait. Ansarullah has described the strait as a strategic maritime chokepoint that could be used as leverage in a wider regional confrontation. In this context, Ansarullah officials have indicated that restricting or disrupting navigation through Bab al-Mandab remains an option if hostilities intensify, presenting it as part of a broader deterrence strategy alongside Iran and other allied regional resistance groups.

Some analysts argue that if Washington launches another attack, Tehran could expand the scope of confrontation beyond the Middle East by targeting American bases in other regions.

They also suggest that Iran should weigh limited preemptive strikes against US forces and installations in the Persian Gulf in response to Washington's naval blockade of its ports — a measure they say is designed to intensify economic pressure and stir domestic unrest.

According to reported intelligence assessments, Israel has conveyed to the United States that sustaining the blockade could generate internal instability in Iran within two months. The same assessments indicate that, in the event of a renewed war, US operations would likely focus on Iran's critical infrastructure — including electricity grids, fuel depots and natural gas facilities — in an effort to tighten the siege and deepen economic strain, ultimately with the aim of fueling domestic turbulence. Against this backdrop, a preemptive Iranian strike is seen as a move capable of disrupting its adversaries' calculations and reshaping the strategic equation.

Taken together, these scenarios reinforce Tehran's warnings that any renewed escalation would carry consequences extending well beyond the immediate theater of conflict. They underscore the risk of disruption to vital maritime corridors and global energy flows. Iran's asserted control over the Strait of Hormuz since the outbreak of hostilities further heightens the stakes, as heightened tensions there are widely seen as a trigger for significant global economic repercussions.

Putin and Xi denounce US-Israeli war on Iran as breach of ‘international law’

From Page 1 ▶ The United States and Israel launched a war on Iran on February 28 to destroy the country's military capabilities and alter its leadership in their favor. But after 39 days of war, Trump had to agree to a ceasefire with Iran after his goals remained unachieved. Despite the ceasefire, the two sides have failed to bring a permanent end to the war due to what Tehran calls Washington's “excessive and unrealistic demands.”

‘Law of the jungle’

Xi, who was hosting Putin for a two-day visit, warned that the world is at risk of regressing into the “law of the jungle.” Xi also called on both countries to oppose “all uni-

lateral bullying” in the international arena, in an implicit reference to US actions in Iran and Venezuela.

In another implicit reference to Trump's threats to renew the war on Iran, the Chinese president noted that “a comprehensive ceasefire is imperative; restarting war is even more unacceptable.”

Xi also emphasized his four-point peace plan to end the US-Israeli war on Iran.

“I have put forward a four-point proposal to protect and promote peace and security in the Middle East, in order to build stronger consensus within the international community, ease the situation, end the fighting, and

push for real peace,” Xi said.

During his latest trip to China earlier this month, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi endorsed China's four-point peace plan, which emphasizes peaceful coexistence, respect for sovereignty, adherence to international law, and coordination of development and security.

Since the outset of the US-Israeli war, China has strongly denounced the aggression.

Russia has also adopted the same stance. During a meeting with Araghchi in Russia last month, Putin said the people of Iran are fighting bravely and heroically for their sovereignty.

LATEST NEWS

Iran envoy: Sanctions and military threats are two sides of pressure policy

Iran's UN envoy in Geneva, Reza Dehghani, says sanctions and military threats are components of a multilayered pressure policy against nations, creating structural obstacles to sustainable development. Speaking at a UN panel, he argued that unilateral coercive measures weaken economic infrastructure, increase vulnerability, and fuel instability. Citing Iran's experience, he warned that financial fragmentation and extraterritorial sanctions undermine the right to development and pose serious risks to international security.

US and Israel seek zero-sum outcome in Iran war, says expert

Former UN expert Alfred de Zayas says the US and Israel are pursuing a zero-sum outcome in the war against Iran, aiming for a defeated and dismembered Iran while Israel becomes “Greater Israel.” However, he warns this will not happen. Modern war is a lose-lose proposition. Unlike WWII's “winner takes all,” World War III would be a cataclysm with no winner, de Zayas added.

Iran rejects rumors of Qalibaf leaving negotiating team

Iranian officials have rejected reports that Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf stepped down as

head of the country's negotiating team. Parliament media chief Iman Shamsaei called the claims “completely false and an obvious lie.” He confirmed that Qalibaf continues to lead the team while also serving as special representative for China affairs.

Pakistani interior minister arrives in Tehran for high-level security talks

Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi arrived in Tehran on Wednesday and was officially received by his Iranian counterpart, Eskandar Momeni, at the Iranian Ministry of Interior.

The two ministers held a high-level meeting during which they discussed issues of mutual interest, including border management, internal security matters, and the latest regional developments.

Detailed consultations were conducted on the overall security situation affecting both countries.

Naqvi's latest trip follows a two-day visit to Tehran earlier this week, signaling continued high-level engagement between the two neighboring states on security and border cooperation.

IAEA chief to travel to Persian Gulf for diplomatic solution

IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi says he will travel to the Persian Gulf region to

find a diplomatic path toward nuclear safety and security. Briefing the UN Security Council on a drone attack at the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant in the UAE, Grossi called attacks on peaceful nuclear facilities “unacceptable.” While radiation levels remain normal, he said the situation is extremely worrying. Grossi reiterated his call for all parties to respect seven essential principles for nuclear safety and security.

US and Israel are responsible for UAE plant attack, says Russia

Russia has accused the UN and the IAEA of applying double standards regarding attacks on nuclear facilities. Speaking at an emergency Security Council briefing, Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia noted that while the UN condemned a recent drone strike near the UAE's Barakah Nuclear Power Plant, repeated US-Israeli strikes on Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant have gone unpunished.

He recalled attacks on Bushehr on March 17, 24, 27, and April 4, which killed an Iranian security officer and threatened Russian specialists. Nebenzia criticized UN Secretary-General Guterres for remaining silent on Bushehr while expressing alarm over Barakah.

He concluded that Washington and Israel bear full responsibility for the regional escalation.

SPORTS

Iran coach Ghalenoei not satisfied with team's readiness

tense and longer.»

TEHRAN - Iran Coach Amir Ghalenoei said getting the squad physically ready for the tournament would be difficult after most domestic-based players went seven weeks without competitive football during the suspension of the Iranian league.

The World Cup will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. Iran are due to play all three group-stage matches in the United States but would require access to Canada if they progress to the knockout rounds.

«Naturally, I am not fully satisfied with the players' level of readiness,» Ghalenoei told the FFIRI magazine before the team's departure for Turkey.

«But with a training camp that is approximately two and a half to three weeks long, we can make up about 20 to 25% of this shortfall.»

Iran will play Gambia in a friendly on May 29 before Ghalenoei names his final 26-man World Cup squad by FIFA's June 1 deadline.

The FFIRI also hope to schedule another friendly in Turkey and plan a behind-closed-doors match against Puerto Rico at their U.S. base in Arizona, provided they are able to enter the country without issues.

Mehdi Mohammad Nabi, first vice president of the Iranian football federation (FFIRI), said the federation was confident security arrangements for the tournament would be handled appropriately.

«There are security committees working with FIFA inside the United States, and responsibility for security lies with those committees,» he said.

Abdi: Asian Games can pave way for Olympics qualification

TEHRAN - Hossein Abdi, head coach of Iran's U23 football team, says he hopes the 2026 Asian Games will serve as a springboard for 2028 Olympic qualification.

Speaking on the sidelines of the team's first training camp, Abdi addressed the squad's current status. «Some players plying their trade abroad haven't joined camp yet, and two to three players from our 37-man list are carrying injuries. One injured player even showed up to camp anyway,» he said. «With the World Cup approaching and the domestic league on break, this was the best window to identify our players and prepare them for the short camps ahead.»

The camp will include a trip to Turkey for two friendly matches. «We're heading to Turkey to play two international friendlies so these players can build chemistry on the international stage,» Abdi explained. «The more international games we play, the better results we'll get. We're preparing for Nagoya, and we hope the Asian Games act as a stepping stone toward the Olympics.»

Abdi made it clear what it means to wear the U23 jersey. «This team are for the best of the best — the elite. These players need to understand that they have far more room to grow. It's not just about technique and tactics. Social awareness and mental strength matter just as much. That's why these boys need to show discipline and confidence in every aspect — not just in one or two camps.»

He stressed the importance of professionalism beyond the pitch. «Everyone must be organized, focused, and balanced — in their private lives and their professional careers. We have to earn the respect of the football community and the people. We teach our players that respecting the veterans of a team and the football community drives their own growth and earns them respect in return.»

On the physical condition of players coming off an unwanted break, Abdi said: «That's exactly why we hold longer camps — so the players can ramp up gradually and then maintain that sharpness. This benefits not just the players but their clubs too, because the break has cut into their training time. That said, our legionnaires and those who were in national team camps are fitter thanks to their training schedules. Still, everyone has a long way to go in terms of full readiness. That's precisely why our sessions are more in-

Rezvani elected as head of Iran's Aquatics Sports Federation

TEHRAN - Mohsen Rezvani was elected as head of Iran's Aquatics Sports Federation for the fourth successive term.

The General Assembly and election was held under the chairmanship of Mohammad Shervin Asbaghian, Deputy Minister for Development of Championship and Professional Sports at the Ministry of Sports and Youth, in Iran's Olympic Academy.

Rezvani was elected as the president of the federation with 46 votes from assembly members.

Kamyar Soltani, Director General of the Joint Affairs Office of Federations; Mahin Farhadizad, Vice President of the National Olympic Committee; and Farid Fathian, Executive Director of the Asian Aquatics Confederation, were also present at the assembly.

Rezvani, Morteza Mohseni, and Hadi Afshar were the approved candidates for the assembly, of whom Morteza Mohseni withdrew, and Hadi Afshar did not attend the assembly, which was considered a withdrawal.

Mohsen Samizadeh had served as the federation's caretaker prior to the assembly.

Rezvani, who was elected to the Executive Board of World Aquatics last year, was elected as the federation's president for a fourth consecutive term.

2026 World Cup: Iranian players still await U.S. visas

TEHRAN - Iran's national team have traveled to Turkey to continue preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup while still waiting for the visas required to enter the United States.

Team Melli departed on Monday for Turkey to begin their final training camp ahead of the World Cup, although the squad have still not received the visas required to enter the United States, where it will play their group stage matches.

