

Op-ed **T** “Cult of Death”? Check your calling card, Mr. Rubio

By Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN — US Secretary of State Marco Rubio addressed Iran in parts of his Wednesday evening speech at the Acropolis in Athens. Taken as a whole, his speech was a selective reading of history; a flimsy version of Samuel Huntington's “Clash of Civilizations.” When the argument is flimsy, a theatrical stage must inevitably be built out of historical symbols. The audience is meant to be impressed by the backdrop, not by the force of the reasoning.

The same logic applies to the war. When a war is launched without careful calculation, on the basis of impulsive, gut-feel decisions, a civilizational and historical veneer must later be tailored to justify it. Rubio's colleague, US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, has gone even further, seeking to legitimize the same action with religious and evangelical language.

I do not intend here to critique every aspect of Rubio's speech. Other observers have, to some extent, already done so, particularly from a historical perspective. What is striking to me is where Rubio called the Islamic Republic of Iran a “cult of death.”

The phrase reminded me of George W. Bush's “axis of evil” after September 11. The pattern is the same: manufacturing a label to evade accountability. Most of the perpetrators of those attacks were Saudi nationals, and no documented link to Iran was ever proven, yet the then-US president chose to point the finger at Iran. Twenty-five years later, the victims' families remain aggrieved by Riyadh's lack of accountability and by the appeasement of the matter by US administrations — Republican and Democratic alike. ▶Page 3

Trump loses Nobel again as jurist behind Gaza genocide findings takes prize

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Donald Trump has repeatedly shown his desperation to obtain the Nobel Peace Prize, but the Norwegian Nobel Committee handed it to the legal investigator who exposed Israeli genocide in Gaza.

On Friday, October 9, the committee announced that it awarded the 2026 prize to Navanethem “Navi” Pillay, the 85-year-old South African jurist who led the United Nations commission documenting systemic war crimes by Israel against Palestinians.

The decision amounts to a direct rebuke to the American president, who spent months insisting that passing him over would discredit the committee. ▶Page 5

Saudi Arabia will never break Yemen's resistance: Ansarallah leader

TEHRAN — Speaking on the tenth anniversary of the Saudi airstrike on Sanaa's Great Hall, Ansarallah leader Sayyed Abdul-Malik al-Houthi declared Thursday that Riyadh's decade-long war to subjugate Yemen has collapsed into a strategic failure.

The October 2016 massacre, which left roughly 1,000 mourners dead or wounded inside a crowded funeral hall, remains a stark monument to Saudi war crimes carried out with direct American support.

The Ansarallah leader emphasized that every governorate across Yemen has suffered identical atrocities, with civilian homes, markets, and schools systematically targeted in a failed effort to force submission.

Al-Houthi dismantled the Saudi monarchy's religious posturing, arguing that its claim to guard Islam's holiest sanctuaries rings hollow. ▶Page 5



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Pezeshkian Calls for Regional Integration, Multipolar Cooperation at Turkmenistan Summits

The Iranian president called for greater attention to implementing agreements, arguing that summit declarations would have little value without concrete action

TEHRAN— Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for deeper regional integration, stronger economic and transport connectivity, and closer cooperation among neighboring countries, proposing a new “CIS+1” framework to expand Iran's engagement with members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Addressing the CIS leaders' summit in Turkmenistan on Friday, Pezeshkian emphasized that regional security, economic development and political stability are inseparable, arguing that countries must strengthen their collective capabilities rather than allow external pressures and geopolitical rivalries to undermine cooperation.

His remarks came as he attended two major regional gatherings in Turkmenistan: the CIS leaders' summit and an extraordinary

summit of Caspian Sea littoral states focused on environmental challenges. On the sidelines, the Iranian president held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Secretary General Nurlan Yermekbayev, and Turkmen President Serdar Berdimuhamedov.

Across his speeches and bilateral meetings, Pezeshkian emphasized a common set of priorities: expanding trade and transit links, accelerating joint projects, safe-

guarding the Caspian Sea, strengthening ties with neighboring countries and advancing a multilateral international order based on dialogue, sovereignty and mutual respect.

‘CIS+1’ framework to strengthen regional connectivity

Pezeshkian described the CIS summit as an opportunity to reinforce existing relationships and open a new chapter in regional cooperation, thanking Turkmenistan for inviting Iran as the gathering's first special guest.

He proposed establishing a “CIS+1” format to provide a structured framework for cooperation between Iran and CIS member states in trade, energy, transportation, investment, mining, technology, tourism, water management, environmental protection, and scientific and cultural exchanges. ▶Page 3

Iran's leader praises police as a ‘key pillar of national security’

TEHRAN— Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei has praised the courage, sacrifices and steadfastness of Iran's police personnel, describing the force as a key pillar of national security and highlighting its role in maintaining public order during the US-Israeli attacks on the country.

In a message marking National Police Week, the Leader, who also serves as commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, stressed that security is among God's greatest blessings and credited police personnel with helping preserve it across Iran, from major urban centers and remote villages to the country's borders and diverse geographical regions. ▶Page 2

New horizons open for Iran-Afghanistan economic co-op during Iran's trade delegation's trip to Kabul

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- During the trip of a trade delegation from the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), led by Ghadir Qiyafteh, Vice President of the Chamber, to Kabul, the capacities for Iran-Afghanistan cooperation in mining and mineral industries, agriculture and conversion industries, technology transfer, and the creation of production and processing chains were examined. ▶Page 4

Israel kills or wounds a Palestinian in Gaza every 90 minutes under sham ‘ceasefire’

TEHRAN — Israeli forces have killed or wounded a Palestinian in Gaza every 90 minutes on average since last October's ceasefire declaration, according to humanitarian charity Islamic Relief.

The UK-based organization recorded 1,454 Palestinians killed and over 5,000 injured in ongoing strikes, including 320 children. Gaza's Health Ministry confirmed matching numbers, raising the total death toll from the genocidal war past 74,250, as of October 8, 2026.

Independent observers contend that no real ceasefire exists in Gaza as American-supplied munitions continue striking crowded displacement camps.

Israel has weaponized the “Yellow Line” buffer zone to seize 65 percent of the territory. This expansion crams nearly 2.1 million residents into remaining areas while Israeli authorities systematically block vital medical evacuations, shelter supplies, and essential fuel across the besieged enclave.

The illusion of control in Washington's Iran gamble

By Syeda Farheen Naqi Mossavi

TEHRAN — Gore Vidal's famous observation that the United States is a nation of amnesia, learning nothing because it remembers nothing, was never merely a witty aside. It was a prophecy dressed as satire. Washington has spent decades proving him right.

Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya each arrived with their own vocabulary of justification, carefully packaged as liberation, security or necessity. Now American power may move toward Iran again, while Yemen may become another front in a conflict Washington claims it can manage. The pattern is familiar: military superiority creates confidence at the beginning, while political control proves far more elusive afterward. ▶Page 5

Minab marks World Children's Day in memory of martyred students

A ceremony marking World Children's Day was held in Minab on Thursday evening, October 8, bringing together members of the public, students, children, and families of those killed in a US missile attack on Shajareh Tayyebbeh School.

On February 28, Shajareh Tayyebbeh Primary School was struck during the opening hours of the war. The attack killed more than 150 people, including about 120 children. The school was hit while classes were underway, turning a place intended for learning and safety into the site of one of the deadliest attacks on civilians.



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TEHRAN PAPERS

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

The threat of war is removed through military strength, not negotiations

In an interview with Kayhan, Mohammad Sadegh Koushki, a faculty member at the University of Tehran, discussed Iran's future approach. He stated that the only factor capable of keeping war away from the country is military and defensive power, supported by a strong national will. There is no alternative to strength when it comes to eliminating the threat of war. Even Iran's adversaries are not seeking negotiations. American officials now openly declare that they have little interest in negotiations. Nevertheless, some pro-Western groups within Iran continue to advocate dialogue. In his view, this reflects the intellectual stagnation of the pro-Western political current, and given the current circumstances, the debate over negotiations no longer merits serious consideration. If the opposing side is unwilling to negotiate, domestic advocates of talks should also stop promoting them.

Iran: Creating opportunities for cooperation in Central Asia

The Iran newspaper examined President Pezeshkian's visit to Turkmenistan to participate in the Caspian Environmental Summit. His trip to the Turkmen city of Awaza comes at the intersection of two distinct yet interconnected tracks of regional cooperation. The first track concerns environmental protection in the Caspian Sea and addressing the ecological challenges facing this shared body of water. The second centers on the summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), where discussions expand beyond environmental and natural resource issues to encompass political, security, economic, energy, and transit relations across a region that extends well beyond the borders of the five Caspian littoral states. From this perspective, although the two meetings appear to have different agendas, both ultimately return to a common theme: the need to redefine mechanisms for cooperation among countries whose interests and security are shaped by the interconnected geography surrounding Iran.

Etemad: Iran's neighborhood policy in a tense regional environment

Etemad evaluated Iran's neighborhood policy amid the current period of regional tension. Developments in neighboring countries over recent months present a clear geopolitical paradox. While Tehran seeks to transform its neighborhood into a source of security and economic opportunity, recent events and the actions of neighboring states suggest that a realistic reassessment of Iran's neighborhood policy has become necessary. Traditional and ideological ties cannot substitute for states' strategic interests. Therefore, the unique calculations and priorities of each neighboring country should form the basis of Iranian foreign policy planning. According to the paper, Iran's

neighbors constitute a diverse and complex front. Through active bilateral diplomacy, Tehran should seek to prevent these various strategies and alignments from converging into a unified containment framework directed against Iran.

Jam-e-Jam: The region would become involved if the war is resumed

Jam-e-Jam discussed the possibility of a future conflict between Iran and the United States developing into a broader regional war. The newspaper argued that any new conflict would not be limited to Iran, the United States, and Israel alone. According to the analysis, while Iran constituted one side in the most recent confrontation, the opposing side effectively included a coalition of states. Therefore, it would be natural for Iran to organize its defense and military operations in response to that wider grouping. The article further said that several regional countries provided varying forms of support to the United States and Israel against Iran. Even if some governments did not publicly adopt explicit political or media positions, the discussion suggested that practical assistance, including logistical facilities, fuel supplies, and operational support, had been made available. As a result, if another conflict breaks out, the scope of hostilities may not remain confined within Iran's borders. Rather, a broader range of regional actors and states could become part of military calculations, depending on the degree of support they provide to US and Israeli operations.

Donya-e-Eqtesad: The military doctrine of war

Donya-e-Eqtesad addressed Iran's operational military doctrine. The newspaper argued that, from the standpoint of operational strategy, Iran's objective was not primarily to inflict a decisive military defeat on the US military. Instead, its aim was to wage a war of attrition that would prevent Washington from achieving its goals quickly and at minimal cost. According to the article, by prolonging the conflict and raising the marginal costs of war for its opponents, Iran sought to preserve its remaining leverage and improve its position for any future negotiations. The analysis emphasized the importance of distinguishing between military damage and political surrender. The failure of the United States to achieve all of its objectives, it argued, demonstrates the limits of coercive deterrence in breaking an adversary's will. The article concluded that as long as both sides perceive compromise and the cessation of hostilities as tantamount to their own total defeat, military superiority alone can merely expand the "geography of destruction" without necessarily achieving the ultimate political objectives sought by either side.

Iran lodges formal complaint over German lawmaker's remarks at IPU assembly

TEHRAN— Manouchehr Mottaki, head of the Executive Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), has lodged a formal protest against remarks made by a German parliamentarian about Iran during the 153rd IPU Assembly in Tanzania, arguing that the comments violated the assembly's rules of procedure.

Speaking at the assembly on Thursday, Mottaki objected to the German lawmaker's remarks and said Iran's parliamentary delegation had formally submitted a complaint to the IPU president.

According to Mottaki, the incident raised questions about whether the German parliamentarian's comments were consistent with the objectives of the Israeli regime.

