

Op-ed



Give Riyadh a mirror

By Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-Chief

TEHRAN - In an article published on Monday, the editor-in-chief of the Saudi daily Asharq Al-Awsat used the Ansarullah strike on Riyadh airport as a pretext to level a series of sweeping — and at times bizarre — accusations.

The strangest claim comes where he writes of the attack: “Rarely in the history of warfare has a civilian airport crowded with passengers been the target of an attack.” One has to ask: Is Mr. Charbel suffering from memory loss, or is he deliberately seeking to conceal and distort the facts?

It would be possible to compile an extremely long list of Saudi airstrikes on civilian targets in Yemen since Riyadh launched its invasion of its southern neighbor in 2015. Even mourning ceremonies and wedding celebrations of the oppressed people of Yemen were not spared from bombardment, time and again turned into bloodbaths — in some cases with up to 150 victims killed in a single strike.

Let us examine just one case in greater detail. At midday on August 9, 2018, a bus full of schoolchildren stopped at the local market in Dahyan, in Saada province. The students were returning from a picnic — likely experiencing the happiest day of their lives.

Your country's fighter jets had been circling in the sky above the area for nearly an hour. They were armed with MK-82 laser-guided bombs — bombs you had purchased from the United States just a year earlier. The missiles were fired, and moments later, the happiest day in the lives of 40 children became the last day of their lives. Most of them were under the age of 10. ▶ Page 3

Trump targets anti-war Muslim congresswoman three weeks before midterms

By staff writer

TEHRAN — U.S. federal agents with Homeland Security Investigations executed a search warrant early Monday morning at the Washington residence of Representative Ilhan Omar.

Law enforcement personnel blocked off the surrounding street and removed multiple boxes labeled as “seized evidence” from the premises.

CBS News cited sources familiar with the case indicating that the Justice Department operation centers on decades-old immigration forms filed by Omar's late father when her family arrived in the United States as refugees from Somalia. ▶ Page 5

Can Saudi Arabia find a viable path out of Yemen?

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Saudi Arabia is once again testing its options for dealing with Ansarallah, hoping that what failed the first time might succeed the next.

It tried a war in March 2015 under the banner of the “Arab Coalition,” and the result was a brutal conflict that devastated everything in its path. The war dragged on for eight years before the guns fell silent, without achieving its objectives. Today, it seems decision-makers in Riyadh have fallen prey to the belief that whatever force fails to achieve can be accomplished by using even more force. The war is being reignited, this time with greater intensity and ferocity. ▶ Page 5



A sign stands behind a fence at the RAF Fairford airbase, Gloucestershire, Britain, September 27, 2026.

London Bombs London Blames

Iran rejects Fairford attribution as baseless, says London cannot evade accountability for role in aggression against Iran: Foreign Ministry

No charges, no explosives, no evidence — yet London blames Iran; how do freed suspects with gasoline vans prove a plot?

By Seyed Mohammad Torabi

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry has strongly condemned Britain's accusation linking Tehran to an alleged security incident at RAF Fairford air base, dismissing it as an ugly plot designed to fuel Iranophobia and evade accountability for London's direct participation in the ongoing American-Zionist military aggression against the Iranian nation.

In a formal statement issued late Monday, the Ministry said the British government's claim attributing the alleged incident to Iran is categorically rejected, holding London and the designers and perpetrators of what it called a clumsy false-flag operation responsible for all consequences arising from the fabrication.

“The government of Britain cannot, without presenting solid evidence and reasons, shirk its political and legal responsibility for its claims and their possible consequences by hiding behind ambiguous phrases,” the statement said. “Resort to terms such as ‘highly likely’ and ‘al-

most certainly’ to insinuate the credibility of attributing the alleged incident to Iran is a blatant attempt to evade responsibility for baseless accusations.”

The Ministry further recalled Britain's track record of fabricating security claims against other countries – which in some cases have led to devastating tensions and conflicts in West Asia – stressing that London must be held accountable for insisting on an approach that undermines international peace and security.

The strongly-worded rebuke came hours after British Prime Minister Andy Burnham told Parliament on Monday that a suspected plot last month against RAF Fairford, a U.S.-operated bomber base in southern England, was

“highly likely to have been coordinated in Iran” and “almost certainly directed by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.”

“We will not tolerate these threats on our soil,” Burnham claimed, pledging to “crack

down on Iran's use of criminal networks, using our full range of powers to target them and their funding streams” and to bring further sanctions to restrict the capacity of Iran and the IRGC.

Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband announced that London had summoned the Iranian ambassador and imposed sanctions on two Iranian nationals – Ruhollah Bazghandi, described as head of IRGC counterespionage operations, and Shahram Ali Reza Tamarzadeh Jakki, described as a facilitator for the Zindashti criminal network – including asset freezes, travel bans and director disqualification, for their alleged role in facilitating hostile activity. ▶ Page 3



Baku arrests dozens as hijab ban empties schools

By staff writer

TEHRAN — “I don't have a single B on my report card. Is this the respect I get?” The girl standing at the school gate was crying, and the officials in front of her did not move. “Have I ever done anything wrong? And now you're telling me I can't enter the school. Why should I have to give up my religion?”

Video of the exchange spread across Azerbaijan within hours. Then Instagram and TikTok began failing for many users.

On September 21, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted Resolution No. 309, which bans school clothing that breaks uniformity or conflicts with the “principle of secularism.” ▶ Page 5

Iran warns US against renewed military action, stresses readiness for diplomacy and defense

TEHRAN — Iran has warned the United States against any renewed military action, saying the consequences would extend beyond the region, while reaffirming its readiness to pursue diplomacy on the basis of realistic proposals and mutual respect for commitments.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs, made the remarks in separate interviews with Russia's RIA Novosti news agency and Al Araby television network, stressing that Washington must adapt to regional realities and abandon military threats in favor of a diplomatic solution. ▶ Page 2

Iran pursues fate of pilots in Qatar, vows justice for Minab school victims

TEHRAN — Iran is pursuing diplomatic and legal efforts to protect its national interests, determine the status of Iranian pilots in Qatar and secure justice for the victims of the February 28 attack on a primary school in Minab, government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani said on Tuesday.

Speaking at her weekly press conference, Mohajerani said the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs were following up on the situation of the Iranian pilots in Qatar, adding that Doha had pledged cooperation and repeatedly expressed its readiness to help clarify their status. ▶ Page 3

Government, parliament must reach a common understanding to manage economic conditions: Qalibaf

TEHRAN- Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, emphasizing the necessity of coordination and consensus between the government and parliament in managing the country's economic conditions, said: “Accurate assessment of the current situation and outlining upcoming scenarios can provide the basis for more effective decision-making to improve people's livelihoods and manage economic challenges in the second half of the year.”

According to an IRNA report from the parliament, a joint meeting of a group of ministers and senior economic officials of the government and the heads of the economic committees of the parliament was held on the topic of examining the economic and livelihood situation of the people, with the presence of Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, the Speaker of the Parliament. ▶ Page 4

North Khorasan, the province I almost missed

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN - A friend's suggestion was all it took to set me on the road to North Khorasan, one of the few Iranian provinces I had never visited and, until then, had rarely considered as a travel destination.

We set out to explore the province over three days, keeping costs low and relying on local guides and the knowledge of people familiar with the region. What followed was a journey through mountain strongholds, traditional homestays, Turkmen hospitality, living musical traditions, local festivals and a secluded valley where a man had spent years building a world of his own. By the end, I had discovered how easily a place can remain off one's travel map until the moment one finally gives it a chance. ▶ Page 6

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Trump's credibility under question

Khorasan argued that Trump's contradictory behavior has weakened his credibility. Pro-Israel circles in Washington portray Trump's unpredictability as a sign of strength, claiming that Iran should always remain uncertain about his next move. However, this approach comes at a cost. When a president's statements are seen as unreliable, even promises of agreements or conflict resolution lose their ability to inspire confidence. For Iran, the political lesson is straightforward. Strategic decisions should be based on measurable actions, verifiable commitments, and the preservation of leverage. Regional developments have created conditions in which Iran sees resistance to pressure from Trump as necessary for protecting its security and interests. The country is currently working to rebuild its military capabilities, a process that should be accompanied by active diplomacy. Stronger deterrence would increase the cost of military action for the United States, while diplomatic efforts should raise the political costs associated with Washington's perceived lack of credibility.

Jam-e-Jam: Marco Rubio's efforts are ineffective

Jam-e-Jam discussed recent remarks by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Athens, describing them as unconvincing and lacking both scientific and moral foundations. Rubio is attempting to justify what it views as an unjustified war allegedly launched by the United States, with Israeli support, against Iran. More than a year has passed since the conflict began, and Rubio's comments represent a delayed attempt to provide a historical rationale for it. Struggles for power inside the United States often impose costs on the wider world, with Iran currently bearing a significant portion of those burdens. The speech was designed to legitimize the use of military force and to provide Republicans with historical and ideological backing. In the paper's view, such arguments are intended to compensate for political weaknesses and help Republicans avoid setbacks in competition with Democrats.

Resalat: Direct US involvement in Yemen would escalate tensions

Resalat examined recent developments in Yemen and placed them within the broader framework of regional tensions. The paper argued that direct US involvement in the conflict could expand the scope of hostilities beyond a regional dispute and transform it into a broader confrontation. A key aspect of the crisis is the tendency to interpret events in Yemen solely through the lens of rivalry between Tehran and Washington. Such a view minimizes the role of Yemeni political actors and overlooks the domestic and historical roots of the conflict. The newspaper noted that the growing connection between developments in Yemen and the larger confrontation between Iran and the United States has

increased the strategic importance of the country. Greater foreign military intervention would make it more likely that the crisis evolves into a component of wider regional competition rather than remaining focused on Yemen's internal political disputes.

Donya-e-Eqtasad: Elections will not change Washington's policy

Donya-e-Eqtasad analyzed Tehran's perspective on its ongoing confrontation with Washington. According to the paper, Iran's main concern is not only military pressure but also a deep distrust of US commitments. Iranian policymakers believe they can withstand pressure and impose additional costs on both the United States and the global economy. Tehran remains skeptical about Washington's willingness to honor agreements, including those signed by Trump himself. From this perspective, US elections do not guarantee a change in policy because, according to some Iranian analysts, Democrats and Republicans differ more in their methods of dealing with Iran than in their overall approach. The paper noted that indirect negotiations between the two countries continue, but disagreements over the sequence of implementing commitments remain a major obstacle. Iran is reportedly seeking a return to the framework of the short-term June agreement while also obtaining economic benefits that, in its view, were not fully realized under previous arrangements.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Successful economic diplomacy in Africa requires institutional support

Arman-e-Emrooz argued that Africa is no longer a peripheral region in international politics but an increasingly important part of the emerging global order. For Iran, one of the most significant developments is the growing geopolitical importance of the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. Recent events in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait have demonstrated close links between the security of that region and the security of the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and major trade routes connecting Asia and Europe. As a result, developments there have direct and indirect implications for Iran's strategic environment. The newspaper emphasized that Iran's primary challenge is transforming potential opportunities into sustainable economic partnerships. Past experience, it argued, has shown that economic relations with African countries have often been limited by inadequate financial mechanisms, weak transportation links, insufficient market knowledge, and a lack of consistent private-sector engagement. Consequently, the article concluded that successful economic diplomacy in Africa requires institutional support and infrastructure development. Political agreements alone, without practical economic foundations, are unlikely to produce lasting and meaningful cooperation.

Iran, Azerbaijan seek to translate bilateral agreements into concrete action

TEHRAN — Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni has underscored Tehran's commitment to strengthening ties with Azerbaijan, implementing bilateral agreements and expanding cooperation across a broad range of areas of mutual interest.