Head coach Amir Ghalenoei confirmed that the team will travel to Antalya with a preliminary roster of 30 players, which must be reduced to the final 26-man squad before the official start of the tournament on June 11.

The Iranian coach expressed hope that every member of the delegation will obtain their travel documents before the team depart for North America. Meanwhile, Iran national team director Mehdi Mohammad Nabi stated that the federation remains in constant communication with FIFA and expects the issue to be resolved within the next two weeks.

The uncertainty continues with less than one month remaining before Iran's World Cup debut, scheduled for June 15 against New Zealand in Los Angeles. Team Melli will later face Belgium and Egypt in Group G.

Iran Football Federation president Mehdi Taj recently held a meeting in Istanbul with FIFA secretary general Mattias Grafström to discuss the visa situation. Following the meeting, Taj said he was satisfied with the discussions and reiterated FIFA's intention to guarantee Iran's participation in the tournament.

However, the situation remains sensitive due to ongoing diplomatic tensions between Iran and the United States. The Iranian federation has reportedly conditioned its participation in the World Cup on several guarantees related to security, transportation, respect for national symbols, and the approval of travel visas for the entire delegation.

For his part, FIFA president Gianni Infantino publicly stated that Iran would be welcomed “with enthusiasm” in North America and described the 2026 FIFA World Cup as “the most inclusive sporting event in history.”

While the visa situation remains unresolved, Iran will continue their preparation camp in Turkey with training sessions and friendly matches ahead of the tournament, maintaining hopes of participating without complications in its seventh FIFA World Cup.

Technical-engineering services, Iran's main advantage in Tajikistan market

TEHRAN – The commercial attaché of Iran in Tajikistan, referring to the envisioned roadmap for Iran-Tajikistan trade exchanges, stated that Iran's main advantages in this market are providing technical and engineering services, industrial technologies at competitive prices, cultural proximity, and the capability to implement joint projects.

Tajikistan's economic growth forecast at over 8%

According to IRNA, citing the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, Mohammad Ali Amirfakhrian said, pointing to the forecast of over 8% economic growth in Tajikistan: The development of infrastructure projects, energy, mining industries, mineral processing, technical and engineering services, and support for export-oriented production will be among the most important economic axes of Tajikistan in the coming years, which can create a good opportunity for the presence of Iranian economic entrepreneurs and capable companies.

Emphasizing the country's industrialization policy until 2030, he clarified: This policy has increased the need for industrial machinery, agricultural equipment, technical and engineering services, construction materials, food industries, medicine, and industrial technologies.

According to Amirfakhrian; examining Tajikistan's foreign trade structure shows that this country faces a lack of domestic capacity in the development of processing industries, infrastructure modernization, mineral processing, and completing the value chain, and this issue can create a good opportunity for the presence of Iranian companies in industrial, mining, and infrastructure projects.

Referring to Iran's export capacities, he said: Currently, in technical and engineering services, food and agricultural industry machinery, power plant equipment, construction materials, processed food industries, medicine and medical equipment, cosmetics and hygiene products, detergents, plastic industries, and steel products, we have good capability and competitive advantage, and it seems that we can supply part of the needs of the Tajikistan market.

The commercial attaché of Iran in Tajikistan added: Iran, as a country with industrial production capacities, technical knowledge, and experience in implementing infrastructure projects, and Tajikistan, as an economy with mineral resources, cheap energy, regional position, and a developing market, can create effective joint cooperation in the fields of mining industries, downstream aluminum industries, raw material processing, energy, transportation, and processing industries.

Iran at a competitive advantage despite China, Turkey, Russia rivalry

He assessed the Tajikistan market as heavily influenced by competition from China, Turkey, and Russia, and added: Iran's main advantage in this market is providing technical and engineering services, industrial technologies at competitive prices, cultural proximity, and the capability to implement joint projects.

Amirfakhrian further addressed the two countries' goal of increasing the volume of trade exchanges and said: Based on the roadmap for developing economic relations between the two countries, the volume of trade exchanges between Iran and Tajikistan has been targeted at one billion dollars by 2030. Achieving this goal will require developing private sector cooperation, creating transportation infrastructure, facilitating banking relations, strengthening distribution networks, and increasing joint investments. Also, joint investment in energy-intensive industries, mineral processing, food industries, textiles, and technical and engineering services can become one of the main axes of cooperation between the two countries in the coming years.

The commercial attaché of Iran in Tajikistan, listing other trade advantages of the two countries, said: Areas such as new energies, information technology, tourism, transportation and logistics, food industries, health tourism, agricultural product processing, and developing regional supply chains are among other important opportunities for joint cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan.

He stated that the success of Iranian companies in the Tajikistan market requires continuous presence, accurate market knowl-



edge, cooperation with reliable local partners, establishing a distribution network and after-sales service, developing transportation infrastructure, and so on.

Iran and Tajikistan have set a target of raising bilateral trade to \$1.0 billion in the near future and agreed to expand joint investments and establish shared industrial plants, as senior officials from both sides moved to deepen economic and mining cooperation.

Seyed Mohammad Atabak, Iran's minister of industry, mining and trade, made the remarks in February, during a visit to Dushanbe, where he met with Prime Minister of Tajikistan Qohir Rasulzoda and other senior officials.

Atabak said economic relations and trade exchanges between the two countries were on a positive and expanding trajectory, adding that bilateral ties, particularly in commerce, were stronger than before.

During the multi-day visit, he held talks with three Tajik ministers, two heads of state committees and the prime minister on boosting cooperation in areas including pharmaceuticals, mining and industrial development.

The two sides agreed to pursue a roadmap aimed at accelerating the implementation of existing agreements, facilitating private sector engagement and strengthening export capacity, technology transfer and bilateral infrastructure.

In the mining sector, Iran and Tajikistan agreed to form a joint working group between Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade and Tajikistan's Ministry of Industry to expand the presence of Iranian companies in Tajikistan's mining and mineral industries.

Masoud Sami'e Nejad, head of the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), said the task force would focus on reconstructing Tajik mining industries through Iranian engineering and design teams, training Tajik engineers and establishing structured engineering systems for mineral processing industries.

The working group will draft a roadmap and submit monthly progress reports to the two ministers, enabling direct coordination to resolve potential obstacles. Large Iranian mining and mineral companies are expected to participate, with plans to facilitate commodity exchanges, particularly metal products used in construction, through the establishment of service centers in Tajikistan.

Iranian firms are also set to assist in the design, production policies and rehabilitation of Tajik factories in sectors such as cement and ceramic tiles.

Officials noted that Tajikistan's rich and largely untapped mineral reserves offer opportunities for cooperation in processing and value addition, reducing raw material exports and enhancing industrial output.

Steel exports and water projects in focus

Steel cooperation emerged as another key pillar of the expanding partnership.

Saeed Zarandi, chief executive of Mobarakeh Steel, said Tajikistan's steel market remained in the early stages of development and required both long and flat steel products.

He described the market as relatively untapped but growing, with significant potential for increased Iranian exports as Tajikistan advances its industrialization plans. Discussions with Tajikistan's minister of industry and new technologies included the development of distribution centers and a stronger Iranian role in meeting the country's industrial demand.

Zarandi added that Iran was also ready to cooperate in Tajikistan's iron and non-ferrous mining projects and to supply water transmission pipes to support large-scale water infrastructure initiatives. Tajikistan holds some of the region's largest freshwater reserves and is planning major water projects.

Wall Street on edge as Iran conflict fuels inflation fears

TEHRAN – According to information published by Bloomberg, the ongoing conflict involving Iran is sending shockwaves through American financial markets. Top economic experts warn that the Federal Reserve may be forced into a sharp series of interest rate hikes to combat resurging inflationary pressures.

Bloomberg's analysis indicates that the financial fallout from the war now extends well beyond simple fuel price spikes. Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, pointed to a key warning signal: the yield on the 10-year US Treasury note has climbed to 4.6%. In an analysis shared on social media platform X, Zandi described this movement as a clear reflection of a rapidly deteriorating economic outlook.

Zandi emphasized that the conflict is directly inflating public expectations of future price increases. He noted that uncontrolled inflation ex-



pectations are the Federal Reserve's greatest fear, as they lead to permanently higher prices. The economist warned that policymakers will likely continue tightening credit conditions—regardless of the broader economic pain—until those expectations cool down. Zandi compared inaction to letting cancer metastasize throughout the economy, requiring

even more drastic rate hikes later.

Meanwhile, veteran market analyst Ed Yardeni told CNBC that recent Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Producer Price Index (PPI) readings show the Fed is already "behind the curve." Bloomberg's report cites Yardeni predicting that the central bank will abandon any talk of rate cuts at its June meeting and shift

toward a "tightening bias," followed by a quarter-point hike in July. He pointed to the 4.1% yield on two-year Treasuries as evidence that bond markets are demanding higher rates.

The economic damage is also hitting American households directly in their wallets. Citing a study from Brown University's Watson Institute, Bloomberg notes that US consumers have paid over \$40 billion in extra fuel costs since the start of Donald Trump's confrontations with Iran. That figure—\$41.5 billion as of last Sunday—averages \$316 per household, enough money to rebuild the nation's bridges or modernize its air traffic control system.

In conclusion, the repercussions of the Iran conflict are pushing US inflation to its highest level since the 2022 Ukraine invasion, creating a growing political headache for Trump while keeping Wall Street on edge.

Maritime-oriented development of free zones in post-war environment

By Dr. Hadi Shirzad

TEHRAN– At the dawn of new military configurations, the axis of geopolitical and geo-economic power is shifting from land to sea. Today, discussions surrounding national security and prosperity are no longer confined to territorial borders and domestic policies; rather, the equations of power and wealth are being redefined across the waves of the Persian Gulf and the vast expanse of the Sea of Oman.

In the aftermath of the imposed war by the United States and its regional allies whose persistent objective has been to create security and economic constraints in order to align countries with their preferred order efforts have continuously been made to restrict Iran's maritime access and economic capabilities. Under such conditions, the concept of "coastal and maritime free zones" must not be viewed merely through a commercial lens. We are now facing a reality in which maritime-oriented development of free zones is not simply an economic choice, but rather a "strategic defense-economic necessity" and an effective instrument for breaking through sanctions and imposed barriers.