The Iranian official also criticized Germany's approach to Israel, stressing that the Iranian nation would not remain silent in the face of the regime's crimes.

Referring to the Iranian martyrs, including the late Leader of the Islamic Revolution,

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Mottaki said the Iranian people would not forget those who had lost their lives.

He emphasized that those responsible for the crimes cited by Iran must be held accountable, underscoring Tehran's insistence on justice for the victims.

The Iranian delegation's complaint places the dispute within the broader debate over the conduct of parliamentary diplomacy and adherence to the rules governing international assemblies. Mottaki's objection underscored Iran's position that parliamentary forums should operate in accordance with established procedures and should not be used to advance politically motivated accusations.

The 153rd IPU Assembly brought together parliamentary delegations from around the world in Tanzania, providing a platform for dialogue on international issues and relations among national legislatures.

Iran's leader praises police as a 'key pillar of national security'

From page 1 ► He said the force's demanding responsibilities, often carried out under harsh weather conditions and across challenging terrain, underpin the security necessary for public welfare and social well-being.

Police steadfastness during wartime

Ayatollah Khamenei said the contribution of the police had become increasingly evident in recent years, particularly during the 'Second and Third Imposed Wars.'

He pointed to attacks targeting the police at multiple levels, from senior commanders to frontline personnel, as evidence of the institution's importance to Iran's security and social order.

Despite these attacks, he said, police personnel had remained steadfast in carrying out their duties, continuing their work even in streets and vehicles when circumstances prevented them from operating from their usual stations and posts.

The Leader described their persistence as a testament to their commitment to protect-



ing the country and maintaining public security in exceptionally difficult conditions.

He also characterized service in the field of security as a form of jihad in the path of God, saying that the work carried out by police personnel enjoys significant public support.

Public trust and institutional strengthening

The message underscored the importance of strengthening public confidence in the police, noting that its personnel, like members of the Army and Iran's

Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), emerge from the society they serve.

He added that the hardship and lack of recognition experienced by those who protect public security could, in the religious understanding expressed in his message, increase their reward in the sight of God.

Often, the efforts and sacrifices of those who safeguard security are taken for granted by some people, and it's precisely this being wronged and unrecognized that amplifies their reward in the sight of God.

IRGC reports fire aboard LPG carrier in Strait of Hormuz, warns against unauthorized transit

TEHRAN— Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy has reported that a large, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) carrier caught fire after being struck while attempting to navigate an unauthorized route south of the Strait of Hormuz, as senior Iranian military commanders reiterated that the strategic waterway remains under Iranian control and warned against foreign interference.

In a statement issued on Friday, the IRGC Navy identified the vessel as the NV Sunshine, a large LPG carrier owned by Nhat Viet, and said the incident had occurred hours earlier. According to the statement, the vessel sustained a major fire in its engine room and propulsion system while attempting to transit the route.

The IRGC Navy said its operations in the Strait of Hormuz were being conducted in accordance with the directives of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei and the Iranian public's demand for the exercise of national sovereignty over the strategic waterway.

The force said it would not permit 'aggressor military forces' to establish a presence in the area and would respond firmly to attempts to undermine its management of the strait.

IRGC Navy accuses US of escalating maritime tensions

The IRGC Navy held the US military responsible for incidents of this kind, adding that Washington's interference in maritime affairs had contributed to growing risks for regional shipping.

According to the statement, the United States has interfered in shipping and insurance arrangements, misleading companies and offering substantial financial inducements to influence their decisions. The IRGC Navy warned that further incidents could occur if such interference continued.

It also cautioned shipping companies against relying on 'unauthorized arrangements,' saying companies found to have violated the applicable restrictions would face sanctions and that punitive measures would be imposed on vessels associated with them.

The warning extended beyond the Strait of Hormuz itself. The IRGC Navy said enforcement would no longer be geographically limited to the waterway and that vessels using unauthorized passages could be pursued throughout the region.

Vahidi: No foreign power has the right to interfere in Hormuz

The announcement came as IRGC Commander Major General Ahmad Vahidi reaffirmed Iran's position that security in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz must be maintained by the countries of the region, without interference from outside powers.

In a message released on Thursday to mark IRGC Navy Day, Vahidi described the security of the Persian Gulf and the strait as a strategic red line for Iran, rejecting any attempt by extra-regional powers to threaten the area or establish a dominant military



presence there.

"Our strategy in this arena is clear, principled and unchangeable: security in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz is indigenous and regional, and no extra-regional power has the right to threaten, establish a domineering presence in, or interfere in it," he said.

Vahidi described the Strait of Hormuz as a vital artery for global energy supplies, emphasizing that its security was directly linked to Iran's national interests, public security and national dignity.

He said the IRGC Navy was operating in coordination with the Iranian Army's Navy and was prepared to respond decisively to any hostile miscalculation involving unauthorized vessel movements through waters under its management.

The commander cited precision-guided missiles, attack drones, fast-attack vessels, electronic warfare systems and coastal defense networks among the capabilities underpinning the IRGC Navy's operational readiness.

"Any threat from the US-Israeli camp will be met with this force's vigilance, unified command and comprehensive readiness," Vahidi said.

He also called on IRGC naval personnel to maintain their readiness to defend Iran and the strategically important waterway under the command of Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, commander-in-chief of the Iranian Armed Forces.

Izadi stresses readiness across southern coasts and islands

Separately, Major General Mostafa Izadi, deputy commander of the IRGC, underscored the readiness of Iran's Armed Forces to defend the Strait of Hormuz and safeguard the country's interests and rights in the strategic waterway.

Izadi made the remarks on Thursday evening during a visit to IRGC Ground Force personnel stationed along Iran's southern

The Leader also called for comprehensive improvements in the capabilities of the security forces, emphasizing the need to strengthen human resources, equipment, and technological infrastructure.

In particular, he highlighted the importance of advancing technology and making purposeful use of artificial intelligence in data analysis to improve the police's operational capabilities and facilitate the execution of their responsibilities.

Appreciation for police personnel

Concluding his message, Ayatollah Khamenei expressed gratitude to all members of the police force, with particular appreciation for its commander, whom he praised for his dedication, courage and tireless efforts.

He voiced hope that, with the prayers of Imam Mahdi, may God hasten his reappearance, Iran's police would achieve further success in strengthening the country's security, power and national dignity.

coasts and islands.

He said the IRGC Ground Force, Navy and Aerospace Force maintained a presence on the islands and in areas north of the Strait of Hormuz, with their personnel prepared to defend the strategically sensitive region.

The deputy commander pointed to operational planning, advanced tactics, combat engineering, troop deployment and the positioning of military equipment as key elements of the forces' defensive capabilities.

He also emphasized coordination between the IRGC and the regular Army, saying personnel from both branches were responsible for guarding and defending the Strait of Hormuz.

Izadi reiterated that Iranian forces controlled the strategic waterway and expressed hope that their combat readiness would be further enhanced on the islands and across the waters of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

A strategic waterway at the center of regional security

The latest statements underscore Iran's emphasis on regional security arrangements and its opposition to an expanded military role for powers from outside West Asia in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

The strait connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and is a critical route for international energy shipments. Its security has significant implications for regional stability, maritime transport and global energy markets.

Iran's military leadership has repeatedly stressed that the countries bordering the Persian Gulf should assume primary responsibility for regional security. The latest warnings link that position to the operational readiness of Iranian forces and their stated determination to prevent unauthorized maritime movements and counter what Tehran regards as external threats.

Pezeshkian Calls for Regional Integration, Multipolar Cooperation at Turkmenistan Summits

From Page 1 ▶ The initiative, he said, could also facilitate joint responses to challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, organized crime, and drug trafficking.

Pezeshkian argued that recent regional and international crises, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the US-Israeli military attacks against Iran, had demonstrated the interconnected nature of security and stability.

Countries cannot expect to preserve their own security and pursue economic development while insecurity, economic pressure and instability spread elsewhere in their neighborhood, he said.

The Iranian president also criticized the use of trade, banking, technology, energy and international financial systems as instruments of political pressure, warning that such measures have consequences extending beyond bilateral relations and can undermine regional commerce, investment and economic development.

He maintained that resilience against external shocks and disruptions depends on connecting national capabilities and infrastructure.

“Our shared interests lie not in competition between routes, but in connecting routes,” Pezeshkian said.

Iran positions itself as a regional transit hub

The Iranian president highlighted Iran's geographical position as a natural link between Central Asia, Eurasia and international markets, particularly through its southern ports on the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

He singled out Chabahar Port as a strategic gateway capable of connecting Central Asian countries with South Asia, Africa and Europe.

Pezeshkian also welcomed the prospect of implementing a Turkmenistan proposal at the United Nations General Assembly for a transport corridor linking Central Asia, South Asia and Europe through the Caspian region, saying Iran's infrastructure and geographical position could contribute to the initiative.

He called for the North-South and East-West transport corridors to be developed as complementary components of an integrated regional network rather than competing projects.

The president also urged regional countries to expand cooperation in oil, natural gas, electricity and renewable energy, while exploring practical financial arrangements and barter mechanisms to facilitate trade and sustain economic exchanges despite external restrictions.

He said stronger regional connectivity should be accompanied by genuine multilateralism, with countries in Central Asia, the South Caucasus and neighboring regions playing a more active role in shaping an emerging multipolar world.

“We want connectivity instead of fragmentation, cooperation instead of exhausting competition, interdependence instead of one-sided dependence, and security based on trust and shared interests instead of threats,” Pezeshkian said.

He stressed that regional diplomacy must go beyond summit declarations and become an effective mechanism for managing crises, preventing conflicts from spreading and translating political commitments into practical cooperation.

Pezeshkian calls for coordinated action to protect Caspian Sea

Addressing the extraordinary summit of Caspian littoral states, Pezeshkian warned that declining water levels, climate change, pollution and damage to natural habitats pose serious threats to the region's environment, economy and coastal communities.

He said the Caspian Sea's interconnected ecosystem could not be



protected through isolated national efforts, calling for joint scientific research, information-sharing and coordinated environmental policies among its five coastal countries.

The Iranian president identified the Tehran Convention as the principal legally binding regional framework for protecting the Caspian marine environment and urged its signatories to strengthen implementation rather than limit their efforts to monitoring environmental deterioration.

He called for a transition toward ‘joint crisis management,’ backed by scientific evidence, sustained political commitment and concrete measures.

Pezeshkian welcomed the decision to establish a high-level commission comprising deputy heads of government from the Caspian littoral states and proposed a long-term regional program under the Tehran Convention to address the sea's falling water levels.

The proposed program, he said, should include coordinated scientific monitoring, marine pollution control, biodiversity protection, restoration of wetlands and natural habitats, adaptation of ports and coastal infrastructure, support for fisheries and local communities, and the provision of adequate funding and technology.

The president also warned against allowing the Caspian to become an arena for geopolitical rivalry or intervention by extra-regional powers, arguing that lasting security depends on respecting the sovereignty and legitimate interests of all littoral states.

He called for the condemnation of attacks on coastal facilities, ports, vessels and other maritime infrastructure, citing the attack on Iran's Anzali port during the US-Israeli war against Iran and an armed Ukrainian attack on an Iranian commercial vessel. He warned that such incidents could endanger regional stability and cause environmental damage extending beyond national borders.

Pezeshkian urged the coastal states to choose scientific cooperation and collective action over passively accepting the Caspian's environmental decline.

“Our choice is cooperation; our choice is science; our choice is protecting the Caspian,” he said, describing preservation of the sea as a shared historical responsibility toward future generations.

Iran and Russia reaffirm strategic partnership

In his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Pezeshkian called for accelerating bilateral cooperation in trade, energy, agriculture, transportation, and other economic sectors, as well as strengthening humanitarian and people-to-people ties.

The two presidents reviewed progress in bilateral relations and emphasized the need to expedite the completion of joint projects and implement agreements under their comprehensive strategic cooperation framework.