Momeni traveled to Baku on October 12 at the head of an Iranian delegation to hold talks with Azerbaijani officials on strengthening bilateral relations, following up on existing agreements and exploring ways to expand cooperation between the two neighboring countries. The visit focused on advancing practical cooperation, particularly in economic and trade affairs, security and border management, as well as other areas of mutual interest to the two countries' interior ministries.

In an interview with Azerbaijan's Trend news agency on Tuesday, Momeni described relations between the two countries as rooted in shared history, culture, religion, and social interests, saying these common bonds provide a solid foundation for further enhancing bilateral ties.

He noted that relations between Tehran and Baku have been moving in a positive direction, with ties advancing over the past two years amid constructive relations between the presidents of the two countries.

Momeni said discussions during his visit and the high-level meetings held as part of the trip focused on ways to deepen bilateral cooperation. He emphasized that translating agreements reached between the two sides into practical steps and ensuring their implementation was among the key objectives of the visit.

The minister described the talks as constructive, highlighting the strong level of cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan in economic and trade affairs, security, border management and other areas falling within the responsibilities of the two countries' interior ministries.

He added that the two sides had agreed to establish joint working groups to address key issues, follow up on bilateral commitments and identify ways to further advance relations.

Iran warns US against renewed military action, stresses readiness for diplomacy and defense

From page 1 ► “If the United States once again chooses the military option, the consequences will not be confined to the region,” Gharibabadi warned, according to his remarks to RIA Novosti. He said Washington must learn from past mistakes and decide whether to continue pursuing confrontation or engage in diplomacy.

The Iranian diplomat emphasized that Tehran had consistently maintained a constructive approach to negotiations and remained prepared for all possible scenarios. He stressed, however, that a diplomatic settlement required realistic proposals and a willingness by the US side to meet its commitments.

Iran finalizing response to US comments

In his interview with Al Araby, Gharibabadi said Iran was finalizing its response to US comments and concerns regarding the proposal Tehran had submitted in New York. Once consultations are complete, Iran will convey its final position through mediators, he added.



Gharibabadi said Iran continued to welcome diplomatic initiatives and had spared no effort to facilitate dialogue with relevant parties. Tehran's continued engagement in the diplomatic process, he noted, reflected its political flexibility and commitment to finding a solution.

He nevertheless underscored that Iran's preparedness to defend itself was no less firm than its readiness to negotiate, making clear that diplomatic engagement should not be mistaken for a lack of defensive re-

solve.

The deputy foreign minister also stressed that the United States must fulfill its own obligations if it expects progress in negotiations. Iran, he said, had not violated its commitments, while Washington had failed to honor its obligations under the Islamabad memorandum of understanding.

Tehran calls for US compliance with commitments

Gharibabadi argued that Iran could not reasonably be expected to demonstrate further flex-

Iran develops countermeasures against Starlink

TEHRAN — Iran has developed technical capabilities to identify and disrupt unauthorized Starlink satellite internet terminals, while intensifying its efforts through international regulatory channels to compel the service to comply with telecommunications rules governing its operations inside Iranian territory.

Mohammad Amin Aghamiri, secretary of Iran's Supreme Council of Cyberspace, said Iranian specialists had developed and tested several systems to identify and manage satellite communications, adding that one of these technologies had been deployed during unrest in December.

Aghamiri said approximately 80% of Starlink communication packets in Iran had been disrupted during that period, while much of the remaining traffic had become largely ineffective.

He stressed that Iran's countermeasures extended beyond interference with the Global Positioning System (GPS), saying domestic specialists had developed other technologies to identify satellite user terminals and interfere with communications between transmitters and receivers.

Identifying unauthorized Starlink terminals remains a priority for Iranian authorities, he added, arguing that the technology could be countered through a range of technical measures.

Beyond GPS interference: identifying and disabling terminals

Starlink, operated by SpaceX, delivers broadband internet through a constellation of satellites in low Earth orbit. Users connect through specialized ground-based equipment known as user terminals, which communicate with satellites passing overhead.

The system's architecture enables terminals to switch between satellites as their positions change, helping maintain connectivity. This network design also presents challenges for authorities seeking to identify individual terminals operating without

authorization across a large territory.

Technical interference with satellite communications and the remote deactivation of user terminals are distinct approaches. The former seeks to degrade or interrupt the communications link, while the latter involves the satellite operator identifying a terminal's location and disabling its access to the network.

Iran's Supreme Council of Cyberspace secretary said the country's countermeasures were not limited to GPS disruption and that Iranian specialists had developed additional capabilities to address satellite communications. His remarks point to a broader focus on terminal identification and communications interference rather than reliance on a single technical method.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has separately confirmed that Starlink has the technical capability to geolocate user terminals and disable them remotely. At its 100th Radio Regulations Board meeting, the ITU noted that Starlink had identified and disabled more than 2,500 terminals operating illegally in a particular area, demonstrating the system's capacity to restrict access geographically.

The ITU's findings are significant to Iran's argument that the operator can take more direct action against terminals operating in territories where its services have not been authorized.

Iran takes Starlink dispute to international regulators

Iran's objections to Starlink's operations are not confined to technical and security concerns. Tehran has pursued the issue through the ITU for several years, arguing that terminals transmitting from within Iranian territory must comply with the country's national telecommunications regulations and applicable international rules.

Aghamiri said Iran's Ministry of Communications had submitted multiple complaints and supporting documents to the ITU over the past two to three years. Tehran has also



raised the matter with the relevant Norwegian regulatory authority and the US side, while Iran's Foreign Ministry has issued a formal warning to Norway.

The dispute centers on the authorization of satellite transmissions and the responsibilities of the administrations associated with Starlink's satellite-system filings. Under the ITU framework, satellite transmissions from within a country's territory must comply with applicable regulatory requirements, including provisions governing authorization to operate transmitting earth stations.

In October, Iran formally protested to Norway over the 'continued failure' to take effective action against unauthorized Starlink operations. The Foreign Ministry summoned Norwegian Ambassador to Tehran Paul Bjornstad and called for immediate measures to halt transmissions from terminals operating without authorization.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran has reached developed nations' level in nuclear science, says AEOI chief

TEHRAN — Iran has attained a level of nuclear science and technology comparable to that of developed countries and is now manufacturing domestically the equipment and systems required by its national industries, Vice President and Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) chief Mohammad Eslami said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a ceremony marking National Standard Day, Eslami highlighted the role of scientific expertise, innovation and effective management in advancing Iran's technological capabilities, saying the country had the human and technical resources needed to become a leading force in science and technology.

He stressed that management should create the conditions for talented individuals to flourish and ensure that scientific achievements translate into tangible benefits for the Iranian people.

Domestic production counters restrictions

Eslami said opposition to Iran's access to nuclear technology would not undermine the country's scientific capabilities, emphasizing that Iran had committed no wrongdoing in pursuing technological advancement.

He also referred to attacks by Israel and the United States on industrial infrastructure, including sensitive processes at refineries, petrochemical plants and steel

facilities. According to Eslami, these attacks targeted industrial control systems and instrumentation essential to maintaining production processes.

He said foreign suppliers had refused to provide or repair certain equipment, prompting Iranian specialists to develop and manufacture domestic alternatives that meet current standards and can be supplied to industrial operators.

The AEOI chief presented this domestic manufacturing capacity as an example of how Iranian expertise could address supply constraints and sustain industrial operations despite external restrictions.

Nuclear technology as a driver of development

Eslami described nuclear technology as a tool for improving people's lives, strengthening national capabilities and supporting economic and technological development. He also highlighted the contribution of a relatively young generation of specialists, noting that the average age of professionals involved in scientific and technological achievements in the field was approximately 35.

His remarks underscored the importance of investing in domestic scientific talent and translating research and technological advances into practical applications across the economy.

London Bombs, London Blames

Iran rejects Fairford attribution as baseless, says London cannot evade accountability for role in aggression against Iran: Foreign Ministry

From Page 1 ► Iran's Ambassador to London, Seyed Ali Mousavi, who was summoned by UK Minister for the Middle East Stephen Doughty, categorically rejected any Iranian role and urged the British side to present evidence supporting its allegations if it possesses any, according to IRNA. He also expressed Tehran's readiness to cooperate with the investigation to clarify the facts.

The Iranian Embassy in London had already on September 28 "categorically" rejected "unfounded and malicious speculations" linking Tehran to the arrests near Fairford, warning they would only fuel Iranophobia propaganda in Britain.

The diplomatic escalation was accompanied by a joint political statement issued Monday by the foreign ministers of 29 countries – including the UK, the United States, most European states, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – condemning "in the strongest terms Iran's use of violent attacks, including acts of lethal plotting, arson, sabotage, cyber-attacks, and other hybrid activities against us and our partners."

The statement explicitly endorsed London's attribution, saying: "We recognise the United Kingdom's attribution of Iran's involvement in the incident at RAF Fairford on 27 September. The UK has also concluded this event demonstrates the IRGC's continued willingness to project hostile activity beyond its borders through covert networks and proxy actors."

Tehran says that cascade – from an unexplained local arrest to prime-ministerial attribution to instant multilateral endorsement and fresh sanctions, all without a single document made public – is precisely the hallmark of a coordinated smear campaign.

What actually happened at Fairford?

According to British police and media reports, in the early hours of September 27, five British men in their 20s were arrested in the vicinity of RAF Fairford on suspicion of terrorism and explosives offences. Two more arrests followed in subsequent days, bringing the total to seven. Counter Terrorism Policing launched an investigation into a suspected foreign state link.

Yet more than two weeks later, the source and nature of the threat remain shrouded in mystery. No one has been charged. All suspects have been released on bail under strict conditions.

Police later acknowledged they had found only a quantity of accelerant – gasoline – in three vans linked to the initial suspects, but no explosives, no detonators, no drones, no weapons-grade material. Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood told Parliament the coordinator was assessed to be "a known individual based in Iran," but she did not name that person nor disclose any supporting communications, financial records, travel data, or other intelligence.

U.S. officials, speaking anonymously to Reuters, spoke of a suspected Iranian plot to carry out a "complex drone attack" on the facility. Last week, U.S. President Donald Trump claimed an Iran-linked threat intended "to kill as many American troops and destroy as many U.S. planes as possible" had prompted a decision to withdraw American bombers. The Pentagon confirmed the B-1 and B-52 bombers stationed at Fair-



ford have now been redeployed to their home bases.

London then upgraded its language in stages: first "strong indications," then on Monday "highly likely coordinated in Iran, almost certainly directed by the IRGC." The two Iranians sanctioned on Monday were not explicitly identified as the organizers of Fairford.

For Tehran and for independent legal observers, that timeline raises far more questions than it answers.

A terrorism plot without terrorists?

The first and most serious ambiguity, Iranian officials stress, is elementary criminal procedure: if this was a genuine terrorist operation against a strategic NATO air base, why are all alleged perpetrators free on bail?

Under British counter-terrorism law, police can detain suspects for extended periods with judicial approval when the threat is deemed grave and evidence is substantive. The unconditional release – without charge, without presentation to a court of any explosive device, without even an official charge sheet linking the men to any foreign handler – is difficult to reconcile with claims of an IRGC-directed mass-casualty plot.

Second: how can a government accuse a sovereign state of directing an attack while admitting it has no evidence to show? Burnham offered no photographs, no intercepted communications, no money trail, no travel records, not even a surname of the alleged coordinator in Iran. Miliband's sanctions designation speaks of "facilitating hostile activity" in general terms for Europe and the U.S., not of commanding the Fairford vans.