From security bottlenecks to corridors of prosperity

The years of imposed wars and attempts to confine Iran within the narrow strategic limits of the Persian Gulf have taught us a critical lesson: excessive dependence on traditional and limited routes constitutes our most vulnerable strategic weakness.

In the current environment, where the Unit-

ed States and its allies seek to control trade routes through expanded military presence and maritime coalitions, free zones must function as "defensive walls built through economic power."

Maritime-oriented development in free zones means transforming these areas from mere border points into integrated logistical, industrial, and commercial hubs capable of transcending political blockades. Such development must prioritize the direct integration of these zones into global supply chains through the Sea of Oman, thereby operationalizing a strategy of "bypassing strategic chokepoints."

Sea of Oman: A gateway beyond Persian Gulf

Focusing on the "Sea of Oman world" within the strategy for developing free zones reflects Iran's geopolitical foresight. The Sea of Oman serves as an exit from the constraints of the Persian Gulf and as an entry point to the Indian Ocean.

By expanding maritime infrastructure, modern ports, and free zones along this strategic corridor, Iran can gradually shift its economic and logistical capabilities from areas heavily monitored by international military forces in the Persian Gulf toward the more open and strategically advantageous space of the Indian Ocean.

This transformation would effectively turn free zones into major connectivity hubs along the emerging eastern trade architecture, linking Iran to new and expanding markets through the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean.

Necessity of transitioning from traditional to strategic management

To realize this objective in the post-war environment, the development of free zones requires three fundamental pillars:

Technological infrastructure development:

Employing smart technologies in port management and logistics to reduce costs and enhance competitiveness.

Diversification of investment models:

Attracting cross-border investment from non-aligned countries and establishing secure legal frameworks for participation in maritime projects.

Integration of maritime and security policies:

Ensuring close coordination between the economic development of free zones and the country's maritime capabilities in order to safeguard trade routes and strategic corridors.

Final remarks

In the face of policies based on pressure and threats, the only viable path toward restoring Iran's leading regional position lies in concentrating on resources that provide access to global connectivity and that resource is the sea.

Maritime-oriented development of free zones is not merely an economic initiative; it represents the reclamation of Iran's strategic position on the global map and a passage beyond imposed constraints through the waters of the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean.

Iran must transform its geographical geopolitics into enduring economic power.

Reconstruction of war-damaged units accelerated with special mechanisms

TEHRAN– The The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, referring to the damages inflicted on some industrial units of the country during the "Third Imposed War," said: The reconstruction process of damaged units must be pursued with greater speed, and achieving this goal requires coordination between the government and parliament to formulate and grant special authorities and mechanisms.

According to an IRNA report from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, Seyed Mohammad Atabak stated in a meeting with the representatives of Isfahan province in the parliament: Isfahan province, as the second most damaged province in terms of the extent of losses caused by the imposed war, has

suffered significant damage, and given the prominent industrial position of this province, the most important damage is attributed to the Mobarakeh Steel complex.

Referring to the continuous follow-up on the status of damaged units, he added: The reconstruction of these units requires a set of special authorities, supports, and laws so that the process of revival and return to the production cycle is carried out with greater speed and effectiveness.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, emphasizing the necessity of forming a headquarters for the reconstruction of damaged units, stated: From the very first days of the Third Imposed War, a special headquarter-

was formed in the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, and through continuous communication with the provinces, the supply status of basic goods and the needs of different regions of the country were monitored and tracked every three hours.

Stating that this action prevented shortages in the market, he noted: At that time, some consumer goods faced a severalfold increase in demand, but production units, by increasing work shifts and enhancing production capacity, managed to meet market demand.

Atabak, referring to the importance of stable supply of goods in the market, reminded: The shelves of shops being full is of strategic importance; because their emptiness does not mere-

ly mean a shortage of goods, but can pave the way for widespread consequences and turbulence in the market.

He added: With the cooperation of trade unions and producers, conditions were managed such that basic goods and household needs were supplied and distributed at a desirable level.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade continued: After the damage occurred, the country's conditions entered a new phase, and now some vital sectors require urgent and serious reconstruction. In this regard, two specialized headquarters have been formed for the reconstruction of the steel and petrochemical industries.

Knowledge-based firms to help repair war-damaged oil industry

TEHRAN– Increasing cooperation of knowledge-based companies for reconstructing damaged facilities and infrastructure of the oil industry in the third imposed war was reviewed during a joint meeting of the Vice President for Science and the Minister of Oil.

According to Shana, a joint meeting of Hossein Afshin, Vice President for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy, with Mohsen Paknejad, Minister of Oil, was held on Tuesday, May 19, at the ministry's premises.

Various areas of cooperation between the Vice Presidency for Science and the Ministry of Oil, aiming to utilize the capacity of knowl-

edge-based companies and the technology ecosystem for the reconstruction and recovery of damages caused by the third imposed war in the oil and petrochemical industries, were discussed and exchanged in this meeting.

The focus of the talks in this meeting was on identifying technological needs, prioritizing projects, and the direct role of modern technologies in restoring infrastructure and increasing the resilience of the energy sector.

Afshin presented his estimate and assessment of the level and volume of damages in the oil and petrochemical sectors during the

meeting and elaborated on points related to the condition of damaged areas in the provinces affected by the war. This presentation paved the way for greater synergy for operational decision-making and designing short-term and long-term cooperation paths.

Presenting a report from his provincial trips, he elaborated on the challenges and obstacles facing damaged companies in various provinces of the country and emphasized the need to pay attention to implementation issues and facilitation for the faster transfer of technological achievements to the field.

Inside the obsessive-compulsive loop of Trump's digital noise machine

Ghostwritten tirades, em-dashed bluster, and cartoonish AI fantasies reveal Trump's pathetic unraveling

From page 1 ▶ More dramatically, on December 1, 2025, the timeline erupted with nearly 160 updates in a single night, followed on January 5 by a surge of nearly 90 posts in an hour.

When the physical world grows quiet, the feed becomes a dumping ground for insomnia and rumination. Trump utilizes immediate algorithmic feedback for instant emotional relief, constructing a parallel universe where his authority remains absolute even when physical events refuse to obey his commands.

Statecraft is reduced to a live war-room megaphone, telegraphing profound instability.

Automation, aides, and the em-dash tell

A classic myth of Trumpism depends on the image of a lone warrior firing unfiltered, spontaneous thoughts directly from his smartphone to the masses. Yet the internal logistics of his digital operation expose this as a carefully engineered illusion.

At the center of this round-the-clock content mill is his executive assistant, Natalie Harp. Reportedly dubbed the "human printer" by insiders, she follows him relentlessly with a tablet and a portable wireless printer, ready to log verbal dictations, harvest right-wing memes, and print out immediate praise to satisfy his appetite for validation.

The seams of this ventriloquized franchise are laid bare through basic linguistic analysis. The most definitive stylistic tell is the sudden, omnipresent appearance of the em dash (—).

To understand just how manufactured this punctuation is, one only needs to examine Trump's authentic, self-authored archive from early 2010s.



His genuine historical writing was defined by short, punchy, and utterly raw thoughts, completely devoid of complex sentence mechanics.

Classic examples from this era, such as his famous 2012 observation, "I have never seen a thin person drinking Diet Coke," showcase a style that was brief, visceral, and structurally primitive.

The em dash requires an entirely different level of textual structure. Trump's actual speech patterns are notoriously associative, circular, and breathless, completely lacking this deliberate pacing.

More importantly, this polished punctuation pattern serves as a clear digital fingerprint of artificial intelligence.

The em dash is a notorious signature of modern Large Language Models (LLMs), which rely heavily on it to organize thoughts and construct clean, structurally balanced text. Its frequent appearance reveals an operational reality where Harp or other staffers are likely feeding raw, disjointed verbal rants into generative AI tools, prompting them to output text that artificially mimics the Trump Truth Social style.

Synthetic omnipotence and AI sandboxes

Lacking decisive real-world victories, especially in his war on Iran, Trump retreats into slopoganda, generative AI spectacle optimized for domestic consumption.

In May 2026 alone, Trump's use of AI imagery surged sevenfold. His timeline has become an archive of the surreal: himself rendered as an ancient king, a muscular Jedi, or a cosmic commander firing missiles from a spaceship.

Because the real world resists his dictates, Trump commands an algorithm to render a digital sandbox where his enemies are effortlessly vanquished.

In another instance, the moral rot was laid bare by a deleted February AI video depicting Barack Obama and Michelle Obama as apes, demonstrating that the synthetic facade partly rests upon primitive impulses.

The bluff cycle and rhetorical fatigue

Nowhere is this failure more glaring than in his erratic posts about Iran, which reflects deep strategic frustration.

Having failed to weaken Tehran's determination, Trump has

reduced the traditional role of commander-in-chief to a series of unpredictable, empty threats, ultimately validating the mocking moniker "TACO" (Trump Always Chickens Out).

In mid-May 2026, Trump issued an apocalyptic ultimatum, writing that Iran's "clock is ticking" and warning that "there won't be anything left of them". Yet, less than twenty-four hours later, he claimed he was pausing a strike to allow for negotiations.

By May 19, he announced he held off because the leaders of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE begged him for restraint, a claim promptly debunked by media reports, driving Trump to double down on his panicked rants accusing the media of "treason."

This loop mirrors his crude April declaration to "OPEN THE HORMUZ STRAIT, TAKE THE OIL," laced with profane threats such as: "Open the F***in' Strait, you crazy bastards, or you'll be living in Hell."

Ultimately, this hyper-vocal style has triggered a severe case of rhetorical inflation. In 2017, a single capitalized word inside a short Trump tweet possessed a visceral shock value.

Today, the endless capitalization and massive walls of text have dulled the effect. When everything is shouted, nothing is heard.

Nonetheless, Trump's Truth Social serves as an invaluable diagnostic window.

It lays bare a pathetic psyche consumed by its own insatiable need for performance, incapable of overcoming the strategic resolve of his enemies, and compelled to seek refuge in nocturnal rants and synthetic AI fantasies that substitute for real power.

Life in Gaza after the "Yellow Line"

From page 1 ▶ As international reporters continue to be barred from entering Gaza to hide the stories of IOF war crimes reaching the outside world, the demographic distribution of civilians in the Gaza Strip has changed radically after the Zionist regime's expanding "Yellow Line."