Pezeshkian described the current period as an important opportunity to deepen ties, expressing satisfaction with the progress achieved and calling for faster implementation of bilateral plans.

He also welcomed Moscow's opposition to unilateralism and called

for greater coordination between Tehran and Moscow in support of multilateral cooperation at the regional and international levels.

Turning to the conflict involving Iran, the Iranian president reaffirmed Tehran's commitment to diplomacy, while criticizing repeated US attacks following negotiations.

“We are in talks, but every time we negotiate with the US, they attack again. However, we will not withdraw from the negotiating table or abandon dialogue,” Pezeshkian said.

He explained that Iran had submitted proposals and that Washington had presented new ones. Tehran was reviewing and revising the proposals, he said, adding that once the revisions were finalized, the parties would meet through existing intermediaries to discuss and consolidate them.

Pezeshkian stressed that Iran's objective was to end the war while ensuring that the rights of the Iranian nation were respected under international law. He warned, however, that a settlement based on unilateral demands would not be acceptable.

Putin, for his part, welcomed the expansion of relations with Iran and said cooperation between the two countries was growing. He emphasized the need to resolve the regional crisis through diplomatic means, noting that Iran had put forward new proposals aimed at ending the war.

SCO needs to strengthen independence, implement commitments

In a separate meeting with SCO Secretary General Nurlan Yermekbayev, Pezeshkian called on the organization to ensure that its decisions were guided by the collective interests of its members rather than the domestic policies or external pressure of the United States.

He said multilateral organizations such as the SCO and BRICS were established to provide common frameworks for cooperation in finance, trade, economics, security and political affairs.

Allowing Washington's policies to influence decisions taken by these organizations, he warned, could undermine their unity and effectiveness. He specifically questioned why some SCO decisions concerning Iran continued to be shaped by considerations of the US position.

Pezeshkian urged member states to strengthen independent regional cooperation and pursue dialogue rather than coercion, emphasizing that relations with neighboring countries should not be constrained by the preferences of distant powers.

He also called for greater attention to implementing agreements, arguing that summit declarations would have little value without concrete action.

Yermekbayev agreed on the importance of multilateralism but emphasized that implementing decisions required practical mechanisms and consensus among member states. He proposed compiling a list of outstanding agreements with Iran so they could be pursued through ambassadors and national representatives.

The SCO secretary general also reaffirmed the organization's commitment to peace, respect for territorial integrity, and the non-use

of force. He noted that all countries have the right to peaceful nuclear energy while adhering to nuclear non-proliferation principles.

Tehran seeks stronger ties with Armenia and Azerbaijan

Pezeshkian's discussions with the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan further underscored Iran's emphasis on strengthening relations with neighboring countries and expanding regional cooperation.

In his meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, the Iranian president highlighted the considerable potential for expanding bilateral relations and called for sustained coordination, communication and mutual trust.

He stressed that the two neighboring countries should take advantage of their geographical proximity and existing opportunities to deepen cooperation across a range of sectors. Pezeshkian reaffirmed Iran's readiness to develop relations with Armenia and expressed hope that bilateral engagement would continue to expand.

In talks with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and explored ways to make fuller use of existing economic and political capacities.

Both presidents emphasized the importance of accelerating the implementation of joint agreements, completing ongoing projects and strengthening cooperation in trade, the economy, transit and regional affairs.

They also called for continued dialogue and constructive consultations between officials to advance shared interests and reinforce good-neighborly relations.

The meetings reflected Tehran's broader approach of prioritizing engagement with neighboring countries as a means of promoting regional stability, expanding economic opportunities and improving connectivity across the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

Pezeshkian also met with Turkmen President Serdar Berdimuhamedov, during which the two presidents stressed the need to accelerate the implementation of previously agreed projects and make better use of existing opportunities to strengthen bilateral ties.

Regional cooperation and issues concerning the Caspian Sea were also discussed. Both sides underscored the importance of closer coordination among Caspian littoral states, protecting the sea's environment and expanding joint initiatives in pursuit of the shared interests of countries in the region.

From regional dialogue to practical cooperation

Taken together, Pezeshkian's speeches and meetings in Turkmenistan outlined an agenda centered on regional integration, economic interdependence, environmental responsibility and diplomatic engagement.

His proposed “CIS+1” format would provide an additional mechanism for connecting Iran with Central Asian and Eurasian economies, while expanded cooperation with Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan could help advance shared infrastructure and trade objectives.

At the same time, his calls for protecting the Caspian Sea and strengthening the SCO highlighted Tehran's argument that regional institutions must translate common interests into practical action and resist the destabilizing effects of geopolitical rivalry.

The broader message from the Iranian president's participation in the two summits was that geography has already connected the countries of Central Asia, the South Caucasus and the Caspian region. The challenge, he argued, is to turn that geographical reality into a durable framework for shared security, sustainable development and regional prosperity.

“Cult of Death”? Check your calling card, Mr. Rubio



From Page 1 ▶ Labeling Iran a “cult of death” is, first and foremost, an insult to the intelligence of that speech's audience. One need only review the record of the seven-month war:

Who attacked a school in Minab on the first day of the war? Who targeted Iran's bridges, roads, and civilian infrastructure?

Thousands of civilians were killed in these attacks, some 300 of them schoolchildren alone. The unarmed vessel Dena was also sunk in waters near Sri Lanka, killing more than a hundred sailors. Trump later stated bluntly that we did it for fun.

Nor is this record limited to that. Who threatened, even at the UN General Assembly, the complete annihilation of the Iranian nation and civilization? And who, by supporting Israel's operations in Gaza, became complicit in the killing of more than 20,000 children?

Ten days ago, the US Secretary of War said bluntly at the Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia: “Lethality is our calling card.”

Iran questions France’s nuclear double standards

TEHRAN— Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei has criticized ‘France's contradictory approach’ to nuclear weapons, questioning why Paris considers its own nuclear deterrent essential to national security while insisting that Iran must never possess nuclear weapons, despite Tehran's stated commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In a post on X, Baqaei contrasted French President Emmanuel Macron's remarks on the importance of military power and deterrence with his categorical opposition to Iran acquiring nuclear weapons.

During a test of a ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, Macron declared: “To be free, therefore, one must be feared, and to be feared, one must be powerful.”

Yet, as Baqaei noted, the French president has also insisted that Iran must never possess nuclear weapons, neither now nor in five or ten years.

The Iranian spokesperson argued that the central issue was not France's possession of a nuclear deterrent, but the apparent double standard under which a rationale presented as essential to French security is treated as a threat when applied to Iran—even in discussions concerning a civilian nuclear program subject to international oversight.

Baqaei argued that the underlying problem was the desire of certain nuclear-armed powers to preserve their exclusive hold on strategic power and the authority to determine which countries may legitimately exercise it.

He said these powers seek to retain their own nuclear arsenals, presenting them as instruments of security and freedom, while invoking the prospect of a nuclear threat to justify restrictions on other countries, including those pursuing peaceful nuclear technology.

According to the Iranian diplomat, such an approach reflects a selective interpretation of security rather than a universal commit-

The remark was shocking, but at least it was honest. An army that sets in motion under the slogans of counterterrorism, freedom, and democracy — what has it brought the targeted nations in practice but death and destruction?

So with this record, who truly deserves the label of “cult of death”? Answering that question requires no complex research. It requires only a modicum of courage and a refusal to close one's eyes to reality.

The Trump administration claims that all this killing was carried out to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. The bitter irony of our time is that the only country in history to have used the atomic bomb, killing hundreds of thousands, regards itself as the world's nuclear policeman. When the Israeli regime, even after the genocide in Gaza, calls itself “the most moral army in the world,” it is hardly surprising that the US Secretary of State should also call Iran a “cult of death.”

The issue here is not the misreading of history. It is the attempt to turn history into a license for war and atrocity.



ment to peace.

“A peace in which nuclear powers regard their own weapons as the guarantors of their freedom and security, but label the same logic a threat when invoked by others, is not true peace,” Baqaei wrote, arguing that this disparity amounted to a monopoly on power rooted in a sense of superiority.

Baqaei maintained that an international order that fails to recognize the equal right of all nations to security and peace risks reinforcing the dominance of a limited group of powerful states rather than safeguarding international stability.

His remarks placed the debate over Iran's nuclear program within a broader question of consistency in international security policy: whether the principles invoked by nuclear-armed states to justify their own deterrence strategies should be applied fairly in their dealings with other countries.

Iran maintains that its nuclear program is intended for peaceful purposes and has repeatedly called for its nuclear activities to be assessed on the basis of international law and safeguards obligations.

Baqaei's criticism thus challenged France to reconcile its stated commitment to preventing nuclear proliferation with its own reliance on nuclear weapons as instruments of deterrence, arguing that lasting peace cannot be built on a system in which security is treated as a privilege reserved for a select group of powers.

We will not allow illusions of Iran’s enemies to become reality: acting oil minister

TEHRAN- The caretaker of the Ministry of Oil, emphasizing the oil industry’s role in advancing the country’s economy, announced: We will not allow the illusions and calculations of Iran’s enemies to become reality.

According to Mehr News Agency, Hamid Bovard wrote in a message posted on the social network X: The oil industry today is more alive, more determined, and more capable than ever in serving Iran.

He added: With trust in God, the support of the people, and reliance on the expertise and capability of the oil industry’s employees, we have set the country’s economic wheel in motion with greater speed and will not allow the illusions and calculations of Iran’s enemies to come true.

Bovard, on Tuesday, on the sidelines of his introduction ceremony as Acting Minister of Oil, said regarding the ministry’s most important plans: The industry’s current programs in production and development are continuing and are being pursued with greater speed and precision.

He added: Efforts are being made to pursue stronger policies in commerce and sales so that the oil industry, as in the past, shines with the help of all my colleagues.

The Acting Minister of Oil recalled regarding oil sales: Matters related to oil sales are being pursued as always, but I cannot disclose information in this area, and we continue to pursue our work in this field seriously.

The Acting Minister of Oil emphasized regarding energy management: I ask all dear people not to consume wastefully and to help in all areas of energy carriers so that this year we achieve stronger savings compared with previous years.

Bovard recalled regarding supplying fuel to industries in winter: Comprehensive decisions are made in the Fuel Committee in the government, and after a decision is made in the government, it is communicated to all agencies.

New investment opportunities reviewed in meeting between Yazd entrepreneurs, South Korean ambassador

TEHRAN- The meeting of the entrepreneurs of Yazd Province with the South Korean Ambassador was held at the Yazd Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, with the aim of developing economic diplomacy and expanding trade relations.

In the meeting, Mojtaba Dastmalchian, the Chairman of the Yazd Chamber of Commerce, referring to the province’s high capacities in various commercial and industrial fields, said: “Yazd Province has good opportunities for investment in various sectors.”

He added: “Yazd Province can have good cooperation with South Korea in cultural and educational fields, and holding events and training workshops is very useful for transferring experience.”

He stated: “Yazd Province has good export potential in tiles and ceramics, copper, welding parts, pistachios, figs, and pomegranates.”

Dastmalchian continued: “The South Korean Ambassador to Iran has a very positive outlook and was satisfied with the trip to Yazd Province, and, God willing, we can have good relations in the medical, educational, cultural, and research fields, and as soon as conditions are established, we can also be active in economic fields.”

The South Korean Ambassador to Iran, Kim Junpyo, referring to Yazd’s tourist attractions, said: “In the past, people made this region habitable with great effort, and this shows the creativity and capability of the people of Yazd.”

Ambassador Kim added: “In various fields such as political, cultural, scientific, academic, and research, as well as humanitarian issues, we can have good cooperation with Iran.”

He said: “Through various visits, I became familiar with the facilities and capabilities of Yazd Province for greater cooperation.”

Also, addressing the ceremony, on Wednesday night, to honor Yazd’s exporters, Ambassadors Kim, referring to the diverse capacities of Yazd Province in various fields, said: Yazd has a positive future ahead, and I hope that getting acquainted with the province’s economic actors will pave the way for more opportunities for cooperation in the future.