Iran's Foreign Ministry put it bluntly: London cannot hide behind "highly likely" and "almost certainly." Those phrases, Tehran notes, have a notorious pedigree in British politics – from the Iraq WMD dossier to the Skripal affair – where probabilistic language was later used to justify concrete sanctions, expulsions and even war, without ever meeting the standard of proof.

Third: what was actually found? Gasoline in vans is not a military capability. It is legally purchasable at any petrol station, and British police themselves confirmed no explosives were present. To extrapolate from jerry cans to an IRGC external operation to kill Americans en masse is, in Tehran's view, a leap that no court would accept, but one that fits a propaganda need.

Fourth: who are the suspects? All are British nationals in their 20s, with no announced Iranian nationality, no announced travel to Iran, no announced IRGC affiliation. If Tehran had recruited and directed them, London has shown no recruitment chain. The claim of

direction by the IRGC's counterespionage chief, Bazghandi, was asserted without any published link to Fairford at all.

"How do they accuse Iran while they do not even have a small clue to present?" an Iranian diplomat asked. "If they have documents, present them. If they are willing to cooperate, as Ambassador Mousavi has offered, accept cooperation. Trial by press release is not investigation."

Tehran sees in this pattern what IRNA on Monday called "a coordinated wave to smear Iran" – a series of suspicious incidents recently attributed to Tehran by the U.S. president and senior Western officials without offering any evidence.

The bombers that fled: why Fairford matters

The irony, Iranian analysts note, is that while London portrays itself as a victim of extraterritorial threats, Fairford itself has been an active platform for extraterritorial aggression against Iran.

RAF Fairford, about 160 kilometers (100 miles) west of London in Gloucestershire, is not an ordinary Royal Air Force station. It is the U.S. Air Force's preferred forward operating location in Europe for heavy bombers. Its 3,000-meter runway, vast munitions areas and specialized maintenance facilities allow it to host B-52 Stratofortress and B-1 Lancer bombers that cannot be permanently based in crowded continental bases.

Since the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran began on February 28 – with surprise strikes that martyred several Iranian leaders and officials, including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, according to regional reports – Fairford has served as a critical staging point for American air operations against Iran.

In other words, U.S. bombers took off from British soil, refueled by NATO tankers, guided by NATO intelligence, to bomb Iranian territory. Their sudden withdrawal last week under the pretext of an Iranian threat only confirms, in Tehran's assessment, the base's combat role: you do not evacuate strategic bombers from a base that has nothing to do with the war.

Iran has repeatedly and openly stated a clear legal doctrine: any base used to attack its territory is a legitimate military target under the right of self-defense enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. That is a public, state-level deterrent posture – the opposite of covertly hiring young Britons with gasoline cans. Conflating the two, Tehran argues, is deliberate.

Britain's hidden hand in the war on Iran

Far more significant than one night in Gloucestershire, Tehran says, is Britain's sustained, if less visible, participation in the war that began in February.

London has provided three layers of support to the American-Israeli aggression, Iranian officials and Western reporting indicate:

First, basing and logistics. Beyond Fairford, Britain has opened its airspace, its Cyprus bases at Akrotiri and Dhekelia, its intelligence facilities and its naval logistics to the U.S. war effort. RAF tankers have supported air bridges toward West Asia. British officials have not denied that U.S. aircraft engaged in operations against Iran have transited UK-controlled infrastructure.

Second, political and intelligence cover. London, alongside Paris and Berlin, has consistently endorsed Washington's narrative of Iranian escalation while remaining silent on the initial U.S.-Israeli strikes and on repeated Israeli attacks on Iranian nuclear, military and civilian infrastructure – including the strike on a girls' school in Minab that martyred schoolchildren. British intelligence-sharing within the Five Eyes and NATO frameworks has fed directly into targeting and missile-defense operations in defense of Israel and Gulf-based U.S. assets.

Third, direct military engagement. The British government admitted its forces participated in what it termed defensive actions against Iranian missiles and drones aimed at Israel and at allied interests in the Gulf, positioning Royal Navy destroyers and RAF fighters as a shield for the aggressor while claiming non-belligerency.

It is this complicity, Tehran argues, that London now seeks to obscure by casting itself as the victim of Iranian terrorism. Accusing the IRGC of plotting on English soil shifts attention from English runways being used to bomb Iranian cities.

"The ugly plot to advance the Iranophobia campaign and escape accountability for participation in the American-Zionist military aggression against the Iranian nation," as the Foreign Ministry phrased it, is therefore not rhetorical excess but a legal argument: a co-belligerent cannot claim the immunity of a neutral and then criminalize the self-defense discourse of the state it helped attack.

International law scholars sympathetic to neither side have similarly warned that the 29-country statement – which speaks of Iranian "lethal plotting, arson, sabotage, cyber-attacks" without referencing the ongoing bombing of Iran, the U.S. withdrawal of bombers from a combat base, or Britain's own admitted hosting of strike aircraft – presents a one-sided picture that undermines its credibility.

Tehran's position is unequivocal: it had no involvement in Fairford, it is ready to assist a genuine technical investigation, and it demands evidence. Until London produces verifiable proof – names, transfers, communications subject to judicial scrutiny – the case will be remembered, in Iran's words, alongside previous fabricated security dossiers that paved the way for aggression in West Asia, not as counter-terrorism but as information warfare to sustain an unlawful war.

One IRGC serviceman was also martyred during the confrontation, the headquarters added.

Sistan-Baluchestan shares borders with Pakistan and Afghanistan, making border security and efforts to prevent the movement of armed groups key priorities for Iranian security agencies.

Give Riyadh a mirror



A child stands next to a Yemeni school bus that exploded in the Saudi airstrike on Dahyan on Aug. 9, 2018, killing 40 schoolchildren

From Page 1 ► Have you ever considered that almost everything about the war you unleashed on Yemen bears a striking resemblance to America's wars? You named your operation "Decisive Storm"; America had "Desert Storm" on its record. The war launched in partnership with Israel against Iran was dubbed "Epic Fury." You struck Yemeni civilians again and again — and America has never fought a war without repeated attacks on civilian targets. Does the chilling parallel between the Dahyan atrocity and the Minab school not give you pause? And there is one final, telling similarity: Riyadh, too, tried to manufacture a veneer of legitimacy for its aggression by assembling a nominal coalition — precisely what Washington does in most of its military adventures.

Have you ever asked yourselves why, despite possessing such modern and advanced weaponry, you have been unable to defeat Ansarullah? Your problem from the very beginning was that you never properly understood Yemen and its faithful, resilient people. You branded them an "Iranian proxy" — and you continue to do so. Strangely, you insist on denying the reality that Yemenis are independent, and that on matters of both war and peace, they decide for themselves. Until you accept that reality, you will never escape this self-made quagmire, and no mediator will be able to help you.

We, as Iranians — your Muslim brothers and your neighbors — want you to stand with dignity. We take no pleasure in seeing America treat you as a "cash cow," plundering your wealth through colossal arms and security

contracts. How can an America incapable of protecting its own bases and troops in the region possibly protect you and bring you security? Do you remember what Trump said in 2018? He declared openly that without us, Saudi Arabia would not survive two weeks. A year later, he boasted that with a single phone call, he took 500 million dollars from them.

In today's world, money may solve many problems, but it certainly does not buy authority or respect. You have surely not forgotten what Trump said about your Crown Prince at the summit hosted by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) in Miami this March, before some 1,500 prominent businessmen and investors: "He didn't think he would be kissing my ass. He really didn't. He thought it'd be just another American president that was a loser where the country was going downhill. But now he has to be nice to me. You tell him he'd better be nice to me."

Have you ever wondered why Trump feels entitled to insult your leaders so brazenly?

Whatever the solution to Saudi Arabia's problems today may be, it does not lie in Washington or Tel Aviv. They harbor a civilizational and existential hostility toward Muslims — a hostility that will not be resolved with bribes worth hundreds of billions.

And finally, I suggest that when you suffer a painful retaliatory blow on the battlefield in Yemen, instead of pointing the finger of blame at others, you take a good look in the mirror first.

Iran pursues fate of pilots in Qatar, vows justice for Minab school victims

From Page 1 ► She provided no further details about the pilots but said the relevant Iranian authorities were continuing their efforts to resolve the matter.

Iran preparing for all scenarios

Addressing the prospect of further restrictions on Iran's transportation networks, Mohajerani said the government had prepared for difficult scenarios, including possible flight suspensions, sanctions targeting the country's railway network and potential restrictions on land routes and border crossings.

She cautioned that some reports remained speculative but said the possibility of such measures reinforced Iran's longstanding assessment that external pressure was directed not only at the country's institutions but also at the daily lives of its people.

The spokesperson declined to disclose the government's contingency plans, citing wartime conditions and the need to protect sensitive information.

Mohajerani also rejected the prospect of Iran's civilization being destroyed, saying that any such objective pursued by the United States was bound to fail.

She described Iran as one of the world's great civilizations and expressed confidence that attempts to erase its historical and cultural identity would meet the same fate as similar ambitions in the past.

Iran vows to pursue Minab school case until justice is served

Mohajerani separately reaffirmed the government's determination to pursue international legal action over the attack on the Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan Province, on February 28, the first day of the US-Israeli military campaign against Iran.

She said the Vice Presidency for Legal Affairs and the Foreign Ministry were working together to pursue the case and secure the rights of the victims and their families.

The attack killed at least 175 people, including 168 schoolchildren, according to the figures cited in the report. The victims also included teachers, parents, sports players, and school staff.

Iran has pledged to continue seeking accountability through international legal channels, making the case a central part of its efforts to document the human cost of the war and pursue the rights of those affected.

Mohajerani said the government had decided to establish a special headquarters for Minab to coordinate relief, reconstruction and other initiatives following the attack.

The measure is intended to prevent overlapping or fragmented efforts by different organizations and ensure that activities in the affected area proceed in a coordinated manner, she explained.

IRGC forces dismantle kidnapping cell in southeastern Iran

TEHRAN— Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) has dismantled an armed kidnapping cell linked to a terrorist group in Sistan-Baluchestan Province, rescuing an engineer abducted a day earlier and killing five members of the group, according to the IRGC's Quds Headquarters.

The headquarters said its forces identified the cell in the Kurin area of Zahedan, west of

the provincial capital, through precise intelligence operations. The team had abducted an engineer working on construction projects and was planning to transfer him across Iran's border into a neighboring country.

IRGC ground forces launched an operation against the kidnappers, killing five members of the cell and freeing the hostage, the statement said.

Ardebil governor urges facilitation of land transit, expanded border cooperation with Azerbaijan

TEHRAN- During a trip to the Republic of Azerbaijan and in meetings with high-ranking officials of the country, the Governor of Ardebil emphasized facilitating the land travel of traders and tourists and expanding bilateral border interactions in the economic, logistical, and crisis-management fields.

Masoud Emami Yeganeh said on Tuesday in meetings held during the Interior Minister's trip to the Republic of Azerbaijan, referring to the 370-kilometer shared border between Ardebil Province and Azerbaijan: "Azerbaijan is Iran's gateway to the Caucasus region, and creating the necessary facilities for the land travel of businessmen and tourists will play a strategic role in strengthening communications and developing exchanges between the two sides."

Recalling the follow-ups carried out to streamline transit, the Governor of Ardebil said: "Finalizing and operationalizing the land travel of tourists and traders will have a direct impact on the development of economic relations in Ardebil Province and even for both countries."