Areas that were once bustling with activity have turned into ghost towns, devoid of inhabitants, construction, and all signs of life, such as Rafah in the south of the Strip, Beit Lahiya, Beit Hanoun in the north, and the eastern zones of the Khan Younis and Gaza governorates.

Since the so-called ceasefire announcement in Gaza, Israeli Occupation Forces withdrew to what is now known as the "Yellow Line," which divides the Strip into two zones: an eastern area under Zionist military control, and a western area home to about two million Palestinians, akin to a concentration camp.

This is part of the agreement's first phase, with subsequent phases, if implemented, including a gradual IOF withdrawal and ending in a complete military pullout from the Strip.

When the agreement began, the Zionist occupation regime controlled about half of the Strip's 365 square kilometers. However, with the continuous shift of the "Yellow Line," the illegal occupation has now established its control in approximately 60% of Gaza's area. Simply approaching the "Yellow Line" has become a death sentence imposed by the IOF.

U.S. President Donald Trump's plan stipulates an IOF withdrawal in three phases:

First phase: Withdrawal to the "Yellow Line" immediately upon ceasefire, in exchange for Palestinian resistance forces releasing all living and deceased prisoners.

Second phase: Israel withdraws to the "Red Line," coinciding with the deployment of an "International Stabilization Force."

Third phase: Complete withdrawal from the Gaza Strip to a designated zone, a "buffer zone."

When the agreement took effect, the IOF withdrew to the "Yellow Line."

The occupation regime's behavior indicates that its plans aim to turn the area controlled by the IOF east of the Yellow Line into a tool for isolating Palestinian resistance forces and reshaping the enclave's future, reflecting Tel Aviv's historical tendency to turn temporary lines into permanently illegal borders.

The "Yellow Line" has become entrenched as a military line through the construction of military infrastructure along it, some fixed and some mobile.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported that the IOF has established new military positions along the line in recent months and carried out infrastructure work. It noted that satellite image analysis shows at least 32 IOF sites near the "Yellow Line" and adjacent areas, most built before the ceasefire, with the IOF later adding seven new sites along the line. At least five locations have paved roads suitable for long-term military activity, reinforcing the assessment that the Zionist regime is not managing a temporary deployment but building a sustainable position-



ing structure.

The investigation highlights the beginning of construction of barriers and ground obstacles along the "Yellow Line" exceeding 17 kilometers in length, about 40% of the total 45-kilometer line.

The reality imposed by Israel on post-Yellow Line Gaza means entrenching long-term IOF control, not only in the security dimension but extending to control over agricultural and industrial resources. This weakens Gaza's economic capacity, increases reliance on foreign aid, prevents the rebuilding of life and production infrastructure, economically strangles the Strip, and pushes its population toward forced migration by creating an unbearable economic and social reality.

The areas inside Gaza's "Yellow Line" under IOF control constitute about 60% of the arable land, which has been completely destroyed.

The Zionist regime believes that imposing the "Yellow Line" as a fait accompli is not a choice but a security necessity forced by its strategic failure on October 7, 2023.

It imagines that its permanent military control over about 60% of the Gaza Strip provides it with a geographic and temporal margin to counter future security threats in Gaza.

The so-called "Yellow Line" has become a new border structure that the regime's fascist government seeks to solidify inside Gaza.

If the current stalemate in the ceasefire agreement continues, and the first phase is not completed to pave the way for subsequent phases, the continued existence of the "Yellow Line" will become entrenched as a new political and military reality, one that Palestinians will not accept.

No one knows how Palestinian resistance forces will develop the tools and means to confront it without giving the occupation regime justifications to return to its full-blown genocidal war on Gaza. History shows that wherever there is occupation, there is resistance. The nature of this resistance to the IOF in response to the heinous war crimes committed against Palestinians is only a matter of time.

Persian Gulf war raises risk of environmental disaster



From page 1 ▶ He suggests "shared responsibility" to keep the strategic waterway safe for navigation, noting that the "future of the Strait of Hormuz depends not on military coercion but on diplomatic innovation."

The following is the text of the article:

The Strait of Hormuz has evolved from a regional maritime chokepoint into the central geopolitical fault line of the global economy. During the past several weeks, tensions between the United States, Israel, and Iran escalated sharply following military exchanges near the strait, U.S. naval operations connected to "Project Freedom", attacks on commercial shipping, and reciprocal accusations of ceasefire violations. Commercial traffic through the strait has been severely disrupted, oil prices have surged, and global shipping insurers have warned of systemic economic risks extending far beyond the Middle East.

Today, the issue of the Strait of Hormuz has become more consequential than the Iranian nuclear dispute itself. The nuclear issue had already been addressed diplomatically through United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a binding international framework. The unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018, followed by unlawful and unnecessary military attacks by the United States and Israel against Iran in violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, fundamentally undermined the agreement and transformed the Iranian nuclear issue from a multilateral diplomatic matter into a broader geopolitical confrontation between Iran and a coalition composed of the United States, Israel, and several U.S.-aligned Arab governments in the Persian Gulf.

Unlike the nuclear issue, however, instability in the Strait of Hormuz directly affects the entire global economy, including energy markets, supply chains, inflation, food security, and maritime commerce. Iran frames the Strait of Hormuz within the doctrine of self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. From Tehran's perspective, repeated military attacks by Iraq under Saddam Hussein during the 1980s, the extensive economic sanctions regime imposed by the United States, cyber operations, targeted assassinations, and the more recent Israeli and American military strikes in 2025 and 2026, have cumulatively imposed trillions of dollars in damage on Iran's infrastructure, economy, and national security. Iranian government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani said an early estimate indicates that Iran has suffered about \$270 billion in damages since the start of the U.S.-Israel war on February 28, 2026.

The United States and several European governments have argued that Iran cannot lawfully impose transit tolls or fees on vessels crossing the Strait of Hormuz because such a precedent could encourage other littoral states to impose similar charges in international straits. "Not only is this illegal, it's unacceptable. It's dangerous for the world, and it's important that the world have a plan to confront it," said the U.S. Secretary of State, Marco Rubio. Legally, the concern reflects the transit passage regime under Articles 37-44 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which protects freedom of navigation through international straits.

However, the comparison between Iran and other coastal states is fundamentally flawed. No other littoral state governing a strategic strait has experienced three major illegal military confrontations - Saddam Hussein's invasion, prolonged U.S. coercive policies, and direct Israeli-American military operations against its territory - while also bearing the primary burden of maintaining regional maritime security and environmental protection.

While Iran has never ratified the convention, however, under international law, Iran may not be legally entitled to impose unilateral tolls merely for innocent or transit passage. Nevertheless, several alternative legal and institutional mechanisms could provide a lawful framework for cost-sharing and compensation.

First, UNCLOS permits coastal states to recover costs for specific services rendered, including pilotage support, environmental protection, emergency rescue operations, anti-pollution measures, maritime traffic management, demining, and navigational safety systems. Iran could, therefore, lawfully establish specialized maritime service regimes tied to concrete operational services rather than simple passage itself.

Second, Article 43 of UNCLOS explicitly encourages burden-sharing agreements between user states and coastal states in international straits. This provision has remained largely underdeveloped globally. Iran could, therefore, advocate the establishment of a multilateral "Hormuz Maritime Security and Environmental Protection Fund" under United Nations or International Maritime Organization supervision. Such a mechanism would allow energy-importing states, shipping companies, insurers, and Persian Gulf energy exporters to contribute financially toward maintaining safe navigation, environmental protection, anti-piracy operations, and post-conflict reconstruction in the region. This approach would transform the debate from "illegal tolls" into lawful cooperative burden-sharing.

Third, Iran could invoke emerging principles within international environmental law and the law of state responsibility. The recent military confrontations in the Persian Gulf have significantly increased risks of environmental catastrophe, including oil spills, destruction of marine ecosystems, and contamination of fisheries and coastal infrastructure. Under the "polluter pays" principle and broader doctrines of state responsibility, states contributing to militarization and conflict in the strait may bear obligations toward remediation and reconstruction. Iran may, therefore, argue that states participating in military escalation should contribute financially to environmental protection and maritime stabilization efforts in the Strait of Hormuz.

Fourth, there is a historical imbalance in international compensation mechanisms that remains unresolved. Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the United Nations Compensation Commission established an international mechanism to process claims and compensation. Iran, despite suffering enormous destruction during Iraq's invasion of Iran initiated by Saddam Hussein in 1980, never received a comparable compensation framework. The absence of such mechanisms has contributed to long-term regional instability and mistrust between Iran and the Arab neighboring countries, which supported Saddam's invasion of Iran.

A future Hormuz framework could, therefore, integrate both maritime security financing and broader reconstruction arrangements connected to decades of regional conflict. The strategic reality is that the Strait of Hormuz can no longer be treated merely as a narrow legal issue of navigational rights. It has become a test case for whether international law can adapt to asymmetrical burdens imposed on regional states in periods of prolonged geopolitical confrontation. The existing framework places the overwhelming responsibility for securing one of the world's most vital energy corridors on the coastal states of Iran and Oman in the Hormuz Strait, while the economic benefits are distributed globally. Such an imbalance is politically unsustainable under conditions of war, sanctions, and repeated military escalation.

Ultimately, the future of the Strait of Hormuz depends not on military coercion but on diplomatic innovation. A durable solution requires de-escalation between Iran, the United States, and the international community, restoration of lawful diplomacy, and creation of a multilateral framework balancing freedom of navigation with equitable burden-sharing, environmental protection, and regional reconstruction. Without such a framework, the strait risks becoming a permanent epicenter of global economic instability. With it, however, Hormuz could evolve from a symbol of confrontation into a platform for cooperative security and international legal innovation.

Zagros Paleolithic Museum damaged by blast wave from recent US strikes



TEHRAN – The Zagros Paleolithic Museum in Kermanshah, the first specialized museum of its kind in the region, has sustained damage from a blast wave generated by recent US airstrikes on the city's historical center. The museum is housed within the historic Biglar Beigi Tekyeh (also known as Biglarbaigi), a Qajar-era Hosseinieh that is a recognized national heritage site.