The Acting Minister of Oil, emphasizing the need for comprehensive management of fuel consumption and strengthening transmission infrastructure, stressed the importance of a macro-level view in oil industry decision-making.

According to Mehr News Agency, Hamid Bovard, on Tuesday, in a meeting with the managers of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company at the company’s central building, in addition to expressing appreciation for the efforts and hard work of employees and managers, stressed the need to use a strategic, scientific, and comprehensive view in managing the issues of the oil industry, especially the refining and distribution of oil products.

Referring to his 35 years of activity in the oil industry, he added: In management meetings, to provide the possibility of more precise decision-making and a macro view of issues, information should be presented coherently and in the form of management summaries.

The Acting Minister of Oil, stating that in large organizations the high volume of activities sometimes causes main issues to be less visible amid details and daily challenges, announced: Looking from above and outside the organization’s daily atmosphere can help identify problems more precisely and find suitable solutions.

While congratulating the province’s economic actors who were honored at the event, the Korean envoy stated: I arrived in Yazd last night, and today, by visiting various parts of the province, I became acquainted with the capacities and activities of this region.

He added: Yazd has extensive capacities in various fields, and given the capacities I observed today, I foresee a positive future for this province.

Referring to his meeting with Yazd’s economic actors, the South Korean Ambassador said: Tonight provided a good opportunity for me to get acquainted with the province’s economic actors, and I hope this acquaintance can create more opportunities for cooperation between the two sides in the future.

Also, Mohammad Reza Babaei, the Governor of Yazd, in a meeting with the South Korean Ambassador, outlined the province’s diverse capacities in various sectors and described the two sides’ acquaintance with and awareness of existing capacities and the provision of grounds for the formation of joint cooperation as among the most important axes of discussion, saying: Yazd Province’s capacities in various fields can pave the way for the development of relations with South Korea.

Babaei also cited Yazd’s capacities in health-care, the development of solar power plants, and historical qanats as other notable areas for cooperation, saying: Yazd Province enjoys significant capacities in these sectors, which can provide grounds for exchanging experience and joint cooperation with the Korean side.

He also considered the employment of several thousand foreign nationals in the province’s industrial units as one of Yazd’s economic capacities and emphasized the necessity of using existing capabilities to expand economic interactions and create new grounds for cooperation.

This meeting was held with the aim of introducing the capacities of Yazd Province and South Korea, examining areas of joint cooperation, and identifying new opportunities to strengthen and expand bilateral interactions.

New horizons open for Iran-Afghanistan economic co-op during Iran’s trade delegation’s trip to Kabul

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- During the trip of a trade delegation from the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), led by Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Chamber, to Kabul, the capacities for Iran-Afghanistan cooperation in mining and mineral industries, agriculture and conversion industries, technology transfer, and the creation of production and processing chains were examined.

Meetings with Nooruddin Azizi, Afghanistan’s Minister of Industry and Commerce, and Haji Akhtar Mohammad Mohammadi, First Deputy of Afghanistan’s Chamber of Agricultural and Livestock Production, along with participation in the Fifth Abu Hanifa International Exhibition and B2B negotiations between Iranian and Afghan traders, formed the main axes of this trip.

Iran-Afghanistan cooperation in mining, mineral industries emphasized

Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, during the trip to Kabul at the head of a trade delegation, in a meeting with Nooruddin Azizi, Afghanistan’s Minister of Industry and Commerce, referred to Afghanistan’s mineral capacities and emphasized the development of Iran-Afghanistan cooperation in mining and mineral industries.

Azizi, referring to the issue of mining machinery, welcomed the expansion of relations and economic cooperation with Iran.

In this meeting, attended by Hamed Asgari, Deputy for International Affairs of the Iran Chamber; Mahmoud Omati, Vice President of the Mashhad Chamber; Hossein Beykzadeh, Vice President of the Karaj Chamber; Arash Alavi, member of the Board of Representatives of the Iran and Kerman Chamber; and Mohsen Amini, member of the Food Industry Committee and member of the Board of Representatives of the Iran Chamber, the capacities for economic cooperation between the two countries were examined.

Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Iran Chamber, considering Afghanistan’s mineral capacities, emphasized the necessity of strengthening interactions and developing cooperation between the economic actors of the two countries in mining and mineral industries, and considered the existing capacities in this sector as a basis for expanding Iran-Afghanistan economic cooperation.

Then Nooruddin Azizi, Afghanistan’s Minister of Industry and Commerce, referring to the issue of mining machinery, emphasized the importance of cooperation in this area and welcomed the development of relations and expansion of economic cooperation between Afghanistan and Iran.

In this meeting, emphasis was also placed on using existing capacities to deepen economic relations and develop private sector cooperation between the two countries, especially in mining and mineral industries.

At the meeting of the Vice President of the Iran Chamber with the First Deputy of Afghanistan’s Agriculture Chamber, it was raised:

A mechanism will be defined for Iran-Afghanistan co-op in technology transfer and production chains creation

Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, met with Haji Akhtar Mohammad Mohammadi, First Deputy of Afghanistan’s Chamber of Agricultural and Livestock Production, and discussed the capacities for developing economic and agricultural cooperation between the two countries.



In this meeting, Mahmoud Siyadat, President of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber; Kamaluddin Tawhid, President of the Afghanistan-Iran Joint Chamber of Commerce; Mohsen Amini, member of the Food Industry Committee of the Iran Chamber; and Ali Asghar Beigi, Vice President of the Yazd Chamber; a number of representatives of Iran’s parliament; and members of Afghanistan’s Chamber of Agricultural and Livestock Production were present.

Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Iran Chamber, referring to existing capacities in Afghanistan’s agriculture and livestock sector and the country’s need for technology and production inputs, emphasized the readiness of Iran’s private sector to develop cooperation, transfer technology, and use joint capacities.

The head of Afghanistan’s Chamber of Agricultural and Livestock Production also emphasized the development of economic and trade relations with Iran and focused on expanding cooperation between the two chambers and using the private sector capacities of both countries.

Later in this meeting, Mahmoud Siyadat, President of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber, referring to Afghanistan’s high capacity in agriculture and livestock, proposed the development of technical cooperation, technology transfer, and the creation of production and processing chains.

He also emphasized increasing imports from Afghanistan and said: “These imports can be developed with a focus on goods needed by Iran, including oilseeds, animal feed, and legumes.”

The President of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber, referring to measures taken in agriculture and pest control, including sending specialized teams to Afghanistan, considered cooperation capacity broad in sectors such as industrial livestock farming, poultry farming, production and processing of agricultural products, and related industries, and emphasized the need for greater support and organization to activate these capacities.

Focus on Afghanistan’s capacities in agricultural processing and conversion industries required

Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, on the sidelines of the Fifth Abu Hanifa International Exhibition of Afghanistan and at the B2B negotiations ceremony of traders and economic actors of Iran and Afghanistan, emphasizing the extensive economic capacities of the two countries, said: “Iran’s view of Afghanistan should not be merely as a market for supplying Iranian goods; rather, it should move toward joint investments.”

Iranian, Afghan traders negotiated face-to-face on sidelines of Fifth Abu Hanifa International Exhibition of Afghanistan

At this ceremony, Ghadir Qiyafeh, Vice President of the Iran Chamber, referring to the extensive presence of Iranian companies and firms in this year’s exhibition, stated: “Last year, when I came to Afghanistan to attend the Abu Hanifa Exhibition, I

istan enjoys very extensive mineral capacities, and in a correct expression, many elements of the periodic table exist in this country.”

He continued: “Iranian companies, with the experience and technical knowledge gained over several decades, can be present in this sector in Afghanistan. This cooperation can begin with exploration and continue through extraction, processing, and production of the final product.”

Qiyafeh, emphasizing that the development of mining and mineral industries requires the provision of necessary infrastructure, added: “If mining and mineral industries in Afghanistan are to develop with investment from other countries, especially Iran, the construction of new roads, development of railway lines, and establishment of power plant units are necessary.”

He said: “Solar, hydro, wind, and thermal power plants can help supply the energy infrastructure needed by this sector.”

Emphasis Qiyafeh, referring to the public ownership of mineral resources in Afghanistan, said: “Just as in Iran mines are recognized as public property and belong to all the Iranian nation, Afghanistan’s mineral resources also belong to the people of Afghanistan.”

He proposed: “Part of the minerals should first undergo primary processing inside Afghanistan, and from the revenue and profit obtained, processing capacities and industrial units should be developed.”

The Vice President of the Iran Chamber emphasized: “With the method adopted today, one cannot expect a serious transformation in Afghanistan’s mining sector in the near future, and it is necessary to plan for developing the value chain and processing of minerals inside the country.”

Readiness of Iranian companies for investment

Qiyafeh, referring to the presence of Iranian companies at the Fifth Abu Hanifa International Exhibition of Afghanistan, said: “Among the Iranian companies present at this exhibition, more than 10 groups are interested and ready to invest in Afghanistan, and some of them have announced their readiness to invest in conversion industries.”

Iran ready to enter a new phase of economic partnerships between the two countries

Mahmoud Siyadat, President of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce, emphasizing the existing capacities for developing economic cooperation between the two countries, said: “Afghanistan’s current conditions, especially continued security and industrial and production growth, have provided a suitable ground for entering a new phase of economic partnerships between Iran and Afghanistan.”

Making the remarks at the gathering held jointly by the joint chambers of commerce of Iran and Afghanistan, he focused on the sustainability of security and the continuation of Afghanistan’s industrial and production growth and spoke of readiness to enter a new phase of trade and investment cooperation between the two countries.

Mahmoud Siyadat, President of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber, referring to the presence of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Parliament at this event, emphasized: “The presence of individuals who are influential in policymaking and policies related to Afghanistan and see the country’s conditions closely is valuable at this ceremony, and we hope their perceptions and views are considered in future policies and decisions.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Trump loses Nobel again as jurist behind Gaza genocide findings takes prize



Navanethem "Navi" Pillay

From page 1 ▶ Trump repeatedly touted his "diplomatic" record, claiming credit for ending regional conflicts while promoting normalization deals that sidelined Palestinian self-determination and advanced Washington's regional agenda.

Yet his administration joined Israel in launching a war on Iran on February 28, while nuclear negotiations were underway.

The war has exacted a devastating civilian toll. The Minab school massacre, during which the U.S. killed at least 155 people, most of them children, stands as one of its deadliest episodes.

U.S. strikes also killed at least 21 civilians in Lamerd and killed five people and wounded 67 in a bombing near a wedding celebration in Kuhestak.

The Nobel Committee rejected Trump's political pressure, choosing instead to honor a veteran anti-apartheid jurist whose work has challenged Israeli impunity and

placed Washington's support for its closest regional ally under renewed scrutiny.

In September 2025, Pillay's UN commission published a definitive finding concluding that Israeli authorities and military forces had committed four acts of genocide in Gaza under the 1948 Genocide Convention.

The report specifically cited Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other high-ranking officials for incitement to genocide and weaponized starvation.

Pillay, a former judge on the International Criminal Court, has spent decades holding powerful states accountable, making her recognition a severe blow to Israeli impunity.

The award also highlights persistent efforts by the United States and Tel Aviv to dismantle international justice.