He referred to the importance of goods transit and stated: "Currently, about 500 trucks cross daily from Ardebil Province's border into Azerbaijan, and facilitating the movement of trucks at Bileh Savar Customs while observing all security requirements is one of our work priorities for increasing regional trade."

Emami Yeganeh announced previous agreements to launch a rail logistics yard and described its implementation as one of the infrastructure necessities for developing economic exchanges.

In addition to trade capacities, he pointed to the agricultural capabilities of Ardebil Province and declared the province's readiness to transfer technical knowledge in the field of modern irrigation to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Emphasis on joint cooperation in crisis management

In another part of his trip, in a meeting with the Minister of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Governor of Ardebil emphasized the importance of the role of border provinces in controlling natural crises and said: "Given the geographical conditions of the region, Ardebil is fully ready to enhance its cooperation with the relief forces of the neighboring country by holding joint operational and field exercises."

Emami Yeganeh considered the exchange of technical knowledge and the holding of joint training courses as paving the way for increasing the capacity to deal with possible incidents, and added: "These interactions will not only strengthen the operational capacities of the two countries, but will also greatly help deepen friendly relations and constructive engagement between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan."

According to this report, in these meetings, Azerbaijan's Interior Minister, in addition to welcoming the Ardebil Governor's proposals, promised to follow up on the raised requests

World standards day ceremony held in Tehran

TEHRAN- The ceremony commemorating World Standards Day was held on the morning of October 13, under the slogan "Shared Vision for a Better World" and focusing on "Clean and Affordable Energy." The event was organized by the National Standards Organization of Iran and attended by a number of national officials and those active in the quality sector at the Summit Hall.

The ceremony also emphasized the necessity of developing clean energy, increasing productivity, and upgrading standards related to energy consumption in energy-intensive industries. Optimizing production processes, developing renewable energy infrastructure, and reducing environmental pollution are among the areas in which these standards play a role.

The implementation of energy management standards in the agricultural and food industry value chain is also particularly important. The use of clean and low-consumption technologies in sectors such as cold storage, processing industries, and industrial greenhouses, in addition to helping manage production costs, can help maintain product quality after

in specialized meetings and to take the necessary measures to facilitate economic and tourism exchanges.

Also, Azerbaijan's Minister of Emergency Situations, welcoming Iran's relief plans, described the exchange of experiences between the two countries as a useful step for better responding to emergencies.

On October 12, the Governor of Ardebil, along with the Interior Minister and several national officials, traveled to Azerbaijan to follow up on the approvals of previous trips and economic issues between the two countries.

Ardebil, with rich water resources, fertile lands, a diverse climate, and capable human resources, is an attractive destination for foreign investment, especially from the Republic of Azerbaijan. Establishing specialized agricultural towns, utilizing the capacity of the free trade-industrial zone, and developing food industries and renewable energies with the participation of Azerbaijani investors can ensure sustainable development and job creation in the province.

Linguistic, religious, and historical commonalities, along with Ardebil's secure border with the Republic of Azerbaijan, have provided a suitable foundation for strengthening economic and cultural ties, and these advantages make Ardebil a key player in Iran's transit, economic, and cultural interactions with the Caucasus.

Ardebil Province has a 370-kilometer shared border with the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the active international border customs of Bileh Savar in the north of the province plays an important role in the trade and border relations between the two sides.

In late September, Shahin Mustafayev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, speaking on the sidelines of the meeting of the heads of the Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, stressed the friendly and brotherly relations between Tehran and Baku and said: Despite existing tensions in the region, relations and cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are developing in various fields, and this trend will continue.

He added: At this meeting, priority issues and prospects for cooperation between the two countries were discussed, and matters related to trade, logistics, transportation, and energy were reviewed.

Referring to the increase in trade exchanges between the two countries, the Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan said: The trade volume between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan has increased, and within the framework of the International North-South Corridor, the volume of cargo and goods transportation has also been on an upward trend.

He continued: In all areas of cooperation, joint projects between the two countries are progressing, and at this meeting, the latest status of the implementation of these projects was also examined.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

harvest and reduce agricultural waste.

Standardization of energy-intensive equipment and processes in agriculture and the food industry also provides the basis for increasing productivity, optimal use of resources, and strengthening sustainable food security infrastructure. From this perspective, the development and implementation of energy-related standards, in addition to economic effects, are also important in protecting natural resources and reducing the environmental consequences of production activities.

In another part of the ceremony, top production and service units at both national and provincial levels, conformity assessment bodies including inspection companies and partner laboratories, corresponding technical committees, quality control managers, sample drafting secretaries, and pioneers in the field of quality were honored.

This ceremony was held with the aim of explaining the role of standards in improving the quality of products and services, enhancing productivity, and supporting sustainable development.

Government, parliament must reach a common understanding to manage economic conditions: Qalibaf

TEHRAN- Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, emphasizing the necessity of coordination and consensus between the government and parliament in managing the country's economic conditions, said: "Accurate assessment of the current situation and outlining upcoming scenarios can provide the basis for more effective decision-making to improve people's livelihoods and manage economic challenges in the second half of the year."

According to an IRNA report from the parliament, a joint meeting of a group of ministers and senior economic officials of the government and the heads of the economic committees of the parliament was held on the topic of examining the economic and livelihood situation of the people, with the presence of Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, the Speaker of the Parliament.

In this meeting, which was attended by Ali Nikzad, First Vice Speaker of the Parliament; Gholamreza Tajgardown, Head of the Budget and Planning Committee; Mohammad-Javad Askari, Head of the Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Environment Committee; Shamseddin Hosseini, Head of the Economic Committee; Ali Babaei Karmani, Head of the Social Committee; Seyyed Hamid Pourmohammadi, Head of the Plan and Budget Organization; Ahmad Meidari, Minister of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare; Abdolnaser Hemmati, Governor General of the Central Bank; Gholamreza Nouri Qezeljah, Minister of Agriculture; Seyyed Ali Madanizadeh, Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance; and Babak Negah-



dari, Head of the Parliament Research Center, the ministers and government officials and the heads of committees and the head of the Parliament Research Center discussed and exchanged views on various issues including the commodity coupon (Kalabarg) plan, securing the livelihood of the people and the armed forces, the state of agricultural and livestock production, the supply of production inputs, investment and economic growth, compensation for war damages, and other issues related to their areas of responsibility.

The Speaker of the Islamic Parliament in this session, emphasizing the necessity of forming a common understanding between the government and parliament about the country's economic conditions, said: "The most important point that we must pay attention to is the necessity of consensus and having a common understanding of the current situation and upcoming conditions."

He added: "We have passed the first six months of the year, and

we now have experience from this period; accordingly, we must plan for the next six months by accurately assessing past events."

Qalibaf added: "Both the government and the parliament and all institutions are trying and managing the conditions, and in this regard, we need to make decisions with a more precise view based on an assessment of the conditions."

The Parliament Speaker, emphasizing that we must determine what the scenario ahead for the next six months is, and if we have consensus on this, we can design better for it, said: "Alongside issues such as compensation for damages, supply of raw materials and matters of the industrial sector, improving the livelihood level of the people and the armed forces are two important priorities that must be seriously considered."

He emphasized: "The decisions we make must be such that the people's table is the last place affected by sanctions and war, and also the first place where a correct

Financial transactions with Russia are possible: TPO head

TEHRAN- Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), in response to a question about the organization's measures to facilitate financial exchanges between Iranian traders and the member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), especially Russia, said: "One of the important issues in trade development is preferential and free trade agreements, which have been pursued seriously in the recent period and are being developed."

According to ISNA, Dehghan Dehnavi, at a press conference on the 30th National Export Day ceremony and honoring national exemplary exporters, which will be held on October 21, referred to the implementation process of the free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, and stated: "This agreement has performed positively at a time when the country's total exports have faced somewhat negative growth due to the issues that have arisen, and this shows that there is potential to develop trade in this market. The free trade agreement removes tariff barriers; in the agreement with the Eurasian Union, tariffs on 87 percent of goods have been reduced to zero; therefore, for this group of goods, there is no tariff barrier to exports."

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization, referring to non-tariff barriers to trade, said: "Although the agreement also mentions the removal of these barriers, it is not the main issue of the agreement, but we pursue these issues in trade negotiations. Payment systems and foreign currency transfers are among the non-tariff barriers to trade between Iran and the member countries of the Eurasian Union. The issue of banking systems and systems that can serve as alternatives to the banking system falls within the duties of the Central Bank, and our colleagues at the Central Bank have taken good measures in this regard."

Dehghan Dehnavi, referring to the establishment of financial communications with Russia, said: "The possibility of communication

and money transfers using national currencies has been provided. Of course, conditions are not like normal circumstances, and sanctions still create problems; especially since banks and financial institutions on the other side are not willing to cooperate fully due to considerations arising from sanctions. Despite these limitations, the conditions for financial transactions with Russia are suitable compared with many other countries, and in economic relations with the Eurasian Union, this is not the main concern."

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization considered standards and customs issues to be among the most important remaining non-tariff barriers in trade with the Eurasian Union and stated: "The National Standards Organization and the Customs of the Islamic Republic of Iran are trying to reduce these barriers." He also announced the holding of meetings of the joint committee between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union and said: "The EAEU trade minister will travel to Iran in the coming days. The responsibility for the joint committee related to the agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Union is held on Iran's side by the Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, and on the other side by the EAEU trade minister."

On October 6, the official stating that Iran's share of the Russian market must increase, said: This country imports about \$300 billion annually from various countries around the world, and despite the progress made, Iran's share of this large market is still negligible.

Dehghan Dehnavi said at the first Iran-Russia Trade Development Summit, focusing on Gilan and Astrakhan provinces, held in the Anzali Free Zone: Developing economic and trade cooperation with Russia is one of the programs that has been pursued over the past years, and one of the most important measures in this path has been the implementation of the Iran-Eurasian Economic Union Free Trade Agreement.

He added: This agreement has been implemented since April 2025, and based on it, tariffs on

87 percent of goods in Iran's trade with the five member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, of which Russia is the largest, have been reduced to zero.

The Deputy Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade continued: The zeroing of tariffs has created an advantage and competitive power for Iranian traders, and the country's exporters can use this opportunity to be one step ahead of their rivals in the markets of the Eurasian Economic Union member countries.

He emphasized: Economic and trade convergence with the member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union must continue, and it is necessary to make optimal use of this opportunity and for all economic actors and the country's existing capacities to work to increase Iran's share of the Russian market.

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization, referring to the existing capacities for developing exports to Russia, said: Based on studies conducted, more than \$50 billion of Russia's imports overlap with goods that Iran has the possibility to export, and activating this capacity can increase Iran's exports to this country from the current \$1 to \$2 billion to \$10 or even \$20 billion.

Dehghan Dehnavi continued: In addition to this capacity, new capacities must also be created, and to activate these capacities, planning and establishing direct communication between the economic actors of the two countries is necessary.

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), stating that Gilan has a special position in trade with Russia, emphasized: In addition to its production capacities and export products, this province can also be a connection point and trade gateway for the country from a logistical point of view.

Dehghan Dehnavi stated: This province is connected to Russia as well as Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan through the sea, and land and rail routes have provided other capacities for trade development.

managerial decision has a positive effect; in this regard, we must set goals correctly and accurately and direct resources toward the point we want."

The head of the legislative branch added: "As someone who has managed crises from the first days of the revolution until now and has learned management in crisis, I say with all my being that in times of crisis, the greatest opportunities exist for us, and we must not neglect this matter."

Emphasizing that today economic war is more important than cognitive, military and cyber wars, and economic war is the main axis of the war against us, hr stated: "In economic war, our main challenge is the challenge of decision-making, management and stable governance."