The Biglar Beigi Tekyeh was originally built by Abdolkhan Farashbashi, nicknamed Biglarbaigi, a prominent official in Kermanshah. Construction of the building began between 1891 and 1897 in the old part of the city, near the Jameh Mosque. Fifteen years later, he added the Hosseinieh section to host religious mourning ceremonies. The Tekyeh is renowned for its unparalleled mirror work, brickwork, and architecture, making it one of Kermanshah's most beautiful buildings and a major visitor attraction. The main Hosseinieh hall features intricate mirror decorations, Qajar-era inscriptions, and ornate ceilings. A section of the Tekyeh also houses a calligraphy museum, which opened in 2004.

Established in 2007 by Paleolithic archaeologist Fereidoun Biglari of the National Museum of Iran, in collaboration with the Kermanshah Directorate of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the Zagros Paleolithic Museum is located within the same complex. As the region's first specialized Paleolithic museum, it features four galleries displaying stone tools dating from one million years ago to approximately 8,000 years ago, discovered at important sites such as Kashafrud, Darband Cave, Mar Tarik Cave, Ali Tappeh Cave, and Sarab and Asiab. The museum also houses Ice Age animal fossils from sites like Wezmeh Cave (dating to 20,000–70,000 years ago), a Neolithic human skull from Ali

Kosh, a full-scale Neanderthal model, and museum-quality replicas of Neanderthal and modern human skulls from well-known sites such as La Ferrassie in France and Tabun in Palestine. Visitors have consistently praised the museum as an extraordinary journey into deep history.

Due to its location within the blast-affected complex, the Zagros Paleolithic Museum has suffered indirect damage. Officials are now assessing the condition of the museum's interior exhibits, including its valuable and fragile Paleolithic fossils from the Zagros region.

Cultural heritage teams have initiated emergency measures, prioritizing the stabilization of the Tekyeh's shingle roof and the replacement of damaged windows to prevent further weather-related deterioration. Photos released by the Cultural Heritage Department show stark before-and-after images of the Tekyeh, highlighting the destruction of its intricate wooden frames and glasswork.

According to the Directorate of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of Kermanshah, total damage to historical sites in the province is estimated at over \$100,000. Emergency restoration efforts have been prioritized for a historic mosque and the Biglar Beigi Tekyeh. Damage to the Tekyeh includes broken Orosi windows, shattered glass, a destroyed shingle roof, and damage to its intricate mirror work and eaves.

A new exhibition titled "Standing in the Dust," featuring photographs of damaged cultural heritage sites across Iran, includes images of the recent damage to the Biglar Beigi Tekyeh. The exhibition was organized by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage at the National Museum of Iran in observance of Cultural Heritage Week.

European tourists shift travel plans closer to home amid West Asia conflict

TEHRAN – European tourists are increasingly choosing destinations closer to home as conflict in West Asia raises security concerns and drives up the cost of long-haul travel, affecting tourism flows across parts of Asia and the Middle East while benefiting southern European countries, industry officials and analysts said.

The outbreak of unrest at the end of February has led to a sharp decline in visitor numbers across several Middle Eastern destinations, according to tourism operators and official data, ISNA reported.

At Jordan's ancient city of Petra, foreign visitors are facing noticeably shorter queues as international arrivals decline amid regional instability.

In Tunisia, hoteliers also reported a slower-than-usual start to the summer tourism season.

"Normally we would receive around 100 new reservations a day, but now we are only getting about 50," Anouar Kamoun, manager of the Royal Garden Palace hotel on the Tunisian island of Djerba, told AFP.

Disruptions at airports and airspace restrictions in Persian Gulf countries, combined with higher airfares caused by rising

fuel prices, have also discouraged many Europeans from traveling to long-haul destinations in Southeast Asia.

According to Thailand's Ministry of Tourism, the country recorded a sharp drop in European arrivals in April, with the number of German tourists declining by 29% and Italian visitors falling by 44% compared with previous periods.

Germany-based TUI Group, the world's largest tour operator, last month lowered its profit forecast and warned of "traveler caution" linked to the conflict in the Middle East.

Tourism industry groups say Europe is expected to benefit from the shift in travel patterns as travelers increasingly favor destinations perceived as safer and more accessible.

The World Travel & Tourism Council said international visitor spending across Europe is expected to rise by 7.1% this year, outpacing global averages, as geopolitical uncertainty and disruptions elsewhere encourage travelers to remain closer to home.

Countries in southern Europe, particularly Italy and Spain, are forecast to gain the most from the change, according to reports cited by Economic Times.

Iran government pledges support for rural eco-lodges, village revival

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Iran's government will continue efforts to remove barriers to rural development and support operators of eco-lodges as part of a broader strategy to revive villages and strengthen local economies and cultural identity, senior officials said on Tuesday at a national conference marking eco-lodge day.

Speaking at the event in Tehran, Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri said the administration viewed rural tourism and eco-lodges as instruments for preserving Iranian identity, promoting social cohesion and revitalizing village life.

"The government stands alongside rural communities with all its capacity," Salehi-Amiri said, adding that President Masoud Pezeshkian had identified village revival and the strengthening of indigenous culture and local economies as national priorities.

Salehi-Amiri described eco-tourism not merely as the construction of accommodation facilities but as "a manifestation of Iranian cultural life" and a platform for rebuilding identity, ethics and social capital across the country.

He said Iran's cultural and historical diversity provided significant potential for the development of rural tourism, adding that the country possessed more than one million historical sites, including 43,000 nationally registered heritage sites and 29 UNESCO-listed locations.

"Iranian people have the right to look upon their culture, art, history, music and civilization with pride," he said.

The minister also linked cultural diversity to national unity, saying Iran's ethnic groups including Kurds, Baluch people, Arabs, Turkmens, Lors and Persians, all contributed to a shared national identity.

"Iran is a land of coexistence among ethnicities, languages and cultures," Salehi-Amiri said. "The diversity of music, clothing, rituals and dialects is not a factor of division but a valuable asset for strengthening national cohesion."

He said the migration of villagers to urban areas in recent decades had weakened traditional Iranian lifestyles and that eco-tourism could help reverse the trend by supporting local economies, preserving handicrafts and encouraging population retention in rural regions.

"The path to saving villages is targeted support for eco-tourism," he said. "Every village with an eco-lodge can become a center for preserving population, creating wealth, transmitting culture and



Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri speaks during a ceremony marking national eco-lodge day in Tehran, May 19, 2026.

strengthening national identity."

According to Salehi-Amiri, the government has prepared programs aimed at facilitating loans, easing licensing procedures and supporting employment in villages and small towns.

He also pointed to increased travel to rural areas during the Nowruz holidays, saying millions of travelers had visited villages and eco-lodges, reflecting growing public interest in experiencing what he described as "authentic Iranian life."

"When families stay in villages, they connect with local food, clothing, handicrafts, music and culture and carry those experiences back to cities," he said.

Salehi-Amiri called cultural integration and national cohesion the main outcomes of eco-tourism development, describing eco-lodges as "a national project for reproducing Iranian identity and strengthening social capital."

At the same conference, Vice President for Rural Development and Deprivation Reduction Abdolkarim Hosseinzadeh criticized approaches to development focused primarily on infrastructure and construction projects.

"For years, we moved forward with the assumption that development would be achieved solely through highways, construction projects and physical infrastructure," Hosseinzadeh said. "But development, before being a physical concept, is a political, social and cultural issue."

He said sustaining rural communities depended more on social hope and quality of life than on construction projects alone.

"What matters most today for the sustainability of villages is the feeling of hope and the desire to remain among local people," he said.

Hosseinzadeh argued that eco-tourism should move beyond a purely economic model toward what he called a "relationship economy" and an "economy of stay,"

where human interaction, lived experience and cultural exchange become part of economic value creation.

"In the current social conditions, if we fail to manage social relations properly, society will face social erosion," he said. "From this perspective, eco-lodges are not merely tourism businesses but capacities for strengthening social solidarity, rebuilding public trust and increasing social belonging."

He also called for redefining the government's approach to poverty reduction, saying "money and projects alone do not eliminate deprivation" and that sustainable development depended on empowering local communities and expanding public participation.

Addressing eco-lodge operators, Hosseinzadeh urged them to identify and document the real capacities of their provinces and villages and involve local residents as the main actors in development projects.

"Sustainable development is not possible without the presence and cooperation of local communities," he said.

Deputy Tourism Minister Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpey said support for eco-lodges had become one of the government's strategic priorities under the administration of President Pezeshkian.

He described rural tourism as one of the most sustainable segments of Iran's tourism industry and said the government had established a specialized rural tourism office to coordinate policies, simplify support mechanisms and strengthen local capacities.

"Eco-lodges are not merely accommodation centers," Mohseni-Bandpey said. "They are centers for preserving rural identity, indigenous lifestyles, rituals, traditions and Iran's historical memory."

He added that eco-lodges could help generate employment, distribute economic opportunities more

evenly and reduce excessive rural migration.

Mohseni-Bandpey said Iran's climate, cultural diversity and historical heritage made it one of the world's most capable countries in tourism development.

Yavari Abiri, head of the National Ecological Association, said the eco-lodge community could serve as a bridge between the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and the Vice Presidency for Rural Development, enabling a major transformation in rural tourism infrastructure through the integration of tourism and rural development funding.

Abiri said the slogan "One Village, One Ecological" provided the right direction for the development of rural tourism, adding that focusing on villages as tourism destinations was a valuable initiative. However, he stressed that the sector still required serious support and attention.

Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Zahra Behrouz-Azar said family-run businesses, including eco-lodges, played a critical role in economic sustainability and cultural preservation.

"In family businesses, social and emotional capital occupy a central place," Behrouz-Azar said. "Family reputation, professional authenticity and public trust are values that owners are unwilling to sacrifice even under difficult economic conditions."

She described eco-lodges as living centers for preserving and transmitting local languages, customs, cuisine and ways of life to future generations and international audiences.

"These operators are guardians of Iran's historical and civilizational identity," she said.

Meanwhile, presidential social affairs adviser Ali Rabiei said eco-tourism should not be viewed solely through an industrial or economic lens.

"The widespread public interest in eco-lodges reflects a growing tendency to return to natural living, simple human relations and local identities," Rabiei said.

He said modern society increasingly sought authentic and intimate human experiences amid the complexities of contemporary life.

"Eco-tourism is not merely a place for accommodation and rest," Rabiei said. "It is a cultural and social institution for reviving local identity, reproducing indigenous traditions and strengthening the connection of Iranian society with its historical and cultural roots."

The gathering was attended by hundreds of eco-lodge managers, tour guides, and ethic people and media personnel from across the country.