Washington has heavily sanctioned the International Criminal Court, while Israeli

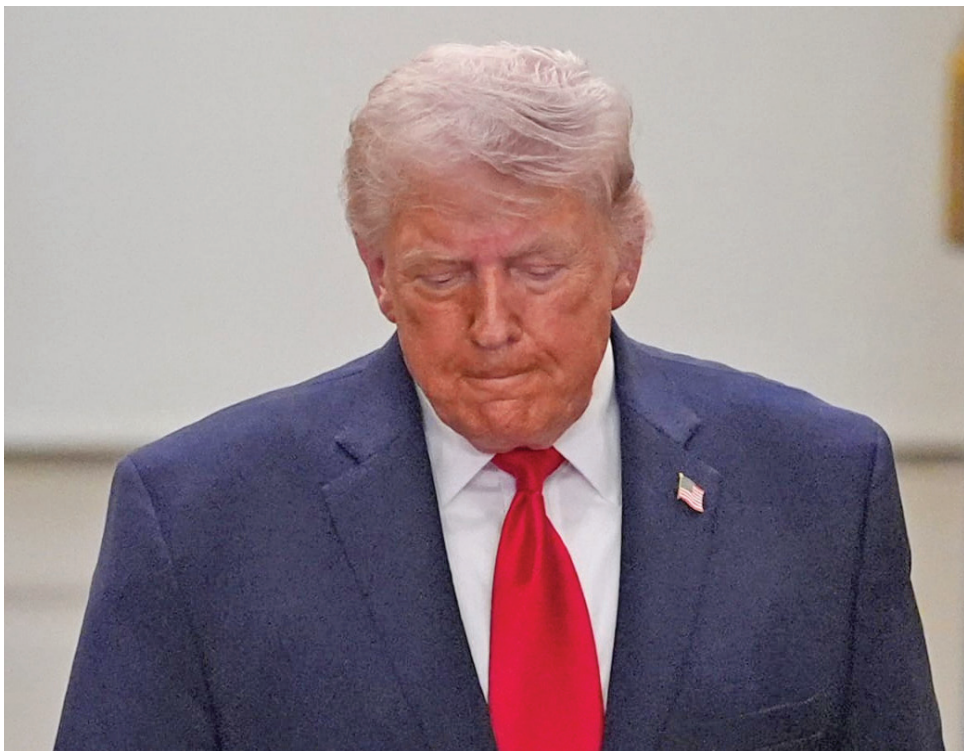
officials reject legal jurisdiction and dismiss evidence of their atrocities as fabrications.

Pillay's win places those documented crimes back on the international agenda, even as American financial and military support for Israel's genocidal war machine continues uninterrupted across the region.

Yet the Nobel Peace Prize itself has a controversial and deeply contradictory history. The Oslo committee has repeatedly bestowed its honors on Western warmongers and foreign proxies, from Henry Kissinger during American carpet bombings in Vietnam to Barack Obama during widespread drone warfare and sanctions targeting civilians.

Independent observers have long criticized this pattern, noting how the prize often bestows misplaced laurels on figures with blood on their hands to validate Western hegemony.

The illusion of control in Washington's Iran gamble



From page 1 ▶

The same script, a different stage

Washington speaks of "pressure" and "diplomacy" in the same breath, as though sanctions, military threats and economic coercion constitute genuine negotiation.

Iran, however, is not Iraq. After decades of sanctions, pressure and confrontation, Tehran has built a strategy designed for endurance rather than surrender.

Its military capabilities are dispersed and hardened, while its geography is vast, mountainous, and strategically difficult.

Yemen: The warning Washington should not ignore

Yemen provides a powerful warning. Saudi Arabia, supported by Western arms and assistance, entered the war in 2015 expecting military pressure to produce a decisive outcome.

Years later, the conflict had become a prolonged catastrophe, while Ansarallah demonstrated resilience and retained the ability to challenge their opponents.

For Washington, the lesson should be obvious. Opening another front against an adversary such as Iran would create consequences that cannot be neatly contained.

Where regional war becomes global crisis

The Strait of Hormuz turns the confrontation into an international economic problem. Any serious disruption immediately affects oil markets, shipping costs, insurance rates, and supply chains far beyond the Persian Gulf.

Recent reductions in commercial traffic demonstrate how quickly geopolitical confrontation can become an economic shock. Iran's ability to influence access to Hormuz gives Tehran leverage that cannot simply be neutralized by deploying more military hardware.

This is the contradiction Washington repeatedly overlooks. Governments make strategic decisions inside secure rooms, but the economic consequences escape those rooms almost immediately.

A military confrontation in Iran means higher fuel prices in America, rising transport costs in Europe, and increased inflation across Asian markets.

The trap of coercive pressure

Washington's strategy appears to rest on the belief that enough pressure will eventually force Iran to abandon its strategic position and accept terms dictated by its adversaries. Yet decades of sanctions have produced a different response: adaptation.

Iran has expanded alternative trade relationships and strengthened its position within emerging Eurasian transport and economic networks. The International North-South Transport Corridor, connecting India, Iran and Russia, has gained greater strategic importance as states seek alternatives to Western-dominated routes.

Iran's geography, energy resources and transport infrastructure also make it significant to China's wider Eurasian connectivity. This does not mean Beijing, Moscow and

Tehran constitute a formal military alliance. They do not. But sustained pressure has encouraged greater cooperation among countries seeking to reduce dependence on Western systems.

That is the paradox of coercion. Pressure intended to isolate an adversary can encourage it to build new partnerships, new routes and new forms of resilience.

Diplomacy is not surrender

The most dangerous assumption is that another application of military force will somehow produce a different political result from previous wars.

A wider confrontation with Iran would be difficult to contain. Strikes on Iranian military facilities provoke retaliation against American and allied interests across the region.

Attacks affecting energy infrastructure damage the very economic networks on which global markets depend.

Disruption in Hormuz, combined with instability around the Red Sea, intensifies pressure on energy and shipping markets and deepens an already fragile global economy.

Diplomacy is not weakness. Negotiation is not surrender. They are recognition that some conflicts cannot be solved by destroying enough infrastructure, and that military superiority does not guarantee political control.

The human cost of the gamble

Behind every military calculation are people who never made the decisions that put them at risk. Families in Tehran and Sanaa do not write speeches in Washington, yet they absorb the consequences.

Washington can launch the first missile, but it cannot dictate everything that follows. It cannot guarantee that escalation will remain limited, that retaliation will stop at a chosen point, or that economic blowback will stay overseas.

That is the illusion at the heart of modern interventionism: believing that superior firepower is equivalent to control. It is not.

Iran is not Iraq, and the Persian Gulf is not a battlefield that can be entered, dominated, and forgotten.

Washington may think it is gambling with Iran, but Iran is not a wager that can be settled by overwhelming firepower. Tehran has spent decades preparing to endure pressure, adapt to isolation, and resist attempts at coercion.

The real danger is not simply what America can destroy. It is what America cannot control once the destruction begins.

The choice is not between war and surrender. It is between diplomacy and hubris. Washington should understand the difference before another gamble turns into a catastrophe no power can contain.

Washington may think it is gambling with Iran, but Iran is not the kind of opponent a superpower can threaten into submission; it is the kind that can turn America's gamble into its greatest strategic reckoning.

The article does not necessarily represent the views of the Tehran Times.

Saudi Arabia will never break Yemen's resistance: Ansarallah leader

From page 1 ▶ The sword emblazoned on the Saudi flag has never drawn blood in defense of Muslims, he observed, but has consistently served Zionist and American ambitions to fragment the region and isolate the Resistance Front.

The address coincided with a sharp escalation on the ground.

On Thursday, the Yemeni Armed Forces shot down a Saudi-operated Turkish Bayraktar Akinci drone over Taiz and launched a ballistic missile strike at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, disrupting flight operations and triggering widespread alarms.

Parallel missile strikes hit Saudi troop concentrations at the Qa'wah camp near Ras al-



Ara and positions along the Bab al-Mandab approach, inflicting dozens of casualties and detonating enemy ammunition depots.

Addressing regional governments, al-Houthi issued a di-

rect warning to Qatar regarding its renewed political and media alignment with Saudi policies.

He reminded leadership in Doha that its previous involvement in the coalition against Yemen did not prevent Riyadh

and Bahrain's Al Khalifa regime from plotting regime change in Qatar and imposing a suffocating blockade.

Assisting Saudi Arabia now, the Ansarallah leader cautioned, makes Doha complicit in war crimes while exposing it once again to betrayal by its alleged allies.

Al-Houthi affirmed that Yemeni forces hold full operational authority to strike enemy assets across the Red Sea and Arabian Sea from any point in the country.

Rebuffing Western media claims, he placed full blame for maritime instability on Saudi and American militarization around Bab al-Mandab.

Mark Levin's stepson systematically quashed US embassy reports on Israeli war crimes

By staff writer

TEHRAN — A senior official inside the U.S. Embassy in al-Quds (Jerusalem) has systematically suppressed and altered internal diplomatic cables to conceal Israeli land theft, regime-backed violence, and war crimes from Washington policymakers and Congress.

According to an October 8 report in The New York Times, internal diplomatic documents and accounts from more than a dozen U.S. officials point to the outsized role of David Milstein, a 36-year-old senior adviser serving as chief of staff to Ambassador Mike Huckabee.

Since assuming the position in April 2025, Milstein has acted as an ideological gatekeeper, filtering how information about Israel reaches Washington.

Milstein is the stepson of the ultra-Zionist American commentator Mark Levin and is engaged to the daughter of Moshe Feiglin, an extremist Israeli politician who has repeatedly called for the forced expulsion and total destruction of Palestinians in Gaza.

Armed with broad authority over the West Bank and Gaza portfolios, Milstein forced all communications from the embassy section handling Palestinian affairs through his office, the NYT report says.

Cable traffic immediately collapsed from several detailed reports a week to a few a month, as career diplomats realized their field assessments would be blocked

or rewritten.

Milstein's suppression was especially stark during major territorial moves. In late March, amidst heightened regional war, Israel approved a record expansion of illegal West Bank settlements.

Embassy staff drafted an urgent memo warning Washington that Tel Aviv was violating President Donald Trump's declared line against formal annexation, the report says. Milstein killed the memo before it left al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Furthermore, as armed settlers rampaged through Palestinian villages with army backing, diplomats drafted reports documenting the inaction of the regime.

Milstein quashed those findings, authoring a replacement cable titled "Government Cracks Down on Escalating West Bank Violence" that praised Benjamin Netanyahu's regime instead.

The censorship also targeted investigations into direct Israeli attacks on civilians and foreign nationals.

Following the killings of nine Palestinian-Americans by Israeli forces and settlers, embassy officers compiled a detailed probe showing that Israeli authorities had stalled inquiries, charged zero perpetrators, and quietly closed cases.

Milstein suppressed the findings, stonewalling efforts by lawmakers like Senator Chris Van Hollen and replacing the probe with a sanitized letter claiming Israel was



pursuing accountability.

He applied similar censorship to Gaza, burying cables warning that Israeli-managed aid sites were causing chaotic, mass-casualty events.

These revelations reveal a deliberate campaign inside the American diplomatic apparatus to protect Tel Aviv from international scrutiny as countries such as Britain, Canada, and France enact sanctions over West Bank settlement expansion.

By altering official field reports and manufacturing a fabricated reality for Washington, American officials remain directly complicit in masking ongoing land theft, Israeli violence, and genocide against the Palestinian people.

Iran drop to 23rd in FIFA World Rankings

TEHRAN - Iran have dropped one place to 23rd in the latest FIFA men's world rankings, while Japan remain Asia's highest-ranked national team in 17th place.

Team Melli's decline comes as the Iranian national team continue their preparations for the 2027 AFC Asian Cup, where they will face Syria, Kyrgyzstan and China in Group C.

Despite slipping one position, Iran remain among the world's top 25 teams, highlighting their continued status as one of Asia's leading football nations. However, the latest ranking serves as a reminder that maintaining consistency will be crucial as the team look ahead to major international competitions.

Japan continue to lead Asian football in the rankings, sitting six places above Iran in 17th. Their position reflects their strong standing on the international stage and their status as one of the continent's most competitive sides.

At the top of the global rankings, world champions Spain retain first place, continuing to lead the international football hierarchy.

For Iran, attention will increasingly turn to the 2027 AFC Asian Cup. The tournament will provide Team Melli with another opportunity to demonstrate its quality and compete for continental honors.

With Syria, Kyrgyzstan and China awaiting them in the group stage, Iran will aim to build momentum, improve their performances and challenge for the title.