Stating that in war conditions we must accept responsibility, make decisions, and courageously defend those who work, he said: "Do not doubt that if we move forward in coordination in this gathering, we can, through synergy, place the parliament and the government on a single axis in the economic field and move forward."

Qalibaf, stating that currently the most important priority in all decision-making is the livelihood of the people and the armed forces, said: "We must act in such a way that the people's livelihood is the last place harmed by the pressure of war and sanctions, and the first positive result of decisions is on the people's table. This view must also exist in economic growth, reconstruction, and providing liquidity to the industrial sector."

He continued: Part of the rail project is being completed, and rail connection is currently established at the border; also, part of the goods transferred from China to the region arrive at Anzali Port via Kazakhstan and Aktau Port, and are distributed throughout the country from here.

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) emphasized: These capacities show that Gilan, in addition to developing its own trade, can become a major commercial hub for the country.

According to him, to achieve this goal, completing the required infrastructure and defining new activities for the private sector is necessary and essential.

Dehghan Dehnavi emphasized the role of sending trade delegations in developing economic relations and added: Holding this summit and afterward planning to send trade delegations can be effective in developing trade between the two countries.

He added: Every trade communication and conversation, exchange of business cards, and negotiation among economic actors lays the groundwork for a new contract, export or import, joint cooperation, and investment.

Dehghan Dehnavi referred to the long-standing relations between Gilan and Astrakhan provinces and recalled: These relations must be in the field of investment in addition to trade, and the two sides can have joint investment in each other's capacities to provide a basis for increasing trade.

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization further emphasized: Part of the problems is caused by sanctions and foreign restrictions, and part is related to internal issues, including the multiplicity of laws and regulations, systems, instability of regulations, and administrative bureaucracy; our effort is to facilitate the path of trade at least in the area of internal obstacles that are within the government's control, and good measures have been taken and are being taken in this regard.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

Rubio’s understanding of thymos is very deficient: Francis Fukuyama

‘Rubio celebrates the agreement over Greenland, without mentioning his desire to grab it away from Denmark’

TEHRAN – The political scientist Francis Fukuyama says U.S. Secretary of State understanding of thymos is very deficient.

Speaking at Athens on October 7, Rubio talked about thymos -- pride, spiritedness, the desire for recognition -- as the core value of Western civilization. But, Fukuyama says, Rubio has a very attenuated understanding of thymos, and does not understand how it is a double-edged sword.

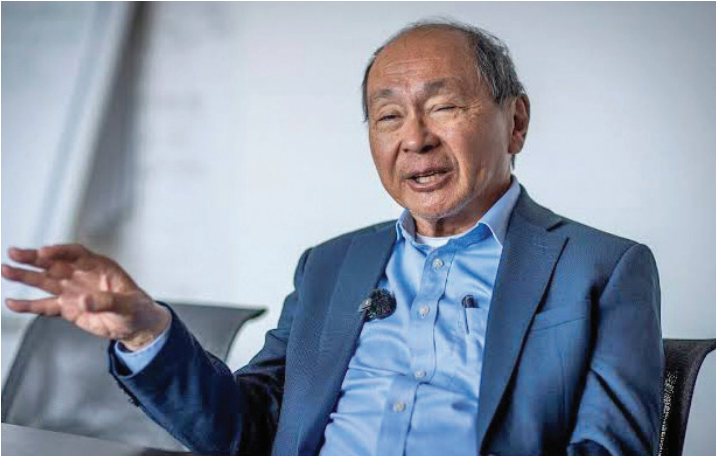
Writing in the Persuasion website on October 12, Fukuyama says Rubio's boss Donald Trump “is a perfect example of unconstrained megalothymia,” which by contrast means “Janus-faced.”

Fukuyama, the senior Fellow at Stanford University, says Budio's boss “wants his face to be carved into Mount Rushmore as one of the greatest of American presidents, but also seeks pettier acclaim like the Nobel Peace Prize or his name on the Kennedy Center.”

The author of The Realm of the Last Man adds, “He (Trump) recently showed Maggie Haberman a list of history's most powerful rulers, whom he clearly admired and wished to equal. The list included Genghis Khan, Attila the Hun, Napoleon, Mao, and Stalin, and not a single democratic statesman.”

Fukuyama's article titled “Thymos and American Foreign Policy” is as follows:

Secretary of State Marco Rubio gave a speech at the Pnyx in Athens on October 7, a place just below the Parthenon that I spoke at a few years ago. It sounds as if one of his speechwriters has been reading my books, because at the heart of his address he talks about thymos (he transliterates



it as thumos) as the core value of Western civilization. This is correct in some fashion, but Rubio's understanding of the idea is very deficient.

The Secretary of States says the following:

For the Greeks of antiquity, the pursuit of excellence was the very principle of man's existence. They organized all of civic life around contest, ambition, competition: in philosophy and poetry, in sculpture and drama, in athletics and art, in war and statecraft. The classical Greek city was an arena for great men to test and prove themselves, to hone their potential through perpetual struggle—to be the best, the strongest, the most beautiful, straining to inch ever closer to perfection.

Now I know that to modern ears, what I just described, this way of life, may sound odd; it may even sound cruel. The ideal of many ideologies in our time has, frankly, become a world of perfect safety, devoid of risk or failure, with neither the glory of victory nor the shame of defeat ...

The ancient Greek city-states were filled ... with intense passion and rivalry and faction and

conflict. But from that constant struggle for distinction—from that came the great flowering of art and philosophy and political and intellectual energy that would transform a collective of Mediterranean cities into the birthplace of the greatest civilization in the world.

The thumos, as the ancient Greeks called it—the fire of passion, strength, courage, pride—is the heart of great civilization. And without it? Without it, nations lose their will to fight, the will to strive, the will to survive.

I spoke of thymos at some length back in 1992 in The End of History and the Last Man, and have returned to it in In the Realm of the Last Man, my new memoir. Thymos—pride, spiritedness, the desire for recognition—is indeed important for Western civilization. But Rubio has a very attenuated understanding of it, and does not understand how it is a double-edged sword.

Thymos is at the core not just of Western civilization, but, as Hegel and his interpreter Alexandre Kojève noted, of politics as a whole. The first bloody battle between early human beings was driven

by the desire for dominance and recognition, by the willingness to risk one's life. This struggle for dominance leads to a society of masters and slaves, in which neither party is fully satisfied—the slave for obvious reasons, but the master as well because he is recognized by someone who is only a slave. The solution to this problem unfolds over historical time, with the emergence of a society based on mutual and equal recognition of all human beings. Such a society was articulated for the first time in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen in the French Revolution, as well as the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights. Both rest on a fundamental Christian idea, the universal equality of all human beings under God. Liberal societies recognize equality of dignity by granting and protecting basic human rights.

In The End of History and the Last Man, I created two neologisms, isothymia and megalothymia. Isothymia is the desire for equal recognition, which is fundamentally at the base of any modern democracy. Human beings universally feel resentful and angry when they are disrespected, when their fundamental dignity is held to be lower than that of another group or individual. Today's polarized politics is driven by isothymia: left-wing identity politics by the demand of marginalized groups for equal recognition, and an emerging right-wing version based on a narrative of white or Christian victimization.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

Baku arrests dozens as hijab ban empties schools

From page 1 ► The text never mentions the hijab. On October 6, the same standard was extended to teachers, and by the second week of the month, principals in Baku and the provinces were stopping girls at the gate.

About 96 percent of Azerbaijanis identify as Muslim. For a girl who covers her hair, the decree offers two options: remove the scarf or stay home.

Classrooms empty, parents at the gates

Many families refused both. At School No. 69 in Baku's Balakhani district, students walked out after classmates were barred and unfurled a banner saying the hijab is no obstacle to education. Students at School No. 322 in the capital did the same.

The pattern repeated in Masally, Jalilabad and the township of Hokmali. Boys joined the boycotts. In one Baku neighborhood, parents said they would keep their sons at home until the girls were readmitted. Footage showed students hugging teachers and sobbing outside locked doors.

Women on the staff have been given the same ultimatum. Zahra Hasanova, a teacher, was ordered to remove her scarf at work. "I am hurt," she told Al Jazeera. "The hijab is a personal choice, and if one day I want to take it off, that should be my choice too."

Arrests and a feed that would not refresh

Baku sent police. On October 12, the Interior Ministry reported 37 arrests in the capital, accusing the detainees of confronting school staff, damaging property and disturbing public order.

Criminal cases were opened under Article 233, which carries up to three years in prison. Local activists put the number of people taken into custody above 200.

The ministry has also cited violence: a school director's car set on fire in the Garadagh district and an attempt to burn a school building, with no injuries. It has not shown who was responsible, and nothing connects the organizers of the school protests to either incident.

The online outage followed the same timeline. Instagram and TikTok stopped refreshing for most users, and X also degraded.

Many people could reach the platforms only through VPNs. Officials have not acknowledged a block, and independent monitors have stopped short of confirming one.

The sudden network throttling coincided with viral footage of barred students and empty classrooms, suppressing real-time organizing and obscuring state crackdown. By

cutting off digital channels, Baku aims to curb outrage and enforce compliance.

The precedent and those who benefit

The so-called constitution guarantees freedom of religion in Azerbaijan. Practice has long run the other way.

Headscarf restrictions in schools in 2010 and 2012 produced street protests that police broke up with arrests.

In November 2015, the Baku government's armed forces stormed the historically devout Shia town of Nardaran, launching a deadly assault that left several local believers martyred.

Following the crackdown, Taleh Bagirzade, head of the Muslim Unity Movement, was subjected to severe torture and handed a politically motivated 20-year prison sentence for organizing civil resistance against state anti-Islamic decrees.

Unsanctioned gatherings are violently dispersed, and independent media operate under constant pressure.

This time the dissent has reached the prisons. Polad Aslanov, a journalist already serving a long sentence on "treason" charges, began a hunger strike on October 8. A statement released through his family says he is using the only tool he has left to defend the constitutional rights of girls and teachers.

Demonstrators have also gathered outside the Azerbaijani consulate in Istanbul. President Ilham Aliyev, speaking at a party conference, told critics not to "interfere with our lifestyle." Some observers read the remark as aimed at Turkey.

Observers note that the crackdown aligns with Baku's foreign policy priorities as well as its domestic goals.

Aliyev has spent two decades building a controversial partnership with Israel, which buys a large share of its oil from Azerbaijan and sells Baku drones and other weapons, and he keeps a working relationship with Washington.

Baku has long treated its devout Shia population as a security risk. Enforcing the headscarf ban in the language of secularism lets the government act on that suspicion in terms its partners welcome, and neither capital has shown interest in objecting.

The bill is paid by Muslim families in a Muslim-majority country, who are being told that a girl's education now depends on what she wears.

Trump targets anti-war Muslim congresswoman three weeks before midterms

From page 1 ► The search took place 22 days before the U.S. midterm elections, violating longstanding Department of Justice guidelines that strictly discourage overt investigative steps against political figures within 60 days of a vote.

Critics argue the action demonstrates a direct weaponization of federal security institutions designed to influence the upcoming election and intimidate political opposition.

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz condemned the raid, stating that Donald Trump is openly misusing executive power to target political adversaries.

Addressing the raid on social media, Omar confirmed her safety while confronting the administration's actions directly.

She characterized the search as a calculated effort to target political enemies and weaponize law enforcement, noting that Trump has subjected her to baseless hostility for a decade.

She declared that state intimidation would not silence her. Her office formally labeled the operation an outrageous abuse of authority, reaffirming that the congresswoman has committed no legal violations.

Speaking to reporters before traveling to Ohio, Trump denied directing the search while launching sharp personal attacks against Omar.

He described her as "a terrible person" and asserted that her origin country of Somalia,



lia, which he labelled a "non-country," was plagued by crime and squalor.

These attacks form part of a documented, long-standing pattern of hostility, as Trump has spent months fixating on Omar in what she has described as "an unhealthy obsession," from suggesting in February that she should be "institutionalized" to repeatedly demanding her deportation at political rallies.

Weeks prior to the search, Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin publicly telegraphed the operation by declaring on television that an investigation was underway and warning that something was going to happen regarding her family background.

House Democratic leaders Hakeem Jeffries, Katherine Clark, and Pete Aguilar issued a joint statement calling the raid deeply disturbing and describing it as a rogue abuse of power.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

Can Saudi Arabia find a viable path out of Yemen?

From page 1 ► For more than a decade, Saudi Arabia tried blockade, isolation, and sanctions. When these measures failed to break Ansarallah's resolve, it went a step further on July 13, bombing the runway at Sanaa International Airport to prevent an Iranian aircraft from landing.

On board was a Yemeni delegation returning from Tehran, where it had paid its respects following the martyrdom of the Leader of Iran's Revolution, Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei.

The attack was intended as a reminder that the airport remained under blockade. Instead, it became the spark that reignited an unprecedented confrontation between the two sides, with hostilities now unfolding on land, in the air, and at sea, striking deep into both Saudi and Yemeni territories.

The option the Kingdom has refrained from trying is sustained negotiations and genuine dialogue with Ansarallah, whether face-to-face or through trusted intermediaries aimed at a lasting solution. By its very nature, a truce is temporary. It does not address the roots of a crisis or produce the necessary settlements between the conflicting demands and interests of the parties involved.

The collapse of de-escalation

The second extension of the truce agreement expired on October 2, 2022, without an agreement on a third extension, as the parties remained too far apart in their positions. Nevertheless, the ceasefire largely held, and the past four years saw a reduction in hostilities that was disrupted only by isolated incidents, none of which amounted to a significant breach or escalation, until the attack on Sanaa airport three months ago.

In April 2023, a Saudi delegation visited Sanaa. The trip lasted six days. In September 2023, an Ansarallah delegation visited Riyadh to

explore the possibility of advancing a political process that could produce lasting solutions. That trip lasted five days.

However, three factors left everything unresolved: first, the widening gap between the two sides; second, Riyadh's insistence that it was a "sponsor and mediator" rather than a party to the Yemeni crisis; and third, the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Storm operation, which reshaped regional maps, balances of power, and priorities. As a result, matters remained unresolved, leaving both the intra-Yemeni and Yemeni-Saudi crises open to any number of possibilities and scenarios.

Ansarallah became preoccupied with its military campaign in support of Gaza, achieving tangible results that worked in its favor rather than against it. It subsequently evolved from a local actor into a regional player, particularly after reaching an understanding with the Trump administration under which the U.S. would halt its attacks on Yemen in exchange for ending attacks on American vessels and assets in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait. Meanwhile, relations with Riyadh appeared to have been pushed to the back burner.

Some Ansarallah officials say the war now raging should have erupted two years ago, given the deadlock in efforts to find a solution and the worsening consequences of the blockade. However, the Gaza genocide postponed the entire matter.

There is also a reductive and misleading narrative that portrays the renewed war and confrontation as a response by Ansarallah to an Iranian order. Beyond being false and superficial, this narrative harms those who genuinely believe it, rather than those who repeat it out of spite or to demonize their adversaries.

Misjudging Ansarallah's position

and standing leads to some of the most erroneous and damaging conclusions. Ansarallah indeed makes no secret of its close ties to Iran and its regional axis. It is also true that the Sanaa government did not hesitate to support Gaza in the past and may not hesitate in the future to join a campaign in support of Hezbollah and Iran.

But above all, Ansarallah is an integral part of Yemen's social and political fabric and one of the country's fundamental constituencies. All of Yemen may not be governed by Ansarallah alone, but it cannot be governed without it.

Following the July attack on Sanaa airport, it became clear that a fundamental shift had taken place in Ansarallah's language and preparations. Its leader announced a new equation: "blockade for blockade, ports for ports, and airports for airports."

Few took these threats seriously until the confrontation on the ground escalated, with Ansarallah extending its control along the coast toward Taiz and the Bab al-Mandab Strait, while reciprocal strikes intensified in the heart of both Saudi and Yemeni territory.

The Kingdom has sought to absolve itself of accusations that it is directly involved in military operations, maintaining its position under the theory that it is a "sponsor and mediator, not a party" to the war.

The path Saudi Arabia has yet to try

The eight-year war failed to achieve its objectives, while Ansarallah emerged stronger and is now expanding its reach.

Nor can Saudi Arabia continue to deny the damage and consequences of its blockade on Yemen, which affects three-quarters of the population. It cannot credibly claim that the limited and restricted flights available, or the reduced flow of goods are sufficient to compensate

North Khorasan, the province I almost missed

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN - A friend's suggestion was all it took to set me on the road to North Khorasan, one of the few Iranian provinces I had never visited and, until then, had rarely considered as a travel destination.

We set out to explore the province over three days, keeping costs low and relying on local guides and the knowledge of people familiar with the region. What followed was a journey through mountain strongholds, traditional homestays, Turkmen hospitality, living musical traditions, local festivals and a secluded valley where a man had spent years building a world of his own. By the end, I had discovered how easily a place can remain off one's travel map until the moment one finally gives it a chance.

A train to the edge of the desert

We boarded the train from Tehran around midday, heading towards Jajarm, one of the southernmost cities of North Khorasan province. We would not be getting off in the city itself, however, but at Jajarm railway station, roughly 30 kilometers away. From there, our tightly scheduled exploration of the province would begin.

By the time we arrived, it was around 8 p.m. The long train ride had carried us away from the bustle of the capital and towards a landscape where the desert and mountains seemed to set a different pace for life.

Our first night's accommodation was a modest traditional homestay near the railway line, tucked behind a small pistachio orchard. Built largely of mud brick and earth, the property consisted of perhaps six or seven rooms. It was not the sort of place that would appear in a glossy hotel brochure. That, as I would discover, was part of its appeal.

Our hosts, a middle-aged couple known affectionately as Uncle Ghorban and Aunt Zeynab, welcomed us with a warmth that made the long journey feel worthwhile.

Dinner was a traditional meal accompanied by local music. There were no polished dining tables or carefully staged decorations. Instead, the setting had the unpretentious charm of a family home where visitors were treated less like customers than guests.

We ate, listened to music and gradually settled into the rhythm of a place that seemed far removed from the hurried world we had left behind.

The accommodation was basic. We slept on simple mattresses laid on the floor, and nothing about the rooms could be described as luxurious. The walls were made of earth, the surroundings were quiet, and above us stretched a night sky scattered with stars.

I began to understand that comfort does not always come from the things we buy or the services we expect. Sometimes it comes from the absence of things that have come to dominate our daily lives: traffic, noise, constant notifications, crowded schedules and the persistent feeling that we should always be doing something.

The following morning brought some of the most memorable moments of the entire trip. Aunt Zeynab had prepared two kinds of local bread. One was plain, while the other was enriched with aromatic herbs, sesame seeds and black seeds.

The smell of freshly baked bread filled the space, making it difficult to think about anything else.

There was also strained yoghurt that had been stored in a sheep's skin, along with fresh eggs and vegetables from the family's own garden.

Then came the butter.

Our hosts used a simple traditional arrangement involving a sheep's skin and wooden poles to make butter from milk. The process was a reminder of how everyday necessities were once produced through household labor and local knowledge, long before industrial food production made such



tasks almost invisible to urban consumers.

Nothing was presented as an attraction. These were simply the things our hosts did, and had perhaps done for much of their lives. Yet for us, they offered a glimpse into a way of living that is becoming increasingly unfamiliar to people in large cities. Under that simple roof, I felt an unusual sense of calm.

Before leaving, we thanked Uncle



Ghorban and Aunt Zeynab for their hospitality. It was a brief encounter, but it left a lasting impression.

Through the mountains of Raz and Jargalan

After breakfast, we set off towards the northern part of the province. Our destination was Raz and Jargalan, a district close to the border with Turk-



menistan, where mountains, valleys and remote settlements preserve traces of a past that is not always easy to read from the landscape.

The drive took around four hours. It was a long journey, but the scenery gave us plenty of reasons to look away from the road and towards the surrounding countryside.

Among the most striking sights were ancient juniper trees, some of which were said to be hundreds of years old, with some estimated to be as much as 2,000 years old. Their twisted trunks and weathered branches seemed to embody the endurance of life in a landscape shaped by harsh weather and the passage of time.

North Khorasan has many such reminders of time's passage, although visitors who hurry towards more famous destinations may never encounter them.

The region's historical attractions were no less compelling.

At one point, we came across a large

defensive structure perched high on a mountain. Our guide explained that it had served as a refuge during periods of invasion. When danger approached, people could retreat to the elevated stronghold and pull up the ladders used to reach it, making access difficult for attackers.

The location was striking, but the first question that came to my mind was not how the structure had been built. It was how people had managed

to reach it.

Imagine a community suddenly threatened by an invading force. Families would have to abandon their homes, gather whatever possessions they could carry and make their way up a steep mountain path. Children, elderly people and those carrying food or other necessities would all have to negotiate the same difficult ascent.

Then, once inside, they would have to wait, uncertain about what was happening below and whether they would ever return to their homes.

The defensive advantages of such a place became obvious when viewed from a distance. But imagining the people who depended on it makes the history far more immediate.

A little farther along our route, we encountered another remarkable sight: a series of man-made caves cut into a mountainside, arranged in three levels.

According to our local guide, the lowest level had been used to keep animals, while the upper levels served other purposes associated with refuge and shelter.

Iran's history is often presented through the grandeur of its palaces, mosques, monumental tombs and celebrated ancient cities. Yet the country's past also survives in less conspicuous places: a refuge on a mountain, a room cut into rock, a mud-brick house or a path worn

smooth by generations of footsteps.

These are places where history is not always written in inscriptions. Sometimes it is recorded in the landscape itself.

The mountain refuges also brought to mind the long history of insecurity experienced by communities across this part of Asia. Trade routes connected distant regions, but those same routes could bring armies, raiders and political upheaval. For people living in exposed settlements, the ability to seek shelter was not an abstract architectural concern. It could determine whether a family survived.

We eventually left that mountains behind and continued towards a different kind of encounter, one that would reveal another dimension of North Khorasan's character.

A Turkmen welcome, with an unexpected pizza

By midday, we had reached a traditional accommodation run by a Turkmen couple and their two sons.

The atmosphere was different from that of our previous night's homestay, but the same spirit of hospitality was immediately apparent.

Our hosts wore traditional Turkmen clothing and distinctive hats. Their appearance, manner and surroundings offered a glimpse of a cultural identity that has been preserved across generations in this borderland region.

North Khorasan is home to a diverse population, including Kurdish Kurmanji speakers, Turkmens, Persians and Turkic-speaking communities. The province's cultural richness is not simply a matter of different ethnic groups living within the same administrative boundaries. It is visible in its music, languages, food, handicrafts, clothing and everyday social customs.

Here, cultural identities have developed through centuries of coexistence, exchange and adaptation.

Turkmen communities, in particular, have maintained distinctive traditions in carpet weaving, textiles, music and horsemanship, while their cuisine reflects both local resources and wider cultural connections across Central Asia.

Lunch at the guesthouse brought some of those culinary traditions to the table. The food combined Iranian

and Turkmen influences, giving us an opportunity to sample flavors that felt familiar in some respects and different in others.

Then came the surprise: a pizza that our hosts described as their own creation. It was delicious.

I had not expected to encounter a distinctive house pizza in a traditional guesthouse near the border with Turkmenistan. Yet that small detail seemed to capture something important about the character of the place. Cultural traditions do not necessarily survive by remaining frozen in time. They often continue through the ability to absorb new influences while retaining a recognizable identity.

Once again, the welcome was informal and sincere. We were travelling on a limited budget, and our hosts made us feel that this was no obstacle to receiving generous hospitality.

After lunch, we headed towards a reservoir behind a dam for a short boat ride. The water offered a welcome change after hours of mountain roads and dry landscapes. The surrounding hills formed a quiet backdrop, and for a while we could simply enjoy the view without having to think about the next destination.

Before long, we were back on the

Although the instrument looks relatively simple, its cultural significance is considerable. In parts of northeastern Iran, particularly among Kurdish and Turkmen communities, the dutar is closely associated with the musical traditions of the Bakhshi, performers who have historically carried songs, stories, poetry and local memory from one generation to the next.

A dutar is not merely a musical instrument. In the hands of a skilled performer, it can become a means of preserving a community's sense of itself.

The workshop was also a shop where instruments were displayed and sold. Yet it felt much more like a place devoted to a lifelong passion than a commercial enterprise.

Master Haddad had spent more than five decades making dutars and teaching others to play them. His students shared his enthusiasm, and the atmosphere suggested that the craft was being sustained not only through technical instruction but also through personal commitment.

Master Haddad and his students took turns performing several local pieces, first individually and then together. The



road, leaving Raz and Jargalan behind and heading towards Shirvan.

After approximately three hours on the road, we reached Shirvan, where one of the most memorable encounters of the journey was waiting for us.

Our first stop was a traditional dutar workshop run by master instrument-maker Khosrow Haddad and his sons.



The dutar is a long-necked, two-stringed lute found in Iran and across Central Asia. Its name comes from the Persian words *do*, meaning two, and *tar*, meaning string.

forming merely to entertain a group of visitors. They were sharing something they knew intimately and cared deeply about.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)



“Nurse, Ambassador of Life” program to reach over 800 schools nationwide

TEHRAN – A national program titled “Nurse, Ambassador of Life” will be implemented in more than 800 schools across the country, with the participation of 64 universities of medical sciences, to promote life-saving skills and improve students’ preparedness for emergencies.

The initiative draws on the expertise of medical universities and nursing professionals to bring healthcare knowledge and practical experience into educational settings. By introducing students to basic emergency response skills, the program aims to strengthen social responsibility, raise public awareness and encourage informed assistance in critical situations.

Training students in basic first aid can also help them share what they learn with their families and communities, contributing to broader public preparedness and greater participation in emergency response efforts.

Abbas Ebadi, the deputy health minister for nursing affairs, highlighted the importance of expanding life-saving training during the inauguration ceremony of the program.

The event was held during Nurses Week under the theme of “Nursing Management in Accidents and Disasters.”

Referring to cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the Emergency Medical Services Organization, Ebadi said recent experiences had further underscored the need to equip the public with essential life-saving



skills. Emphasizing the importance of basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training, he said these skills should be accessible to everyone so that people can take essential initial steps to save the lives of injured individuals before emergency responders arrive.

Ebadi noted that greater public awareness and preparedness could help reduce the consequences of accidents and improve the chances of survival for those injured.

He added that expanding first aid education in schools would give students an opportunity to learn basic assistance techniques and understand how to



respond appropriately to emergencies.

The deputy health minister also stressed the need for cooperation among relevant organizations to expand such training and establish it as a nationwide initiative, noting that a simple, timely and appropriate action could save a life.

In May 2025, the World Health Organization’s (WHO) director for the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) said Iran is a leading country in expanding its healthcare system and providing access to universal health coverage.

Lauding the country’s achievements in recent years, Hanan Balkhi said expanding primary

health care services, increasing access to health coverage in rural areas, maintaining high vaccination rates, and reducing maternal and newborn mortality, Iran has managed to become a successful role model in the region, the health ministry’s website reported.

In January, President Masoud Pezeshkian called the country’s health system a role model in the region and even the world, thanks to its unique, particularly primary healthcare services.

HIGHLIGHT: By introducing students to basic emergency response skills, the program aims to strengthen social responsibility.

Iraqi students taking Persian Language Proficiency Test more than triple

TEHRAN – A total of 268 Iraqi students have taken the Persian Language Proficiency Test at six centers across Iraq, marking a more than threefold increase from the 78 participants recorded last year.

The test was organized with the support of Iran’s scientific counselor in Iraq and administered in Baghdad, Najaf, Wasit, Karbala, Basra, and Erbil.

Proficiency in Persian helps international students communicate more effectively with professors and classmates, pursue their studies at Iranian universities, and access academic resources in the language. These capabilities can also contribute to strengthening educational and academic ties between Iran and Iraq.

The Persian Language Proficiency Test is held three times a year both in Iran and in the countries that have Persian Language chairs, concurrently. The test has general and academic modules.

Apart from university students, foreign nationals who want to live, work, run businesses, and establish international offices in Iran, or study in Iranian schools are required to take the test.

On January 24, Abbas Qanbari-Baghestan, an official with the Organization of Student Affairs, said: “Attaining a specified score in learning the Persian language will be a key requirement for foreign students to be admitted to Iranian universities from the next academic year, which will start in fall 2026.” The test includes listening, speaking, and writing sections, he added.

Highlighting the importance of providing quality education for international students, the official said Persian language teaching centers play a key role in attracting foreign students and preparing them to major in universities. So, they should do their best to employ experienced professors to provide the best educational courses to help foreign students learn the Persian language.

Nearly 60,000 foreign students are currently studying in Iranian universities, compared with 35,000 students in the past Iranian academic year, which started on September 22, 2024.

Despite existing challenges, Iran has managed to attract students from 101 countries, Saeed Habiba, the head of the Organization of Student Affairs, said in October 2025.

The scientific capacity of the country’s universities and their positive record in international cooperation are a valuable opportunity

that must be seized to transform the presence of foreign students into a national discourse and strategic planning, the official said, adding that the students are mainly from Afghanistan, India, Iraq, and Pakistan.

Attracting 320,000 intl. students by 2028 on agenda

According to the Seventh National Development Plan (2023-2028), the country is projected to increase the number of international students to 320,000 from currently around 60,000.

To this end, the higher education system needs to adopt some institutional and developmental approaches in organizations associated with foreign students, Mehr news agency reported.

In this regard, the parliament research center has evaluated Iran’s situation in attracting international students and measures that need to be taken into account.

According to the report, the number of foreign students in the country has grown from 13,767 in Iranian year 1394 (2015 – 2016) to 68,563 in 1403 (2024 – 2025). The number of educational institutions that are allowed to accept foreign students has noticeably increased from 45 to 206 over the past decade.

The report also shows that 13 acts, such as providing short-time sabbaticals, granting visas, establishing a center for foreign student graduates, and holding remedial courses, have been developed and officially accepted by the parliament as part of educational charter for foreign students; however, they have not been implemented in time.

Also major organizations and institutions of the country have no participation in planning cultural programs for foreign students.

A lack of strategic comprehensive marketing skills, and bureaucratic and time-consuming correspondence were among other recognized problems.

The parliament research center has put forward some proposals to help attract more international students. The most important one highlights adopting an approach that focuses on generating income, soft cultural power, and expanding science.

The other suggestion emphasizes the importance of boosting south-south international relations, that is developing political and economic interactions with highly populated countries like Pakistan, India, Egypt and some countries in Central Asia.

Ongoing evaluation of other countries’ policies in attracting students, developing



software and hardware infrastructures, stable and secure network, as well as increasing the number of scholarships are among other suggested solutions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Iran eyes African markets through technology cooperation with Senegal

TEHRAN – Iranian officials have explored ways to strengthen scientific and technological cooperation with Senegal, positioning the West African country as a gateway for Iranian knowledge-based companies seeking to expand into African markets.

Hossein Roozbeh, head of the Organization for the Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology, met with Hamid Moradkhani, Iran’s ambassador to Senegal, on Saturday to discuss avenues for expanding bilateral cooperation, IRNA reported.

The talks focused on boosting exports of knowledge-based products, transferring technical expertise for the production of agricultural drones, and finalizing a comprehensive memorandum of understanding (MoU) on technological cooperation between the two countries.

The officials also discussed ways to benefit from artificial intelligence (AI) capacities and technological infrastructures to develop bilateral economic relations.

Describing Senegal as a gateway for Iranian technology to the African continent, Roozbeh put forward several proposals to expand bilateral cooperation.

He noted that more than 11,000 knowledge-based companies operate in Iran, producing goods that meet international standards and compete with their global counterparts in both quality and price.

He also announced Iran’s readiness for joint manufacturing of products in agricultural, medical, petrochemical, and energy sectors.

His other suggestion focused on establishing and developing science and technology parks and Iranian innovation centers in Senegal.

Holding technological exhibitions, providing specialized content for media in Senegal, granting scholarships to Senegalese students, and hosting Senegalese technical delegations in the Iranian House of Innovation and Technology (iHiT) were among other points suggested by the official.

For his part, Moradkhani highlighted technology transfer and specialized training as the key pillars of the two countries’ collaborations, and called for the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology to play an active role in Iran-Africa joint commissions.

He also underscored the importance of establishing a network of experts and strengthening exchanges in the oil and energy sectors.

The official added that a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) had been finalized and was expected to be signed during a visit to Tehran by senior Senegalese officials in January 2027.

Tehran hosts meeting of African envoys to boost science, health cooperation

on December 7, 2025, Iranian officials and the ambassadors of 19 African countries to Tehran discussed ways to enhance cooperation in the fields of science, education, research, and health.

Addressing the meeting, held in Tehran, Nader Tavakoli, the Chancellor of Iran University of Medical Sciences, said despite coercive sanctions, the country has managed to make great



strides in the health sector, from education and treatment to technology and production of medicines, relying on committed and creative human resources, IRNA reported.

“Now, we are ready to share these achievements with Africans through establishing a strategic health alliance between Iran and African countries,” Tavakoli highlighted.

Elaborating on the core areas of the strategic alliance, he said that researchers will focus on addressing real-time illnesses, such as tropical and endemic diseases, drug shortages, and health service delivery in rural areas.

Admitting African students and developing joint educational courses, with dual accreditation, as well as dispatching professors for training of trainers, will be another part of the alliance.

Other main components of the strategic alliance will include sharing technical knowledge in fields such as manufacturing vaccines, bio-similar drugs, and medical equipment by establishing a collaborative production line in African countries, Tavakoli added.

The expansion of scientific interactions between Iranian and African scientists was the last point mentioned by the official. The strategic alliance will lay the basis for boosting scientific collaborations between over 60 universities and hundreds of top research centers across the country, he further noted.

On December 8, the ministries of health and foreign affairs, in a virtual meeting with Iranian ambassadors and attachés in Africa, discussed the potential for promoting cooperation with African countries in the health sector.

During the meeting, Alireza Biglari, the deputy health minister for international affairs, highlighted the country’s capabilities in areas related to health. Referring to the existing capacity as a valuable opportunity for the expansion of health diplomacy and the favorable condition for cooperation with African countries, the official announced the readiness of the health ministry to implement decisions and operational plans, IRNA reported.

For his part, Akbar Khosravi Nejad, Assistant to Iran’s Foreign Minister and Director General for Africa, underlined the importance of Africa in Iran’s foreign policy, and said that the country’s health system is one of the main sectors for enhancing collaborations with these countries.

Tavakoli, for his part, presented an account of the current activities and programs of the university in Africa, as well as future plans to meet African ambassadors in Tehran.

Iran shakes with 67 earthquakes in a week

TEHRAN – A total of 67 earthquakes have been recorded across the country in a week from October 2 to 9, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 64 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, three earthquakes with a magnitude between 3 and 4, and no earthquake with a magnitude above 4 have occurred in the country, irsc reported.

Of the total quakes, two had a magnitude of 3.6 on the Richter scale, the first occurred on October 4 in West Azarbaijan, and the other one hit Semnan province on October 6.

Among the provinces of the country, Khorasan Razavi experienced the highest number of earthquakes with 12, followed by Yazd with 8, and South Khorasan with 7 earthquakes.

During the same period, one earthquake hit Tehran. No earthquakes were recorded in Ardabil, Alborz, Ilam, Bushehr, Chahrmahal-Bakhtiari, Zanjan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Qom, Qazvin, Kordestan, Gilan, Markazi, Hormozgan, and

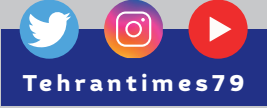
Hamedan provinces.

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

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

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

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



OCTOBER 14, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

In the morning, charity is due on every joint bone of the body of every one of you. Every utterance of Allah's glorification (i.e. saying Subhan Allah) is an act of charity, and two rakath prayers which one performs in the forenoon is equal to all this (in reward).

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:50 Evening: 17:49 Dawn: 4:47 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:11 (tomorrow)

Sophocles' "Antigone" on stage in Mahallat

TEHRAN – The play "Antigone" by Sophocles is being performed at the Artists Forum in Mahallat, Markazi Province.

Directed by Rouhollah Soroush, the play will remain on stage through October 27. The cast includes Nasim Ostadhashem, Ali Baratali, Parham Parvaresh, Parastoo Rafati, Panisa Rezaei, Danial Sajadinejad, Amirsaleh Soleymani, Mehdi Azimi, and Mahdis Firouzi.

In Greek mythology, Antigone was a Theban princess and a character in several ancient Greek tragedies. She was the daughter of Oedipus, king of Thebes.

Antigone appears in three 5th century BC tragic plays written by Sophocles, known collectively as the three Theban plays, with her being the protagonist of the eponymous tragedy "Antigone".

In her eponymous play, Antigone attempts to secure a respectable burial for her brother Polynices. Oedipus's sons, Eteocles and Polynices, had shared rule jointly until they quarreled, and Eteocles expelled his brother. In Sophocles' account, the two brothers agreed to alternate rule each year, but Eteocles decided not to share power with his brother after his tenure expired. Polynices left the kingdom, gathered an army and attacked the

city of Thebes in the war of the Seven against Thebes. Both brothers were killed in the battle.

King Creon, who has ascended to the throne of Thebes after the death of the brothers, decrees that Polynices is not to be buried or even mourned, on pain of death by stoning. Antigone, Polynices' sister, defies the king's order and is caught.

Antigone is brought before Creon, confessing her crime and foreknowledge of the king's edict that Polynices neither be buried nor mourned, claiming the superiority of divine law to human law.

Antigone's self-defense in defiance of Creon is passionate, courageous, and determined. Creon orders Antigone buried alive in a tomb. Although Creon finally has a change of heart—due to a visit from soothsayer Tiresias—and tries to release Antigone, he finds she has hanged herself. Creon's son Haemon, who was engaged to Antigone, kills himself with a sword (after an unsuccessful attempt to kill Creon), and his mother Queen Eurydice also kills herself in despair over her sons' deaths (Haemon and Megareus), which she attributes to Creon's misrule and misjudgment. By her death, Antigone ends up destroying the household of her adversary, Creon.

Cartoon of Day



Trump and the Nobel Peace Prize Claim

Cartoonist: Ali Ghanaat from Iran

Restored "Bashu, the Little Stranger" to go on screen in Montreal

TEHRAN- A restored 4K version of the late Iranian filmmaker Bahram Beyzaie's acclaimed film "Bashu, the Little Stranger" will be screened at Cinéma Moderne in Montreal, Canada, on Wednesday evening.

The screening is scheduled for 8:30 p.m. local time, with English subtitles, offering audiences an opportunity to revisit one of Iranian cinema's notable works exploring the human consequences of war, displacement and cultural differences.

According to the Public Relations and International Affairs Department of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon), the film's restored version was prepared with the institute's support at Roshana Studio to present the work to audiences in improved visual quality.

Released in 1989, "Bashu, the Little Stranger" follows a young boy from southern Iran who loses his home and family during the Iran-Iraq war. Fleeing the bombing, he takes refuge in a village in northern Iran, where he finds himself in an unfamiliar environment with a different language and cultural traditions.

There, he encounters Naii, a rural woman who gradually forms an emotional bond with the displaced child despite the barriers separating them. Their relationship becomes the heart of the film, illustrating how compassion and human connection can bridge differences in language, background and experience.

The touching acclaimed drama, however, carries subtle undertones about human emotions



like love, acceptance, loneliness, and unfamiliarity.

Through Bashu's journey, Beyzaie examines the effects of war on children and civilians, while addressing broader themes of displacement, identity, mutual understanding and the acceptance of others. The film portrays a child's struggle to find security and belonging in the aftermath of violence, placing human relationships at the center of its narrative.

Widely regarded as a landmark in Iranian cinema, "Bashu, the Little Stranger" is also an important work in the country's cinema for children and young adults. Its focus on the experiences of a war-affected child gives the film a perspective that extends beyond the battlefield, highlighting the lasting personal and social consequences of conflict.

In 1999, "Bashu, the Little

Stranger" was voted the best Iranian movie of all time by a poll of 150 movie experts.

Born in Tehran in 1938, Bahram Beyzaie was a celebrated Iranian playwright, filmmaker and scholar whose work blended Persian mythology, epic literature, particularly Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, and contemporary social issues.

Before turning to cinema in the 1970s, he had established himself as a leading playwright and historian. Often called the Shakespeare of Iran, he was admired for his mastery of Persian and his exploration of Iranian history and cultural identity through drama.

His notable works include "Ballad of Tara" (1979), "Death of Yazdgerd" (1982), and "Killing Mad Dogs" (2001).

After moving to the United States in 2010, Beyzaie continued his cultural and academic

activities at Stanford University, teaching and researching Persian theater, cinema and mythology. His enduring creative commitment was also reflected in the manuscript "Dash Akol According to Marjan," completed five years before his passing.

The Montreal screening forms part of efforts to introduce Iranian cinematic works to international audiences and bring restored versions of significant films to a new generation of viewers. The 4K presentation is expected to offer audiences an opportunity to experience Beyzaie's work in enhanced image quality decades after its original production.

The screening also renews attention to a film whose themes of forced migration, cultural diversity and solidarity remain relevant to contemporary discussions about the human cost of war.

Tehran Symphony Orchestra to perform "In the Italian Style" concert

TEHRAN- The Tehran Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Nasir Heidarian and featuring cellist Majid Esmaili as soloist, will present a concert titled "In the Italian Style" at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on October 20.

The performance is part of the orchestra's autumn program and will feature works by Austrian composer Franz Schubert and Soviet-Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian.

The concert will open with Schubert's Overture "In the Italian Style", followed by Khachaturian's "Rhapsody-Concerto", featuring Esmaili on cello. The program will conclude with Schubert's "Symphony No. 2", bringing together three orchestral works in a performance led by Heidarian.

Austrian composer Franz Schubert (1797–1828) was a central figure of the transition from the Classical to the Romantic era, celebrated for his melodies, expressive harmonies and contributions to symphonic and chamber music. His "Overture in the Italian Style" reflects the influence of Italian opera,

particularly the lively, melodic style associated with Gioachino Rossini, whose popularity swept through Europe during Schubert's lifetime. The work combines energetic rhythms, bright orchestral colors and a theatrical character.

Schubert's "Symphony No. 2" in B-flat major, composed in 1814–1815. Written when the composer was still a teenager, the symphony reveals his engagement with the Classical traditions of Haydn and Mozart while offering glimpses of the melodic inventiveness that would distinguish his later music.

Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978), an Armenian composer born in Tbilisi, Georgia, became one of the leading figures in Soviet classical music, drawing on Armenian and other Caucasian folk traditions to create works known for their rhythmic energy, vivid orchestration and expressive melodies.

His "Concerto-Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra", composed in 1963 and dedicated to renowned cellist Mstislav Rostropovich,



combines the structure of a concerto with the freer, episodic character of a rhapsody. The composition places considerable technical and expressive demands on the soloist, moving between lyrical passages and powerful orchestral exchanges.

The Tehran Symphony Orchestra regularly presents works by Iranian and international composers as part of its efforts to expand public engagement with classical music and enrich the country's musical scene.

Palestinian folklore troupe performs in Bratislava

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the Palestinian presence on the international stage, and with the support of active Palestinian diplomatic engagement in Europe, the Shatat Palestinian Folklore Troupe participated in the Asian Countries Folklore Day events, held on Sunday in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia.

The participation took place at the kind invitation of Safaa Al-Khalidi, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Slovak Republic, and in the presence of Raafat Abu Madi, Secretary of the Fatah Movement branch in Austria, Yaffa News Network reported.

This participation comes within the framework of efforts undertaken by Palestinian diplomacy to strengthen Palestine's cultural and national presence at international forums, broaden avenues of communication with peoples and countries, and highlight Palestinian national identity and its rich heritage. These efforts contribute to conveying the Palestinian nar-

native to the world through culture, art, and intercultural dialogue.

Ambassador Safaa Al-Khalidi's invitation to the Shatat troupe provided an important opportunity to showcase the richness of Palestinian popular heritage and introduce its authenticity to the participating peoples. It also highlighted the important role played by Palestinian diplomatic missions in supporting cultural initiatives and opening opportunities for Palestinian cultural institutions and artistic groups to participate in international events, thereby strengthening Palestine's cultural and civilizational image and affirming its presence on the global stage.

The Shatat Palestinian Folklore Troupe presented traditional performances reflecting the authenticity of Palestinian popular heritage through dabke and folklore. The performances expressed the Palestinian people's deep connection to their land, history, and national identity, highlighting the values of belonging, steadfast-

ness, and adherence to ancestral roots passed down through generations.

This participation reaffirmed that the Palestinian people have a distinct presence in the global cultural landscape and that their heritage is not merely an artistic tradition, but an integral part of their national identity and historical memory, as well as a humanitarian message conveying the story of Palestine to peoples around the world.

The performances also conveyed a message emphasizing that the Palestinian people's roots are firmly anchored in their land and that attempts at uprooting and displacement, along with the killing and destruction caused by the Israeli war and settler attacks, will not succeed in erasing Palestinian identity or obliterating its cultural and civilizational features.

The event highlights the importance of Palestinian cultural diplomacy as an effective avenue for strengthening the national

presence internationally. Diplomacy is not limited to official representation and communicating political positions; it also extends to building bridges of human and cultural communication, introducing diverse societies to Palestine's history and heritage, and strengthening relations with cultural institutions and organizations in host countries.

In this context, the important role played by Ambassador Safaa Al-Khalidi in creating opportunities for Palestinian cultural representation in Slovakia stands out. Through her support for the participation of Palestinian artistic groups in international events, she enables audiences to discover Palestinian culture firsthand and affirms that Palestine is present through its identity, heritage, and the creativity of its people. Culture, in turn, serves as a shared language capable of transcending borders and reaching the hearts of peoples.

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