National, regional railway museums planned to preserve industrial heritage

TEHRAN – Iran's railway authority plans to establish five national and regional railway museums and expand rail tourism projects as part of efforts to preserve the country's industrial heritage, officials said on Tuesday.

According to the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, Chief Executive Jabbarali Zakeri said the railway network represented not only a transport infrastructure but also part of Iran's industrial and historical identity that should be preserved for future generations.

Speaking at the first "Rail-Nama" meeting, held to coincide with the anniversary of the establishment of Iran's first railway and tramway company in 1888 and the country's museum and cultural heritage day, Zakeri said several railway museums were being planned across the country under the slogan "Railways; Sustainable Development and Lasting Heritage."

The projects aim to preserve and display historical railway objects and documents for the public, he said.

Zakeri, who also serves as deputy roads and urban development minister, said authorities were also pursuing plans to develop rail tourism through the creation of tourism villages along railway routes and the launch of new tourist

train services in cooperation with private sector operators and passenger companies.

He said the expansion of rail tourism could help promote Iran's tourism potential while increasing the attractiveness of train travel.

During the event, a documentary titled "Rail-Nama" and a short film called "Smoke Machine" focusing on Iran's railway engineering heritage and the history of the national rail network were screened.

Officials also highlighted the recent national registration of the "Gar Machine" station on the Tehran-Rey railway line, considered the country's oldest railway station.

Vahid Aliqardashi, director of the UNESCO-listed Trans-Iranian Railway of Iran, announced plans to build the "National Museum of Iran's Trans-Iranian Railway" at Tehran railway station.

He said the project aimed to strengthen the culture of preserving Iran's "living industrial heritage" and outlined broader plans to protect and better introduce the railway network, which was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list in 2021.

Mohammad-Hossein Talebian, adviser to the minister of cultural heritage, tourism and

handicrafts, described the UNESCO registration of Iran's railway as the result of cooperation among state institutions and expressed hope that other historic railway lines could also gain national and international recognition.

At the end of the ceremony, Zakeri donated an old railway lantern, once used to guide trains, to the future national railway museum.

The Trans-Iranian Railway connects the Caspian Sea in the northeast with the Persian Gulf in the southwest crossing two mountain ranges as well as rivers, highlands, forests and plains, and four different climatic areas. Started in 1927 and completed in 1938, the 1,394-kilometre-long railway was designed and executed in a successful collaboration between the Iranian government and 43 construction contractors from many countries. The railway is notable for its scale and the engineering works it required to overcome steep routes and other difficulties. Its construction involved extensive mountain cutting in some areas, while the rugged terrain in others dictated the construction of 174 large bridges, 186 small bridges and 224 tunnels, including 11 spiral tunnels. Unlike most early railway projects, construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway was funded by national taxes to avoid foreign investment and control.

Minister urges WHA to condemn attacks on civilians, says health must remain a bridge for peace

From page 1 ▶ “Just a few days ago, a school in Minab (Hormozgan province) was struck. 168 students and their teachers were killed at their desks. They were not combatants; they were children with dreams.”

The official went on to say that the death toll, number of casualties, and destruction are horrifying.

A total of 376 children under the age of 18 are killed, and more than 33,000 civilians are injured; this is clear evidence of indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets. 63 hospitals and 195 other health infrastructures are damaged, and 27 medical staff are killed.

Let us recall the World Health Organization, the WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, says, “bombing a hospital or school is not a miscalculation. These are war crimes. Full stop.”

Let me be clear, the Pasteur Institute of Iran, the pillar of our country's health system for over 100 years, has been directly hit.

Attacking a school or hospital is attacking the future and the fundamentals of ethics.

Iran calls on this Assembly to condemn attacks on civilians and civilian health infrastructures.

Yet, despite all these attacks, our health system continues to function with pride. We will not be broken, and our national team of health stands with the people of Iran in any condition. Health can and must remain a bridge for peace.”

Meeting with counterparts

On the sidelines of the 79th WHA, Zafarqandi held meetings with his counterparts.

In separate meetings with Omani and Lebanese health ministers, Zafarqandi highlighted the need for boosting solidarity to confront any aggressions.



During the meeting, Hilal bin Ali Al Sabti, Omani Health Minister, voiced his country's readiness to enhance cooperation with Iran in the medical and pharmaceutical sectors. He welcomed the expansion of scientific exchanges and the development of advanced treatments in both countries.

For his part, Zafarqandi highlighted the capabilities of Iran's health system in providing health and medical services to Iranians in all fields, including advanced treatments such as organ transplants and cancer treatment.

The two sides proposed to form two scientific and economic working groups to pursue solutions to strengthen cooperation in the health sector.

The health minister also met Lebanese Minister of Public Health Rakan Nassereddine.

The officials discussed the impacts of the US-Israeli war against the two countries, condemned the illegal assaults, and highlighted the need for promoting solidarity among nations to confront aggressors, preserve peace, and establish stability in the region.

On Tuesday, Zafarqandi explored avenues to expand cooperation with his counterparts

from BRICS member states in different fields of the health sector.

Holding a meeting with the Indian Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Jagat Prakash Nadda, Zafarqandi highlighted the role of India in the pharmaceutical industry and emphasized the need for the enhancement of ties in the field of health.

Attacking a school or hospital is attacking the future and the fundamentals of ethics.

For his part, Prakash Nadda expounded on India's capacity in the health sector and announced the country's readiness to maintain and promote cooperation with Iran.

The two sides agreed to form a joint committee to follow up on the development of academic, medical, and pharmaceutical ties.

Also, Zafarqandi held meetings with his Russian, Brazilian, Chinese, South African, Egyptian, and Ethiopian counterparts, elaborating on the impacts of the

US-Israeli war on the country's civilian and health infrastructures, while discussing ways to enhance collaboration among the BRICS member states in the health sector.

The health minister also held a meeting with Mirjana Spoljaric Egger, the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ICRC).

During the meeting, Zafarqandi highlighted the recent war's impacts on healthcare facilities and medical centers, stressing that attacks on health infrastructures have severely damaged the health system and medical staff.

Referring to the destruction of the Pasteur Institute of Iran, he warned about the consequences and health risks.

The official said that since the beginning of the imposed war against Iran on February 28, medical staff, in cooperation with the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), emergency teams, and firefighters, were among the first to be present in the fields to provide medical services.

Lauding the ICRC for dispatching aid consignments to the country, Zafarqandi called for expanding humanitarian cooperation.

For her part, Spoljaric Egger censured the attacks on civilian and medical infrastructures, while commending the unprecedented operational capabilities of the health ministry and the IRCS, noting that the ICRC has nothing to add to strengthen the high capacity of the two organizations.

The official noted that the ICRC is exploring new avenues to raise funds and receive contributions from international donor states to address humanitarian needs.

China provides financial aid to help rebuild war-damaged houses in Iran

TEHRAN - The Chinese embassy in Tehran has provided financial assistance to help rebuild houses damaged during the US-Israeli attacks on residential areas in the country.

Chinese Ambassador Cong Peiwu delivered the \$17,500 donation to Morteza Bakhtiari, the head of the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, on Tuesday.

The Ambassador offered his condolences to the Iranian people, expressing regret over the losses and casualties caused by the US-Israeli war against the country.

As a partner of Iran, China has always supported the country in defending its national sovereignty, fairly promoting peace in the international arena, and has provided humanitarian assistance to the Iranian people, the envoy said, ISNA reported.

In April, the head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, Pirhossein Kolivand, lauded humanitarian aid from friendly countries to support Iran during the US-Israeli war, noting that their empathy reflects deep human, cultural, and historical bonds with the Iranian nation.

The first consignment of the Chinese Red Cross included five Toyota rescue vehicles, 20 motorcycles, and the second shipment involved a loader, a backhoe, a mini-loader (bobcat), and 5,000 blankets. The third aid shipment contained 11 bobcats, two cranes, a backhoe, and eight motorcycles.

Leader highlights role of population growth in national power

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei has called for increased efforts to promote the culture of childbearing, saying that the country's growth as a great and influential power is directly related to the growth of its population.

“Among the valuable achievements of the third Sacred Defense and the great blessing of the nation's unique uprising, which has become clear to everyone, is Iran's emergence as a great and influential power,” the Leader wrote in a message issued on the occasion of National Population Day, in response to a letter of condolence and affection from population activists following the martyrdom of his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

“Undoubtedly, the continuation of this situation and reaching a more desirable degree of it is di-

rectly related to the issue of population.”

The Leader said the need for population increase is sometimes viewed merely as a way to compensate for past policy shortcomings, Press TV reported.

“With the diligent pursuit of the correct and certain policy of population increase, the great Iranian nation will be able to experience great role-playing and strategic leaps in the future, and take long steps toward creating a new Islamic Iranian civilization.”

He said the late Leader placed a premium on the matter during meetings or correspondence with public and private audiences, and it remains one of the most important strategic matters of the Islamic establishment.

person Guo Jiakun said.

Civilians account for half of victims

An Iranian official said on April 26 that civilians comprised nearly half of those killed in the US-Israeli war on Iran, a grim reality that starkly contradicts President Donald Trump's repeated assertions that the conflict was intended to help the Iranian people and protect innocent lives.

Jamshid Nazmi, an advisor at Iran's Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs, put the death toll at 3,468. Speaking at a press conference, he said 1,460 of the victims — around 45 percent — have been identified as civilians.

The United States and Israel launched a joint war on Iran on February 28. The conflict lasted nearly 40 days. During the war, not only military sites but also hospitals, schools, energy facilities, and development infrastructure were targeted across the country.

On the first day of the war, a US Tomahawk missile struck a school in the southern Iranian city of Minab in Hormuzgan Province. Nearly 170 people, most of them schoolchildren, lost their lives in the attack on Shajarah Tayyebah School.

On April 9, Ebrahim Taheri, the general prosecutor in Minab, said 120 students were killed in the strike — 73 boys and 47 girls. Among the other victims were 26 teachers, all women — one of them six months pregnant — as well as seven parents, a school bus driver.