Although the one-place drop is relatively small, Iran will hope to respond positively on the pitch and climb back up the FIFA rankings in the months ahead.

2026/27 PGPL: Tractor remain top

TEHRAN - The first day of Matchweek 8 in the 2026/27 Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) concluded with six matches, as Tractor maintained their position at the top of the table following a 1-1 draw against Esteghlal.

Sepahan, Gol Gohar and Aluminum also strengthened their positions with results that brought them to 13 points.

In the most anticipated fixture, Tractor drew 1-1 with Esteghlal at Yadegar-e Imam Stadium in Tabriz. The result left Tractor top with 17 points, while Esteghlal remained second with 16.

Sepahan recorded one of the biggest victories of the round, thrashing Fajr Sepasi 6-1. The win took Moharram Navidkia's side to 13 points and lifted them to fourth place. Fajr Sepasi remained 13th with seven points.

Gol Gohar also secured an impressive victory, defeating Esteghlal Khuzestan 3-0 at home to reach 13 points. Their opponents stayed 15th with six points.

Elsewhere, Aluminum drew 1-1 with Malavan, while Nassaji shared the same scoreline with Zob Ahan. Aluminum moved to 13 points, while Nassaji and Malavan reached nine and eight points respectively.

In the final match of the day, Foolad Khuzestan beat Mes Shahr-e Babak 2-1 to climb to seventh with 12 points. Mes remained 17th with five points.

At the end of the day, Tractor lead with 17 points, followed by Esteghlal on 16. Persepolis sit third with 13 points and a game in hand, while Aluminium, Sepahan and Gol Gohar remain close behind.

Taremi looks to end Iran's AFC Asian Cup title drought

TEHRAN - Talismanic striker Mehdi Taremi will look to end more than 50 years of AFC

Asian Cup near-misses and disappointment for Iran in Saudi Arabia 2027 when the widely-travelled forward seeks to lead his nation to their first title since 1976.

The 34-year-old is already considered one of his nation's finest-ever players, forging a successful career at the highest level in European club football as well as scoring at the FIFA World Cup.

Victory at the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 would put the seal on his status as an Iranian great alongside the likes of Ali Parvin and Ali Daei, providing the ideal curtain call for a career that is unlikely to extend through the entirety of another FIFA World Cup cycle.

Since making his international debut against Uzbekistan in June 2015, Taremi has managed to average more than a goal every other game, netting 60 times in 111 appearances for his country.

Taremi's journey started in humble surroundings with his hometown club Shahin Bushehr before a switch to Iranjavan, but it was his move to Persepolis in 2014 that saw the young forward attract national and, eventually, global attention.

His scoring exploits for the Tehran giants earned a call-up to the national team under Carlos Queiroz and the international game was soon sitting up and taking notice.

Taremi transferred to Qatar's Al Gharafa before a switch in 2019 to Rio Ave in Portugal, where his career took off. Eighteen goals in 30 league matches prompted Lisbon-based FC Porto to sign him, launching Taremi on the next phase of his rapidly rising trajectory.

Across four seasons from 2020 to 2024, Taremi scored 91 goals in 182 matches in all competitions, with his exploits in the UEFA Champions League in particular catching the eye of clubs in Europe's leading leagues.

A spectacular overhead kick against Chelsea in 2021 saw him nominated for the FIFA Puskas Award while in the 2022/23 season he scored seven times in 11 matches in the UEFA Champions League as Porto reached the last 16.

By this stage, Taremi had become a central component in Queiroz's team representing IR Iran, featuring at the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cups as well as the AFC Asian Cup in 2019 in the United Arab Emirates and at Qatar 2023. Taremi became the first Iranian player to score twice in a FIFA World Cup match when he netted in a 6-2 loss to England in 2022 while his goals were vital again as the country secured their berth at the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027™. And it will be there that Taremi will seek to etch his name in the history books by ending his country's long wait for a record-equaling fourth AFC Asian Cup crown.

Ghoddos scores as Kalba draw with Al Ain

TEHRAN - A draw played out in the match between Al Ain and Kalba, which ended 2-2 this Thursday during the third round of the UAE Pro League Cup group stage.

The match was held at Hazza bin Zayed Stadium and proved highly exciting, with the lead changing hands between the two teams before Al Ain managed to equalize in the final minutes.

Al-Ain opened the scoring before the end of the first half, winning a penalty that Al-Hussain Rahimi converted into a goal in the 43rd minute.

Kalba did not wait long to respond; Saman Ghoddos equalized in the 47th minute with a powerful shot from inside the penalty area, and the first half ended in a 1-1 draw.

In the second half, Kalba managed to turn the match around and take the lead with a second goal in the 62nd minute, courtesy of Benjamin Tetteh, who headed the ball into the net.

Al Ain attempted to get back into the match during the remaining minutes, eventually succeeding when Alejandro Romero scored the equalizer in the 85th minute with a powerful shot from outside the penalty area, bringing the match to a 2-2 draw.

Shams Tabrizi mausoleum opens in Khoy after 20-year wait

TEHRAN- The mausoleum of Shams Tabrizi in Khoy, West Azarbaijan province, has officially opened after two decades of anticipation, marking a new step in efforts to promote Iran's Sufi heritage and cultural tourism.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, West Azarbaijan Governor Reza Rahmani, and a number of national, provincial and foreign dignitaries on Wednesday, October 7, ISNA reported.

A statue of Shams Tabrizi was also unveiled at one of Khoy's main squares during the ceremony. The square was named after the celebrated mystic, further highlighting his longstanding connection with the city's cultural identity.

The shrine complex, covering an area of 7,000 square meters, includes a domed chamber, an 8,000-volume library and research facilities. The site was inscribed on Iran's National Heritage List on October 3, 2026.

The opening is expected to strengthen Khoy's position as a destination for cultural and spiritual tourism, building on the city's historical association with Shams Tabrizi, the 13th-century Persian mystic and spiritual mentor of the renowned poet Jalal al-Din Rumi.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration, Salehi-Amiri announced plans to develop a nationwide Sufi tourism



route connecting sites associated with prominent Iranian mystics.

The proposed route would extend from Shahroud, home to the mausoleums of figures such as Sheikh Kharaqani and Bayazid Bastami, to Khoy and the shrine of Shams Tabrizi. Other sites associated with mystics and philosophers, including Suhrawardi and Sohrevard, would also be incorporated into the broader itinerary.

The minister also announced plans for a cultural and spiritual corridor linking Khoy with Konya in Türkiye, where Rumi's mausoleum is located. He said discussions and follow-up work on the cross-border initiative would resume when conditions in the country had stabilized.

Salehi-Amiri described the shrine's inauguration as a starting point for further cultural projects centered on mysticism, acknowledging the efforts of officials involved in bringing the project to completion, particularly the provincial governor.

South Korean envoy calls for practical steps to expand tourism ties with Iran

TEHRAN- South Korean Ambassador to Iran Kim Junpyo has called for turning bilateral talks on tourism, cultural heritage and handicrafts into concrete initiatives, saying the two countries should seize opportunities to expand cooperation.

Speaking on the sidelines of the first international tourism exhibition in Yazd on Wednesday, Kim said discussions between Tehran and Seoul should go beyond negotiations and produce tangible results.

The ambassador made the remarks during a meeting with Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpei, Iran's deputy tourism minister, provincial cultural heritage officials, tourism professionals and local authorities.

Kim said the exhibition was a positive experience, giving him an opportunity to become acquainted with Yazd's tourism potential and capabilities. He described the central Iranian province as a destination with a distinctive historical and cultural identity and considerable tourism attractions.

He expressed hope that his visit would help strengthen relations between Iran and South Korea, particularly in tourism.

Referring to the recent visit by Iran's minister of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts to South Korea, Kim said the two sides held constructive discussions on cultural affairs, heritage preservation, tourism and handicrafts.

He voiced hope that the visit would mark the beginning of a new phase in bilateral relations,

stressing that the discussions should lead to specific measures and practical outcomes.

Kim also welcomed a proposal to invite South Korea's tourism minister to Iran, saying he would convey the invitation proposal to Seoul and inform the minister after receiving an official invitation.

He emphasized the importance of support from the Iranian side in advancing joint initiatives and pledged to work toward promoting Yazd's tourism capacities and expanding tourism exchanges between the two countries.

For his part, Mohseni-Bandpei highlighted Yazd's diverse tourism resources, including its historical, cultural, natural and economic attractions.

He said sustainable tourism development requires greater public awareness of the sector's potential and closer links between tourism and other fields, including environmental protection.

Rural tourism, he added, could become a major driver of tourism development in Yazd, given the province's villages and their distinctive attractions.

The deputy minister also pointed to mining tourism as an area with considerable potential, citing the province's extensive mineral resources and the Chadormalu mining complex as opportunities to diversify tourism offerings.

Addressing prospects for Iran-South Korea cooperation, Mohseni-Bandpei said Iran was ready to work with the private sector to show-

vincial governor.

He also said the government intended to inaugurate one heritage structure each month, emphasizing Iran's wealth of historical and civilizational landmarks.

The shrine's opening and the unveiling of the statue represent efforts to integrate the legacy of Shams Tabrizi more visibly into Khoy's urban landscape while developing the infrastructure needed to introduce his spiritual and literary heritage to a wider audience.

The proposed route to Konya could also provide a framework for closer cultural cooperation between Iran and Türkiye, connecting places associated with the enduring spiritual relationship between Shams and Rumi.

Shams Tabrizi (c. 1185-1248) was a Persian mystic and spiritual teacher whose encounter with Jalal al-Din Rumi profoundly transformed the renowned poet's

life and literary outlook. Their relationship is regarded as one of the most influential spiritual partnerships in Persian literature and Sufi tradition.

Shams's teachings emphasized spiritual love, self-knowledge and a direct, personal experience of the divine, inspiring Rumi to develop the mystical poetry for which he became internationally celebrated. Rumi's Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi, one of the major works of Persian mystical literature, bears Shams's name and reflects the depth of their spiritual connection.

Although historical accounts of Shams's life and final years vary, his legacy remains closely intertwined with Rumi's poetry and the broader development of Sufism.

Khoy, in Iran's northwestern West Azarbaijan province, is traditionally associated with Shams and has long occupied a strategic position along routes connecting Iran with Anatolia and the Caucasus. Its historical role as a crossroads of culture, commerce and intellectual exchange makes the city a significant setting for efforts to preserve and promote the heritage of the celebrated mystic. The development of Shams's shrine and related cultural facilities is expected to further strengthen Khoy's profile as a destination for spiritual and cultural tourism, while drawing greater attention to the historical connections between Iranian mysticism and the wider Persianate world.

case its tourism capacities at international exhibitions and facilitate the participation of South Korean representatives in tourism fairs in Iran.

He said a proposal had also been made to invite South Korea's tourism minister to Iran and establish a joint technical committee to draw up a clear schedule and roadmap for cooperation.

Such a mechanism, he added, could help the two countries pursue tourism initiatives in a more coordinated and effective manner.

The Historic City of Yazd was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2017. Located in Iran's central deserts near the historic Spice and Silk Roads, the city is regarded by UNESCO as a living testimony to the intelligent use of limited resources in a desert environment.

Its traditional urban fabric developed around the qanat water-supply system, with individual districts built around qanats and communal centers. Earthen construction, underground courtyards, wind catchers and thick walls helped residents adapt to the harsh desert climate.

The historic city has retained traditional districts and a range of architectural and urban elements, including qanats, houses, bazaars, hammams, water cisterns, mosques, synagogues, Zoroastrian temples and the historic Dolat-Abad Garden. UNESCO also highlights the longstanding coexistence of Islam, Judaism and Zoroastrianism in the city.

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duction of their authenticity, while creating more opportunities for local artisans to promote and sell their work in domestic and international markets.

He described Iraq not merely as a nearby destination for Kermanshah's handicrafts, but also as a potential gateway for expanding exports and introducing the province's artistic and cultural capabilities to a wider audience.

The workshop also focused on practical ways for artisans to enter the Iraqi market, enabling participants to pursue marketing, sales and export opportunities with a better understanding of the requirements involved.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

Pezeshkian urges Caspian states to unite on long-term environmental protection plan



TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has proposed developing and implementing a long-term regional plan under the Tehran Convention to address the declining water level of the Caspian Sea.

Speaking at an extraordinary summit of Caspian littoral states in Turkmenistan on Friday, Pezeshkian said environmental cooperation could serve as an important platform for building trust and strengthening regional convergence at a time when the world is grappling with multiple crises, geopolitical rivalries, wars, unilateral sanctions, and the weakening of multilateralism.

He noted that the Tehran Convention and its protocols provide a comprehensive framework for cooperation among the Caspian littoral states on a range of environmental issues, including oil pollution, land-based sources of marine pollution, biodiversity conservation, transboundary environmental impact assessments, climate change, and the decline in the Caspian Sea's water level.

Iran believes that the first principle in addressing the crisis should be reliance on science, shared data, and regional cooperation, Pezeshkian said.

He acknowledged that a comprehensive and definitive understanding of the relative contributions of various factors to the

Caspian Sea's declining water level had yet to be achieved. Climate change, rising temperatures and evaporation, shifting precipitation patterns, changes in river flows, and human interventions must all be examined within an integrated scientific framework to identify effective solutions and mitigate the consequences, he added.

Given the rapid pace of change, the region must move beyond merely observing and describing the crisis toward a new phase of joint crisis management, Pezeshkian stressed.

He also said lasting peace, stability, and security in the Caspian region could be ensured only if the littoral states respected one another's sovereignty and legitimate interests and prevented the strategic water body from becoming an arena for destructive rivalries or the presence and interference of extra-regional powers.

The entry of fuel and pollutants into the marine environment, damage to coastal habitats, contamination of water and sediments, and harm to biodiversity could have consequences extending far beyond the immediate site of an incident, he warned.

Iran therefore emphasizes the importance of preserving the Caspian Sea's peaceful character and protecting its environment even in situations of armed conflict, the president said.

Pezeshkian underscored the central role of the Tehran Convention, which was signed by the five Caspian littoral states in 2003 and serves as the region's principal legally binding framework for protecting the marine environment of the Caspian Sea. The convention recently marked the 20th anniversary of its entry into force, with the seventh meeting of its contracting parties held in Tehran with the active participation of all littoral states.

Welcoming the summit's decision to establish a high-level commission comprising deputy heads of government from the Caspian littoral states, Iran proposed developing and implementing a long-term regional plan under the Tehran Convention to address the declining water level.

According to Pezeshkian, the proposed plan should cover at least seven key areas:

1. Joint scientific monitoring of the factors contributing to the decline in water levels, alongside the development and implementation of a comprehensive regional action plan.
2. Stronger joint mechanisms to combat marine pollution and protect biodiversity.
3. A strengthened role for the Tehran Convention, including more effective implementation mechanisms.
4. Adaptation of coastal infrastructure and ports to future changes.

frastructure and ports to future changes.

5. Protection and restoration of wetlands, habitats, and ecologically sensitive areas.

6. Support for local communities, fisheries, and livelihoods of the millions of people who depend on the Caspian Sea.

7. Mobilization of financial and technological resources to implement environmental protection and adaptation measures.

Pezeshkian said the region faced a historic choice: either passively observe the Caspian Sea's declining water level as a natural and inevitable process and wait for its consequences, or draw on science, regional cooperation, and political will to reduce the damage and strengthen the resilience of this unique ecosystem.

Iran's choice, he said, was cooperation, science, and the protection of the Caspian Sea, as well as preserving the shared heritage for future generations.

He called on the littoral states to turn the Caspian Sea into a new symbol of regional cooperation, describing it as a bridge connecting nations rather than a dividing line.

"The Caspian is not just a sea; it is a shared heritage," Pezeshkian said, adding that protecting this heritage was a shared historic responsibility for all the countries of the region.

Iranian students win BRICS Smart City 2030 Award

TEHRAN – A team of three students from Sharif University of Technology has won first place in the third International Student and Young Scientist Project Competition, "SMART CITY 2030," held in Moscow on October 5–6.

The competition brought together more than 3,000 students from leading universities across BRICS countries to develop innovative solutions for sustainable urban development.

The event is part of the international platform Sustainable Urban Development Management in BRICS Countries, which provides opportunities for students, postgraduate students, and young researchers under the age of 35 to present projects and exchange ideas.

The Iranian team's winning project, titled Minab App, was developed in memory of 168 students who were killed in a US attack on a school in Minab, Hormozgan Province, on the first day of the recent war imposed on the country.

The project proposed initiatives focused on smart-city technologies, creating safer urban environments, and improving energy and transportation systems. It also emphasized the importance of educating children from an early age and raising awareness about environmental protection as key elements of sustainable urban development, IRIB reported.

This year, young scholars from BRICS member states proposed 600 projects in seven main categories.

According to Lyudmila Sergeyevna, director of the center for Business and Management Studies at Russia's Higher School of Economics, the project of the Iranian students is one of the best ideas, saying that the proposal is highly commendable, as it emphasizes the

institutionalization of environmental protection skills among children.

DOE, Education Ministry plan to develop environmental education curriculum

The Department of Environment (DOE) and the Education Ministry have discussed the possibility of developing a national education curriculum to promote environmental responsibility and awareness among children.

Referring to the inefficiency of short-term and incoherent teaching, Mohammad Medadi, an official with the DOE, said that achieving sustainable development and boosting the country's resilience are not possible without institutionalizing an environmentally friendly attitude and lifestyle in society. So, educational approaches need to be reviewed, he added.

Environmental protection education should be taught from preschool to high school. In addition to scientific training, it should focus on ethical aspects based on cultural, religious, and social teachings.

The initiative also aims to train and empower parents and teachers, the official further noted.

Promoting environmental protection among children

In October 2025, the DOE and the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) signed a memorandum of understanding to promote environmental protection among children and young adults.

The MOU was inked by Hadi Kiadaliri, the deputy head of the DOE for education and public participation affairs, and Hamed Alamati, the IIDCYA director, at the place of IIDCYA headquarters in Tehran.

The signing ceremony was concurrent with

the second day of National Children's Week, which was observed nationwide from October 7 to 13, with the theme 'children, joy of life'.

Since education plays a key role in boosting environmental protection, the DOE is implementing a national project that aims to train eco-friendly students, dubbed 'environmental helpers', in 20 percent of elementary schools across the country.

According to Mohammad Medadi, an official with the DOE, the project was launched in cooperation with healthcare providers on September 23, 2025, the start of the past academic year.

It aims to identify students who are interested in environmental issues and encourage them to participate in a working group focusing on environmental-related subjects, IRNA quoted Medadi as saying.

These students will later train other students to raise their environmental awareness. The project is assumed to cover all schools in five years, the official added.

Moreover, informal education in the form of extracurricular activities is planned to be carried out. Consequently, the development of a national environment subject is placed on the agenda. It will contribute to creating a roadmap for formal environmental education according to which relevant content would be included in the curriculum, he further noted.

To instill eco-friendly behaviors, environmental education has to be introduced at an early age, when children are in elementary school or even preschool. However, there will be some challenges.

Education is an ongoing process; temporary or short-term courses would not induce long-standing behavioral changes. It requires time to see favorable results, Medadi said.

Iran's presence in world's top 2% of scientists nearly doubles

TEHRAN – The number of Iranian researchers included in the world's top 2% of scientists has nearly doubled, rising from 1,154 in 2020 to 2,678 in 2026, according to Scopus data provided by Elsevier.

An analysis of the rankings shows a steady upward trend in the number of Iranian researchers recognized among the world's top 2% of scientists over the past several years.

The number rose to 1,701 in 2021 and 1,941 in 2022, before increasing to 2,137 in 2023 and 2,514 in 2024. The figure reached 2,678 in 2026, ISNA reported.

The majority of Iranian researchers are from 30 universities and scientific centers; the University of Tehran, with 123 researchers, is placed first. Followed by Tehran University of Medical Sciences (112), Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (75), and Iran University of Science and Technology (74).

Tabriz University of Medical Sciences with 66 researchers, Iran University of Medical Sciences with 64 researchers, University of Tabriz with 61 researchers, and Tarbiat Modares University with 56 researchers are placed fifth to eighth.

Also, the number of highly cited Iranian researchers in the career-long index has experienced threefold growth, rising from 433 in 2020 to 1,380 in 2026.

Some 794 out of 1,380 researchers, amounting to 57.5 percent, are from 30 universities and scientific centers. University of Tehran (with 91 researchers), Sharif University of Technology (53), Amirkabir University of Technology and Tehran University of Medical Sciences (each with 48 researchers), and Iran University of Science and Technology (45), University of Tabriz and Tarbiat Modares University (each with 40 researchers) rank first to fifth.

Stanford University's list of "World's Top 2%" scientists is based on a 2 percent or above percentile rank, or the top 100,000 by c-score (with and without self-citations). This prestigious list identifies the world's leading researchers, representing approximately 2 percent of all scientists worldwide.

It encompasses standardised data on citations, h-index, and a wide range of bibliometric indicators. Researchers are classified into 22 scientific fields and 174 sub-fields, drawing from Scopus data provided by Elsevier through ICSR Lab.

The esteemed ranking, derived from Scopus database data, highlights researchers whose work has had a significant impact across various scientific disciplines.

The ranking is based on a composite indicator (c-score) calculated from six citation metrics: Total citations (NC), H-index (H), Hm-index (H-index adjusted for the number of authors), Citations to single-author papers (NCS), Citations to single or first-author papers (NCSF), Citations to single, first, or last-author papers (NCSFL).

The c-score combines these metrics to provide a comprehensive measure of a scientist's impact, accounting for both the quantity and the quality of their contributions.

The list provides two separate rankings, each offering a different perspective on a researcher's impact:

Career-long impact ranking: This evaluates a researcher's cumulative citation performance over their entire career to date.

Single-year impact ranking: This focuses on the citation impact of research produced in the most recent year.

Iran ranks first in key scientific output among Islamic countries

Iran ranks first among Islamic nations in key fields of scientific output such as quantum science, cognitive sciences, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and advanced materials, the head of the Presidential Affairs Office at the Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC) announced in August.

The country is in close competition with Turkey and Saudi Arabia in these fields, IRNA quoted Saeed Bakhtiari as saying.

He made the remarks in a press briefing on August 17, noting that the development of science in these fields has also been emphasized in national development plans.

Based on the reputable Web of Science database, Iran ranks first among Islamic countries in scientific output in some of these fields, while placing second or third in others. Overall, how-

ever, Iran holds the top position, he said.

Bakhtiari noted that in advanced materials—a multidisciplinary field spanning physics, chemistry, mechanics and materials science—Iran ranks second among Islamic countries and ninth worldwide.

He added that Iran ranks third in artificial intelligence, behind Saudi Arabia and Turkey, while in quantum science it ranks second, after Saudi Arabia.

The ISC official further said that Iran holds the top position among Islamic countries in scientific output in cognitive sciences and ranks first overall.

According to Web of Science (WoS) data, over a five-year period (from 2021 to 2025), Iran (with 32 documents) ranks first in cognitive sciences among Islamic countries.

Turkey, with 23 documents, and Saudi Arabia, with 22 documents, are placed second and third, respectively, IRNA reported.

From 2014 to 2023, Iran ranked either first or second in most fields of cognitive sciences among Islamic countries. Over the course of the decade, the country ranked first in cognitive neuroscience, cognitive rehabilitation, and cognitive linguistics with 387, 156, and 30 documents, respectively.