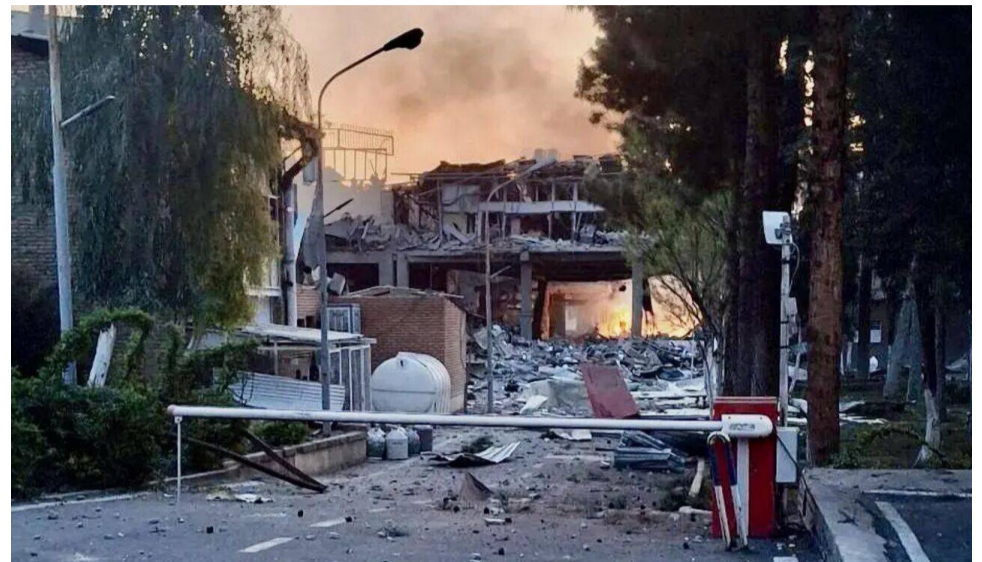
The Leader praised grassroots activists in the field of population and urged them to continue their efforts.

“The increasing efforts of popular activists in the field of population and the promotion of childbearing culture can have a significant impact on securing this bright future,” he wrote.

The National Population Day is observed on May 19 to mark the date the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, announced general policies on population as per the Constitution.

Underscoring the significant role of the population in national authority, the general population policies were announced to compensate for the decrease in population growth and fertility rate over the past years.

Scholars urge ‘full restoration’ of Pasteur Institute of Iran hit by US-Israeli strikes



TEHRAN – Prominent Iranian and foreign scholars have called on global health communities to deploy their full capacity to protect health-care infrastructures and to foster the full restoration of the Pasteur Institute of Iran's essential laboratory and its diagnostic, surveillance, and vaccine capabilities, which were damaged during the US-Israeli strikes against the country's scientific facilities.

“We urgently call on the international health communities to deploy their full capacity to protect health-care infrastructures and to foster the full restoration of the Pasteur Institute of Iran's essential laboratory and its diagnostic, surveillance, and vaccine capabilities. This is not solely a national issue; regional health security is also at risk,” they wrote in an article published in *The Lancet* – one of the most prestigious peer-reviewed publications among international general medical journals – on May 16.

The article's authors, namely Mahmoud Reza Pourkarim, Mohammad Barzegar, Philippe Lemey, Simon Dellicour, and Marc Van Ranst, said: “The Pasteur Institute of Iran sustained considerable damage from a series of airstrikes in late March 2026.

This historically important medical institution, founded 106 years ago, has played a key role in combating various human pathogens in the region and has responded to numerous epidemics and pandemics in its history.

The Pasteur Institute of Iran houses reference laboratories, departments of vaccine research and production, pathogen surveillance, and outbreak response teams.

WHO confirmed that, following the damage caused by the airstrikes, the institute was no longer functional and could no longer deliver health services.

These attacks occurred after years of sanctions had already left Iran's public health system in a precarious condition.

In 2018, we raised concerns in *The Lancet* that US sanctions were jeopardising Iran's viral hepatitis elimination programme. This programme depends on locally developed and produced vaccines and essential imported medicines.

Amid the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, Iran suffered multiple epidemic waves while sanctions constrained access to genomic surveillance facilities and other resources crucial to the Pasteur Institute's preparedness and response.

The current destruction poses a fundamentally new threat: not simply disruption, but the possible loss of a cornerstone public health institution.

The Pasteur Institute of Iran has been a pillar of the country's public health system for more than a century. This institute has provided key public health infrastructure on multiple fronts, including vaccine development and production, national reference laboratory services, diagnostics, and genomic surveillance for infectious diseases, including SARS-CoV-2, cholera, rabies, measles, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and viral hepatitis.

The loss of the institute is not merely symbolic; it represents a real, immediate, and dangerous threat to public health.

Reports from our Iranian collaborators indicate that, fortunately, none were physically harmed. However, crucial reference laboratories, including those for genomic surveillance, rabies, HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, and vector-borne diseases, were completely lost.

Consequently, without these crucial facilities, seasonal and regional outbreaks might not receive timely and effective public health responses.

We urgently call on the international health communities to deploy their full capacity to protect health-care infrastructures and to foster the full restoration of the Pasteur Institute of Iran's essential laboratory and its diagnostic, surveillance, and vaccine capabilities. This is not solely a national issue; regional health security is also at risk.”

In April, four prominent Iranian scholars severely criticized what they described as ‘the systematic degradation of the Iranian health-care system’ by military actions carried out by the United States and Israel against the country.

“The military campaign initiated on Feb 28, 2026, by the USA and Israel against Iran has rapidly evolved into a regional conflagration with catastrophic health consequences for Iran as well as for the region,” Iraj Sobhani, Ali Keshavarz, Asghar Rastegar, and Mohsen Shahmanesh have said in an article in *The Lancet*.

The sheer ferocity and duration of the strikes have led to the violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the foreseeable collapse of civilian life-sustaining systems for Iranian citizens, they added.

Although the immediate human toll is staggering—at least 3636 people, including around 1700 civilians, had been killed as of April 7, 2026—the systematic degradation of the Iranian health-care system, which was already compromised under medical and economic sanctions, represents a profound violation of IHL and a long-term threat to population health.

As of March 27, 2026, data compiled from WHO, the Iranian Red Crescent, and national health agencies reveal a targeted erosion of medical neutrality. A total of 292 medical and relief centres, including hospitals, pharmacies, and primary health clinics, have been damaged or destroyed.

The assault on health care is not merely incidental but systemic. Under the Geneva Conventions and the UN Charter, medical personnel and facilities must be protected at all times unless used for military purposes. Yet, verified reports indicate US-Israeli attacks on health facilities and the killing of at least eight health-care workers, doctors, nurses, and emergency first responders in Iran.

The protection of civilians extends to those who try to help them, including medical staff, humanitarian and relief organizations that are providing essential goods such as food, clothing, and medical supplies. Parties to a conflict should not violate the law.

Medical units, hospitals, rehabilitation institutions, and humanitarian facilities enjoy special protection. Parties to a conflict are under a binding obligation to respect the fundamental principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution.

Four Geneva Conventions were later strengthened by Additional Protocol I of 1977, which requires the absolute distinction between civilians and combatants. But, as ever, civilians, particularly women, children, and displaced people, are suffering the brunt of war.

However, the United States and Israel forces have been launching violent attacks on Iran, targeting residential areas, and bombarding health, educational, and sports infrastructures.

Their violation of international humanitarian law has been confirmed and condemned by many individuals, media, and international organizations worldwide.

HIGHLIGHT: The Pasteur Institute of Iran has been a pillar of the country's public health system for more than a century.



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**
Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 43051505
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430



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

MAY 21, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

One who says unpleasant things about others, will himself quickly become a target of their scandal.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:27 Dawn: 03:14 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 04:54 (tomorrow)

Tehran Symphony Orchestra to perform "From Beyond Borders"

TEHRAN – The Tehran Symphony Orchestra's first performance in the new Iranian year will be held under the baton of a guest conductor on Thursday evening at Vahdat Hall in Tehran.

Titled "From Beyond Borders," the concert will have Omid Mehrabi as the conductor, following the new approach and in line with the new policies of the Artistic Council, which seeks to give opportunities to young conductors and is set to mark a new chapter in the activities of this orchestra, ISNA reported.

The concert will feature works by prominent composers from around the world and Iran, including the German composer Ludwig van Beethoven, Russian composers Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and Alexander Borodin, Soviet composer Fikret Amirov, Italian composer Pietro Mascagni, Czech composer Bedřich Smetana, and Iranian composer Heshmat Sanjari.

Each of the works represents a part of the

world's classical music heritage and, together, will create a diverse and magnificent atmosphere for the audience.

The title "From Beyond Borders" also emphasizes this international perspective and cultural dialogue through music. The performance aims to take the audience on a journey across cultures, styles, and musical narratives, transcending geographical boundaries.

The Tehran Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1933, is Iran's oldest and largest symphony orchestra. It was founded as the Municipality Symphony Orchestra by Gholamhossein Minbashian, before entering its modern form under Parviz Mahmood in 1946.

In the years that followed, conductors such as Rubik (Ruben) Gregorian, Morteza Hannaneh, Haymo Taeuber, Heshmat Sanjari, Farhad Meshkat, and Fereydoon Nasserri took over as the conductors of the orchestra.

Palestinian women artists paint rock at Gaza port in support of Global Sumud Flotilla

Palestinian women artists paint on a rock at the port in support of the Global Sumud Flotilla, which has been targeted by Israeli attacks in Gaza City, Gaza, Palestine, on May 18, 2026. The artwork depicts a ship moving through waves and carrying the colors of the Palestinian flag, conveying a message of support for the flotilla that set out to break the blockade and for global solidarity movements calling for its end.

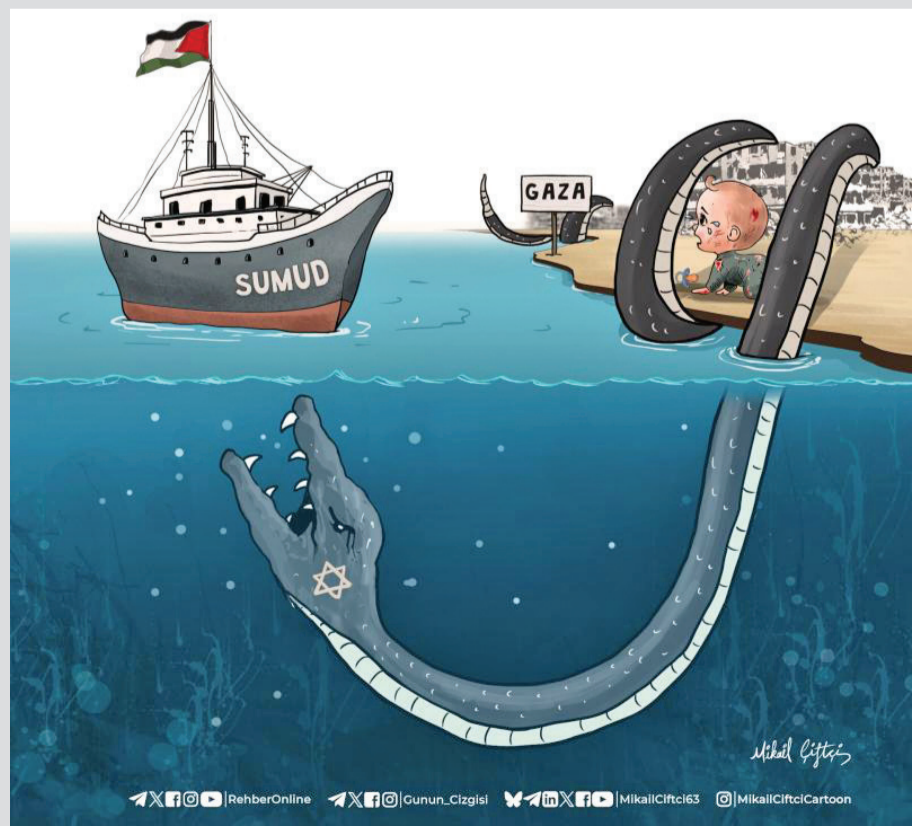
The rock painting serves as a symbol of Palestinian solidarity with the humanitarian mission, which has faced Israeli naval attacks in international waters. The image of a ship bearing the

Palestinian flag represents the ongoing struggle against Israel's 17-year blockade of Gaza.

Israeli forces have seized more than 40 of the 54 vessels from the Global Sumud Flotilla and detained around 300 activists. The flotilla, carrying humanitarian aid, was attacked in international waters as it sought to draw attention to Gaza's humanitarian catastrophe.

Ten countries, including Türkiye, Pakistan, and Spain, have condemned Israel's attacks on the flotilla. Palestinian artists continue to express solidarity through visual art, reinforcing the message that the blockade must end.

Cartoon of Day



Global Sumud Flotilla
Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Turkey

Two Iranian short films to compete in 54th Huesca International Film Festival in Spain

TEHRAN – Two Iranian short films will take part in the 54th Huesca International Film Festival, which will be held from June 5 to 13 in Huesca, Spain.

"Besieged" directed by Kiarash Ardeshirpour and "Melatonin" by Hannaneh Daliri are the two films from Iran, competing in the International Short Film Contest section of the festival with 14 other short films, ILNA reported.

A 2025 production, "Besieged" is a 16-minute fiction about an oppressed mother in Tehran, who devises a staged plan to escape. At the very last moment, her secret plan for freedom turns into a nightmare as her little girl goes missing after school. Trapped where her lies began, she must live it all again: this time, her desperate lie has become reality.

Co-written by Ardeshirpour and Majid Barzegar and produced by Rainy Pictures, the film has Sonia Sanjari in the cast.

Kiarash Ardeshirpour, 33, is an Iranian screenwriter and filmmaker based in Tehran. After leaving a software engineering program to pursue acting, he transitioned into cinema, gradually discovering his voice through screenwriting and directing. He later earned a Bachelor's degree in Film Editing from Tehran University of Applied Science and Technology in 2023.

Produced in 2026, "Melatonin" is a 13-minute fiction about Ali,



a 14-year-old boy from southern Tehran, who works in a repair shop to support his family. After a period of detention, he discovers that his 9-year-old brother, Milad, has taken his place, a place that reminds Ali of hidden trauma. When he realizes Milad has also become a victim, Ali is forced to find a way forward between silence, the collapse of his family, and standing up against injustice.

Daliri has also written the script for the film, the cast of which in-

cludes Nazanin Keyvani, Mohammad Asgari, Abolfazl Khanpour, and Ayan Yarbeygi.

Hannaneh Daliri is an independent Iranian filmmaker, writer, and director. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Visual Arts in 2022, along with degrees in Economics and a Master's in Business Administration from Islamic Azad University. In 2018, she completed directing and performance training at a private institute.

Established in 1973, Huesca In-

ternational Film Festival is a festival in the Spanish city of Huesca, province of Aragon. The event is dedicated to short meter films.

The Huesca International Film Festival is supported by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which recognizes it as a pre-selection festival for the Oscars in the category of "Best Live Action Short Film." It is also recognized by the Spanish Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for the Goya Awards.

"For Iran" exhibition, workshop support artists amidst war's impact

TEHRAN – "For Iran" group exhibition is currently hosting art enthusiasts at the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF), serving as a vital platform to support visual artists whose livelihoods have been strained by the recent Ramadan War.

The 10-day event, which opened on Monday, spans all major galleries of the forum, including Bahar, Tabestan, Paez, Zemestan, Mirmiran, Momayyez, and Nami, ISNA reported.

Featuring over 300 diverse artworks, the initiative aims to provide both spiritual encouragement and financial relief to the creative community, with all sales proceeds going directly to the participating artists.

A highlight of the event is a series of specialized calligraphic painting workshops. The first session was held on Monday evening, featuring artists Kiarash Yaqobi, Peyman Peyravi, Abbas Seifabadi, and Anita Ashrafi, who engaged in live demonstrations and face-to-face dialogues with visitors.

Two more sessions are scheduled to follow. On Thursday evening, Gholamhossein Altafi, Parisa Darabi, and Mojdeh Mirpanj will host students and enthusiasts. The final workshop will take place on Friday with a lineup including Hossein Norouzi, Behrouz Kiani, Allahyar Khoshbakhti, Barbod Yazdani, and Rouhollah Hosseinzadeh.

The organizers, the Institute for the Development of Culture and Art, emphasized that supporting creators is an urgent necessity in these times. "Creativity must continue even when the cost of art supplies, like the cost of bread, has soared due to the war," they noted.

The exhibition remains open until May 23. The upcoming workshops are free and open to the public at the IAF premises on Iranshahr Street, offering a rare opportunity for students to learn from contemporary masters without prior registration.

Afshin Hashemi to stage "Female Monologues Based on the Alphabet" in California

TEHRAN – Renowned Iranian director and actor Afshin Hashemi is set to stage his acclaimed production, "Female Monologues Based on the Alphabet," in Oakland, California, featuring a cast of Iranian actors residing in the United States.

Hashemi, who is currently in the US for a cultural project, will bring the play to the stage at the Oakland University of Fine Arts on May 30 and 31, and June 6 and 7, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

The production consists of 32 distinct monologues that narrate the stories of Iranian women from various eras—spanning the

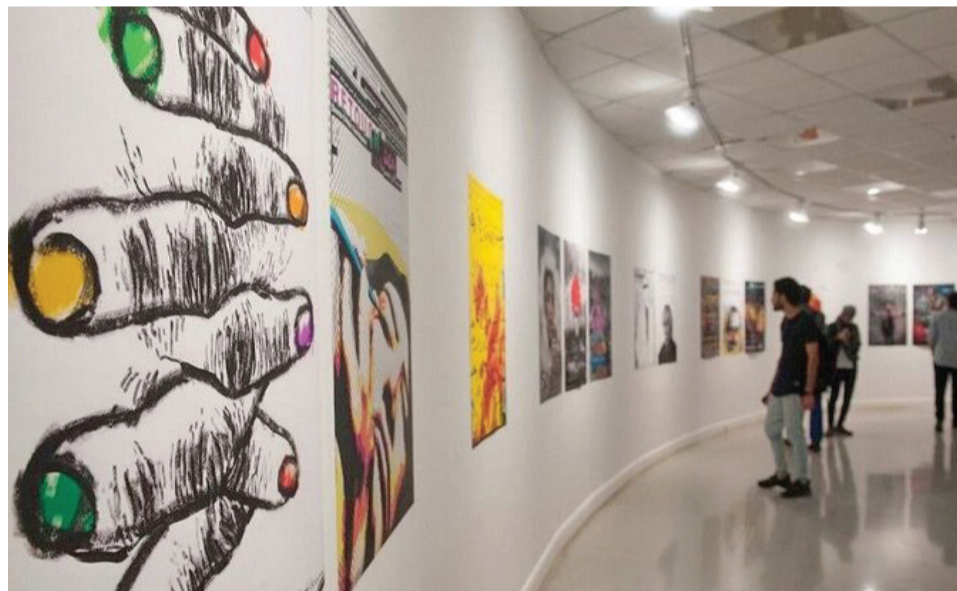
past and present. Each monologue is uniquely centered on a specific letter of the Persian alphabet, making extensive use of colloquial language, idioms, and traditional proverbs.

The play was born out of the COVID-19 pandemic when traditional theaters were closed. It initially gained widespread popularity through a series of digital performances by actress Mona Farjad on social media from April 2021 to May 2022. The innovative project was later honored by the Iranian House of Theater's Actors Guild, which presented awards to both Hashemi and Farjad for their

cultural contribution during the lockdown era.

Hashemi had originally intended to stage the play in Tehran at the Iranshahr Theater Hall this past April. However, due to the current regional conflict and the prevailing war conditions, the Tehran performance was postponed. In the interim, Hashemi decided to organize the California run with the Iranian expatriate artistic community.

The director has stated that he plans to return to Iran to stage "Female Monologues" for domestic audiences as soon as conditions permit.



Beyond the crumbling walls of galleries, the war has exacted a grueling toll on the artists themselves, many of whom have seen their livelihoods vanish overnight. The economic blockade and the soaring costs of essential supplies have made professional tools—such as imported pigments, canvases, and brushes—as prohibitively expensive as basic necessities, effectively stalling the work of a generation.

Numerous members of the artistic community have been displaced or have suffered personal losses, yet they continue to create amidst the ruins, using their craft as a form of spiritual resistance. Despite the immense pressure, the resilience of Iran's creators remains steadfast, though the damage to the nation's artistic infrastructure and the loss of private collections will require a monumental effort of reconstruction in the post-war era.



Salvage Day 20th
Saturday, June 27th
Sunday, June 28th
Oakland University of Fine Arts
Oakland, CA 94612
Tickets: www.oufa.com/448285