It ranked second in cognitive psychology (124 documents), cognitive education (561 documents), philosophy of mind (34 documents), and cognitive evaluation (898 documents). The country's best ranking globally was in cognitive neuroscience; it ranked 15.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences, with 73 documents, University of Tehran, with 39 documents, and Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, with 32 documents, ranked first to third in cognitive neuroscience. In cognitive psychology, University of Tehran (10 documents), Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (7 documents), and Allameh Tabatabai University (6 documents) were the top three universities.

In cognitive linguistics, University of Tehran (with 3 documents), Al-Zahra University (3 documents), Allameh Tabatabai University (2 documents) ranked first to third. In cognitive education, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences were placed first to third, respectively.

In cognitive rehabilitation, Tehran University of Medical Sciences (21 documents), University of Tehran (16 documents), and Iran University of Medical Sciences (12 documents) ranked first to third. The best three universities in philosophy of mind were University of Tehran, Isfahan University, and Amirkabir University of Technology.

In cognitive evaluation, Tehran University of Medical Sciences ranked first with 196 documents. Iran University of Medical Sciences (105 documents) and Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (91 documents) ranked second and third.

The country is placed second in quantum (with 216 documents) and advanced materials (with 5975 documents), after Saudi Arabia, with 283 and 6160 documents in quantum and advanced materials. Malaysia (with 154 documents) and Egypt (with 3151 documents) are placed third in quantum and advanced materials, respectively.

Despite illegal sanctions, Iran secures first place in cognitive sciences among Islamic nations and ranks ninth globally in advanced materials. Numerous prestigious Iranian universities and institutions are included in international rankings. These accomplishments underscore the country's scientific capabilities, IRIB quoted Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf as saying, addressing the 7th Turkey Educational Technologies Summit (known as TETZ 2026), held in Istanbul from June 26 to 28.

Iran serves as a great opportunity to invest in higher education and modern technologies. The country has one of the largest higher education systems in the region, with more than three million students and over seventy thousand faculty members and researchers.

Highlighting that the rapid development of emerging technologies, including AI, is fundamentally transforming human relationships and higher education systems around the world at an unprecedented pace, Simaei-Sarraf said that effective use of smart technologies requires the establishment of a system based on algorithmic transparency, educational justice, accountability, protection of learners' rights, and responsible data governance.



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OCTOBER 10, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Leniency eases hardships and facilitates difficult situation.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:51 Evening: 17:54 Dawn: 4:44 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:07 (tomorrow)

19th International Resistance Film Festival to be held in November

TEHRAN – The 19th International Resistance Film Festival will be held in November with screenings of works in various sections.

The programs and details of the various sections of the festival are being finalized, and information about the exact time of the event will be announced soon by the secretariat, Mehr reported.

The 19th International Resistance Film Festival will be held under the auspices of the Revolutionary and Sacred Defense Cinema Association.

Cinema, through the power of storytelling and imagery, plays a significant role in shaping the minds and hearts of people. It is a unique medium for revealing the truth and conveying human values.

In this context, Resistance Cinema seeks to preserve human dignity by portraying the sacrifices of peoples, defending truth, and standing against oppression and domination, while bringing stories that have been less heard or seen to audiences around the world.

With nearly four decades of history, the Resistance International Film Festival is an artistic and cinematic platform dedicated to promoting a spirit of resistance, awareness, and solidarity among the free peoples of the world.

The festival aims to discover new talents, strengthen the movement of Resistance Cinema, and foster connections among filmmakers and artists from around the world.



The 19th edition of the festival, with an international outlook, focuses on concepts including resistance, freedom, justice, human dignity, peace, hope, and progress. It seeks to present a contemporary, diverse, and vibrant perspective on Resistance Cinema and the human stories associated with it.

In this edition, resistance is not understood solely as resistance on the battlefield or in times of war. Rather, it is viewed as a broader concept encompassing human resistance against oppression, occupation, discrimination, violence, domination, and oblivion; a resistance to preserve truth, identity, freedom, human dignity, and hope for the future.

Beyond being a film festival, the event is a cultural endeavor aimed at fostering dialogue among nations and filmmakers around the world and taking a step toward the realization of justice, freedom, peace, and human dignity.

International Resistance Film Festival is regarded as one of the most prestigious international film festivals in Iran.

43rd Tehran International Short Film Festival posters unveiled

TEHRAN – Posters for various sections of the 43rd Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF) were unveiled in Tehran on Thursday.

At the ceremony, in addition to unveiling the main poster and other posters of various sections of this year's edition of the festival, there was a discussion about the approach of the 43rd festival, the design of the idea, and the implementation of the poster based on the characteristics of the event, Mehr reported.

The 43rd Tehran International Short Film Festival, with the approach of “Iranian Thought; Global Narrative” and under the direction of Behrouz Shoaibi, will be held from October 15 to 20, 2021 at the Mellat Cinema Complex in Tehran.

The Tehran International Short Film Festival stands as one of Asia's most prestigious and widely recognized platforms for short films, celebrated for its dedication to creative excellence, innovation, and the promotion of diverse voices in cinema.

Over the course of its illustrious history, the TISFF has evolved into a vibrant hub for global storytelling, attracting thousands of submissions from filmmakers worldwide—a reflection of its unparalleled reputation as a cornerstone for emerging talent and visionary cinematic voices.



work of filmmakers and alumni.

To support emerging filmmakers and promote diversity, the TISFF allows free film submissions, ensuring financial barriers never hinder talented filmmakers from sharing their unique visions.

Organized by the Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS), a leading organization in short film production and education, the TISFF benefits from an extensive infrastructure comprising 57 branches across Iran and a thriving network of filmmakers and alumni.

The IYCS supports the production of countless short films annually and trains aspiring filmmakers each year. Many of its graduates have risen to prominence as some of the most celebrated filmmakers in international cinema, reinforcing its profound influence on the global filmmaking stage.

An OSCARS-qualifying festival, the TISFF is renowned for embracing innovation while celebrating cinematic tradition.

For its 43rd edition, TISFF proudly showcases its established categories of fiction, documentary, animation, and experimental films—genres that have long been at the heart of its commitment to cinematic excellence, with the Grand Prize winner becoming eligible for Academy Awards consideration.

As ever, TISFF remains a global platform for filmmakers to present their work, fostering the evolution of short film as a compelling artistic and cultural medium.

Reading performance of Bertolt Brecht's “The Caucasian Chalk Circle” in Tehran

TEHRAN – The Nofel Loshato Theater in Tehran will host the reading performance of the play “The Caucasian Chalk Circle” by the German modernist playwright Bertolt Brecht on Saturday night, October 10.

Directed by Morteza Sabahi, the play will be read by Abbas Sherizadeh, Alireza Sharif, Hossein Mousavi, Hashem Issalou, Zeinab Mohiabad, Parisa Davoudi, Bahar Same'eh, Masoud Mahmoudi, Farshad Asadi, Delaram Shakeri, Paeiz Ghorbani, Alireza Motamed, Arian Nayeib-ol-Sadr, Sahar Kilani, Farhaneh Kalantari, Pegah Asharizadeh, and Fardin Kasehpour, Mehr reported.

An example of Brecht's epic theater, the play is a parable about a peasant girl who rescues a baby and becomes a better mother than the baby's wealthy biological parents.

The play was written in 1944 while Brecht was living in the United States. It was translated into English by Brecht's friend and admirer Eric Bentley. After Bentley failed to have it programmed at the University of Minnesota, where he taught, it was premiered by his student, Henry Goodman, in a student production at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, in 1948.



“The Caucasian Chalk Circle” is one of Brecht's most celebrated works and one of the most regularly performed German plays.

It reworks Brecht's earlier short story “Der Augsburger Kreidekreis.” Both derive from the 14th-century Chinese play “The Chalk Circle” by Li Xingdao.

Brecht, in his typical anti-realist style, uses the device of a “play within a play”. The “frame” play is set in the Soviet Union around the end of the Second World War. It shows a dispute between two communes, the Collective Fruit Farm Galinsk fruit growing commune and the Collective Goat Farmers, over who is to own and manage an area of farm land after the Germans have retreated from a village and left it abandoned.

A parable has been organised by one group, an old folk tale, to be played out to cast light on the dispute.

The Singer, Arkadi Tcheidse, arrives with his band of musicians, then tells the peasants the parable, which forms the main narrative, and intertwines throughout much of the play. The Singer often takes on the thoughts of characters, enhances the more dramatic scenes with stronger narration than simple dialogue, and is responsible for most scene and time changes. Often the role is accompanied by several “musicians” that help the Singer keep the play running smoothly.

At the end, he states that the land should go to those who will use it most productively, the fruit growers, and not those who had previous ownership.

Gaza playwright Ali Abu Yasin wins English PEN award

Ali Abu Yassin, a playwright from Gaza who continued writing even as Israel's genocidal campaign devastated the world around him, has won a prestigious award in London.

“This prize is great not only for me, but for Gaza, Palestine, and all the Palestinian people,” Ali Abu Yasin, who was named on Thursday as “Writer of Courage 2026” by the literary group English PEN, told Al Jazeera.

The 62-year-old began writing plays and mastering the oud as a teenager in al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza, one of the largest in the Strip and a target of recent attacks.

“It's how I was born, I've wanted to express myself using art since my childhood,” he told Al Jazeera.

After the war began in October, 2023, Abu Yasin stopped writing plays and instead wrote about life under Israeli bombardment.

Abu Yasin said for the first two years, he wrote about the situation in Gaza as Palestinians fled and feared for their lives.

“There was no theater; it was impossible to have a theater be-

cause Gaza was being destroyed,” the writer said, shaking his head.

Since 2023, Israel has killed more than 74,000 people in Gaza and the majority of survivors have been displaced several times over.

Abu Yasin works with actors who now rehearse their lines in makeshift tents, against the sound of gunfire.

“I was near death four, five times. I saw people around me die. We lived by chance, and those who died, died by chance,” Abu Yasin told Al Jazeera.

“My son was trapped under rubble; my house was bombed. So, during those two years, I was trying just to provide some safety to my family. To protect them from famine. And to document what was happening, so the world can hear my voice before I die.”

After a break, he wrote several screenplays that he hid and carried with him throughout displacement.

In 2004, Abu Yasin began working with the Said Al-Mishal Theater, a hub for Palestinian culture in Gaza City that was lev-

elled in a 2018 Israeli bombing.

Leading playwrights and theater directors described the attack as “obliteration of this symbol of Palestinian culture and identity” in a letter to The Guardian newspaper.

In 2008, Abu Yasin began writing the Gaza Monologues, a series illustrating life in Gaza, both moments of joy and of pain.

A few weeks ago, Abu Yasin left Gaza with the support of an artist residency program in France.

“I didn't actually leave the war. The war lives in me, Gaza lives in me,” he said.

He has found himself conserving small amounts of water and minimizing waste, habits he developed by living through the humanitarian crisis.

The award ceremony aligns with his trip to France, allowing him to attend in person largely by fortunate coincidence. For English PEN, the privilege of an in-person ceremony at the British Library is not taken for granted.

“For many years, writers living in Gaza have been among those with the most limited freedom

of movement in the world. We recognize this and the direct impact it has on their freedom of expression,” an English PEN spokesperson told Al Jazeera.

Abu Yasin's recent play, “50 Minutes,” was shown in Gaza and tells the story of genocide and mourning. Actors rehearsed in a makeshift tent in a car park, many of them without any previous theater experience.

Abu Yasin was nominated by the British academic and cultural critic Jacqueline Rose, who won the 2026 PEN Pinter Prize.

The Writer of Courage “is awarded to an author who is active in defence of freedom of expression, often at great risk to their own safety and liberty, and shares the PEN Pinter Prize with the winner,” says English PEN.

The organisation is the United Kingdom branch of PEN International, a global association of writers dedicated to “championing freedom of expression and literary advocacy worldwide.”

English PEN joined PEN International in calling for an arms embargo on Israel and condemning the killing of Palestinian writers.

Cartoon of Day



GAZA GENOCIDE

Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen