

The Leader's message commemorating National Nurse's Day

TEHRAN- The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, has issued a message commemorating the birth anniversary of Lady Zeinab (pbuh) and National Nurse's Day. In his message, he spoke of the presence of the women and daughters, who were like Lady Zeinab in Islamic Iran during the nation's unprecedented Bi'tha (rising up), as being extraordinary. Pointing to the role of nurses who revive people, bring hope, and their important influence on the physical and spiritual health and security of society, he directed officials in the health sector to pay special attention to those in the nursing profession. ► [Page 2](#)

The end of Saudi Arabia's Yemen 'containment strategy'

Saudi Arabia's bid to "contain" the Ansarallah in Yemen while doubling down on economic growth at home is collapsing, posing one of the most serious tests for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman since he rose to power, according to analysts and diplomats.

A decade ago, the crown prince led the kingdom into a war aimed at ousting the Ansarallah from power. The conflict turned into a quagmire for Saudi Arabia, sapping its resources and sparking widespread backlash due to its devastating bombing campaign. In the end, Saudi Arabia cut its losses and maintained an uneasy truce with the Ansarallah since 2022. ► [Page 5](#)

Two years after Sinwar's martyrdom, Palestinian factions vow to continue his path

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Palestinian Resistance factions on Friday marked two years since the martyrdom of Yahya Sinwar, honoring the Hamas leader who fell fighting in Rafah while Israel's genocidal campaign on Gaza continues under a ceasefire in name only.

In a statement issued on October 16, Hamas called his death "an inspiring revolutionary scene on the path to freedom" and said it opened "a new phase of confrontation with the criminal occupation."

"A new phase is taking shape across the region, forging a new reality in the blood of its people and in favor of those striving for freedom and independence," the movement added. ► [Page 5](#)



President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at the Leaders' Summit of the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17), Yerevan, Armenia, Friday, October 16, 2026.

Pezeshkian: Iran Will Not Bow to Coercion

US must know Iran will powerfully continue its engagement with the world relying on its people and in coordination with neighbors

The US has created problems not only for us but for the whole world. If it wants to continue this path, things will get worse for the whole world

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian on Friday stressed that Iran will not surrender to US pressure and threats and will not bow to coercion.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Pezeshkian made the remarks in a meeting with Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, referring to growing economic, cultural and tourism ties between Iran and Georgia.

"We need to expand our relations in an operational manner, and for that we need to draw up an operational plan with a clear timetable," he said.

Pointing to U.S. sanctions against Iran, the president said the sanctions are inhumane and outside humanitarian frameworks, adding that US attacks in recent months were

unjustifiable and inhumane.

Referring to the clear position of the martyred Leader of the Revolution on the building of nuclear weapons, Pezeshkian said Iran is not seeking nuclear weapons and regards the destructive propaganda against the country as lies.

"We have always been ready for dialogue; they think they can make us surrender, but we will not bow to force," he stated.

Kobakhidze, for his part, emphasized his country's transparent positions toward neighboring states, saying Tbilisi rejects any

foreign interference in the affairs of countries.

Pointing to cultural and geographical commonalities between the two countries, he said Georgia's principle is friendship and cooperation, expressing hope that the foreign ministers and diplomatic apparatuses of both sides can reach common understandings in economic and tourism areas.

In a separate meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Pezeshkian stressed the need for drafting a long-term strategic plan between the two countries in mining, trade, economic, tourism and cultural fields, saying such a plan can deepen bilateral relations in different sectors.

Deepening relations between the two countries will bring stability and security to the region, he noted. ► [Page 3](#)

Iran raps UK for reversing roles of aggressor and victim

TEHRAN— Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei has condemned Britain's accusations against Iran, accusing London of reversing the roles of aggressor and victim despite two rounds of unlawful aggression against the Islamic Republic in just nine months, including while Tehran was pursuing negotiations.

In a message posted on his X account on Thursday, Baqaei attributed the turmoil engulfing the region to unlawful interventions, including those supported or facilitated by Britain. ► [Page 2](#)

Iran reaffirms Strait of Hormuz closure, says passage must be coordinated

TEHRAN — Iranian military officials have reiterated that the Strait of Hormuz remains closed to uncoordinated maritime traffic, linking any easing of restrictions to 'respect for Iran's rights' and warning that continued US military presence in the region will deepen insecurity.

Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, deputy coordinator of the Iranian Army, said on Thursday that any vessel seeking to transit the strategic waterway must coordinate its passage with the Iranian authorities who are in charge. His remarks came as Army Chief Commander Major General Amir Hatami and Army Spokesman Brigadier General Mohammad Akraminia issued separate statements emphasizing Iran's military readiness and its determination to maintain control over the security environment around the strait. ► [Page 3](#)

Co-op memorandum signed: Iran, Eurasia take new step for free trade, integration

TEHRAN- The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade stressed, at the signing of a cooperation memorandum with the member states of Eurasia, the full implementation of the free trade agreement, the removal of trade barriers, and the expansion of transit cooperation.

According to IRNA from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, Seyyed Mohammad Atabak, on Wednesday evening, at the signing of the memorandum with the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union during the second meeting of the Joint Committee for the Implementation of the Free Trade Agreement between Iran and this union, called for operational follow-up of the agreements, the removal of trade barriers, and maximum use of the capacities of this agreement to develop economic exchanges. ► [Page 4](#)



Iranians rally at Persepolis in defense of national identity after Rubio remarks

TEHRAN – Hundreds of people from Fars Province gathered at the UNESCO-registered Persepolis complex on Wednesday afternoon in a rally dubbed "Devotees of Civilization" to protest recent anti-Iran remarks by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

The gathering, held from 15 at Takht-e Jamshid, was aimed at showcasing Iran's ancient civilization and national identity and conveying a message of resilience to the world.

The protest followed Rubio's remarks in Athens, in which he accused the armies of Xerxes of burning temples and shrines in the Greek capital in 480 B.C., a claim Iranian participants described as a distortion of Iranian and regional history.



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

The illusion of victory over Iran

In an article, Donya-e-Eqtasad discussed what it described as Washington's illusion of victory over Iran. Citing international affairs analyst Farid Zakaria, the newspaper argued that military success does not necessarily produce political or strategic success. The article notes that although the United States speaks of victory, it is still attempting to restore normal shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. The main issue, according to the paper, is not only the strait itself or the military and economic costs involved, but the absence of a clear American objective. The Trump administration, it argues, has not clarified whether its goal is changing Iran's behavior or changing the Iranian government. The article contends that Washington must choose between these approaches. If the goal is to alter Iranian policies, reopen the strait, limit the nuclear program, and curb Tehran's regional activities, then the United States should pursue realistic goals through pressure and negotiation. If regime change is the actual objective, America must prepare for a costly conflict with consequences extending beyond the Middle East.

Kayhan: Violation equals punishment

Kayhan wrote that recent military developments in the Strait of Hormuz show, contrary to Donald Trump's statements, that Iran is fully enforcing its authority over the strategic waterway. According to the newspaper, Iranian armed forces are taking action against vessels that violate Iranian regulations. During recent regional tensions, the Persian Gulf, particularly the Strait of Hormuz, has become both an active arena of confrontation and a demonstration of Iran's military capabilities. The paper argues that Western plans to bypass the strait through alternative routes have failed. Investments in pipelines and southern transit corridors were intended to reduce reliance on Hormuz, but recent events allegedly demonstrated that Iran's deterrent and operational reach extend beyond the strait itself. According to Kayhan, these developments prove that no secure alternative route can eliminate Iran's leverage and that the waterway remains under Iranian authority.

Hamshahri: American warships, power projection or operational constraint?

Hamshahri examined reports that US naval forces are operating roughly 700 to 800 kilometers from the Strait of Hormuz. Quoting the commander of the IRGC Navy, the paper stated that an American aircraft carrier remains at that distance because of vulnerability concerns and has avoided entering areas within the reach of Iranian forces. The article notes that Washington has long used aircraft carriers as symbols of military power and tools of pressure. Military analysts, however, argue that effectiveness depends

not only on the number of ships and weapons available but also on vulnerability to an opponent's missiles and operational capabilities. According to the paper, the fleet's distance from the strait raises questions about whether American claims regarding maritime security fully match operational realities.

Sobh-e-No: Hormuz is completely locked

Sobh-e-No argued that Iran's policy in the Strait of Hormuz has entered a new and more assertive phase. According to the newspaper, movement through the waterway faces tighter restrictions while Iran is expanding measures designed to enforce new navigation rules. The article states that increased attacks on vessels accused of violations indicate that Iran's approach has moved beyond warnings and statements into active implementation. In its view, the current situation represents more than a rise in maritime incidents. Rather, Tehran is using its geographical position, energy influence, and political leverage to increase pressure on Washington. The newspaper argues that a military option could trigger a broader regional conflict and drive oil prices sharply higher. On the other hand, continued restraint could allow Iran to strengthen its influence over global energy flows. The article concludes that negotiations remain the most practical route to reducing tensions.

Javan: War reaches the heart of the digital economy

In a commentary on the implications of regional tensions for artificial intelligence, Javan examined risks facing major technology investments in the Persian Gulf. The newspaper noted that hundreds of billions of dollars have been invested in AI projects and data centers that support ambitions to make the region a global technology hub. According to the report, rising military tensions have increased concerns about the security of critical digital infrastructure. As Persian Gulf economies become more dependent on cloud services, data centers, and advanced technologies, any expansion of conflict could threaten economic stability and technological development. The article argues that potential military actions affecting infrastructure linked to American technology companies create a new connection between warfare, deterrence, and economic security. It warns that the consequences could extend beyond the battlefield and influence future investment decisions across the region. Dr. Mohammad Reza Ghasemi, an adviser to the Iranian Parliament's Artificial Intelligence faction, stated that a significant escalation of conflict could lead to widespread disruptions in international internet connectivity and serious interruptions to everyday life.

Iran raps UK for reversing roles of aggressor and victim

From page 1 ► “The chaos engulfing our region is the consequence of unlawful interventions, including those backed or contributed to by the UK,” he wrote.

Baqaei criticized British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband for portraying Iran as the aggressor after two rounds of unlawful attacks against the country within nine months, even as Iran was engaged in diplomatic efforts to resolve disputes.

“For the UK Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband to portray Iran as the ‘aggressor’ after two rounds of unlawful aggression against it in just nine months, even as it pursued negotiations, is a grotesque reversal of victim and aggressor,” Baqaei wrote, describing the remarks as another low point in Britain's long record of hostile campaigns against Iran.

Drawing a historical parallel, the spokesman said the British position was as absurd as depicting Nazi Germany as a defender of peace while portraying Britain and its allies in World War II as the aggressors.

Baqaei's remarks came after UK Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband said on October 13 that he had spoken with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, offered condolences over the death of a US citizen in an attack on King



Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia, and discussed what he described as ending Iran's aggression, including in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran maintains that such accusations disregard the circumstances surrounding the US-Israeli war of aggression against the country and overlook the wider consequences of foreign military intervention in West Asia.

Tehran has repeatedly emphasized that diplomacy must be pursued based on respect for national sovereignty and international law, arguing that efforts to assign responsibility for regional instability must take account of the actions that have fueled the conflict rather than isolate Iran's response from the events that preceded it.

The Leader's message commemorating National Nurse's Day



From page 1 ► The full text of the Leader's message is as follows:

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

The fifth of Jumada al-Awwal each year serves as a reminder of the blessed birth of a woman who was raised in the light of the love, nurturing, and close company of the Five Pure Souls (pbut) who are considered to be the most exalted of divine creation. For over 50 years, the upbringing and growth of Zeinab al-Kubra (pbuh) in this luminous school of thought gave rise to such a multifaceted display of honor and excellence in this shining star of the ages that she has continuously been praised, admired, and spoken proudly of by those closest to God. The peak of this brilliance emerged in the epic of Ashura: on one hand, manifesting an endless abundance of patient compassion, benevolence, and solicitude for the oppressed on the plain of Karbala, while being one of the most revered symbols of steadfastness and courage.

From the beginning, the history of the Islamic Movement and Revolution has been replete with scenes showing the presence of Iranian women and girls inspired by Zeinab. This presence took on remarkable dimensions, both qualitatively and quantitatively, during the nation's unparalleled Bi'tha (rising up) that took place in the Third Sacred Defense. Today, Islamic Iran's women inspired by Zeinab are at the forefront in elucidation in action and resistance with their presence in various arenas, particularly in

city and village squares, behind the front lines of the military war. This is to such an extent that the tyrants of our time – who are perpetually seeking the suffering, pain, and suppression of this nation – are incapable of confronting this vast army.

The people of this land, devoted as they are to the Pure Progeny of the Prophet (pbut), have rightly designated the birth anniversary of Lady Zeinab al-Kubra as a day to honor nurses in view of her kindness, her empathizing with those in pain, and her selfless devotion to them. Indeed, many of these moral virtues and human values may be clearly seen in the hardworking, admirable members of the nursing profession.

The work of nurses, like that of certain other groups – including doctors, teachers and educators, religious scholars, and relief workers – revives and inspires hope. It's for this rea-

son that a nurse is sometimes thought of as an “angel of mercy,” because in the face of the irritability and distress of those who are suffering and in pain, nurses help bring patients comfort and hope, speed their recovery and healing, and thereby prepare the conditions for divine mercy to descend.

However, the role of nurses in treating patients, unlike that of physicians, requires a continuous, attentive, patient presence. The impact of their presence extends far beyond physical healing. It acts as a balm for psychological and spiritual wounds, frequently preventing feelings of despair from taking over. In this way, that which is beyond the reach of medicine alone is achieved due to their compassionate devotion.

In this era, the evil network of Global Arrogance spares no effort to inflict various forms of oppression and crimes on

free, resilient nations – especially the Iranian nation – and seeks, among other things, to bring suffering on the great Iranian nation by creating various restrictions in healthcare and medicine. Attending to the needs of nurses, strengthening the nursing community, and maintaining and enhancing nurses' knowledge, skills, capabilities, morale, motivation, and dignity – particularly those who have devoted themselves to working in non-private institutions – have an important impact on the physical and psychological health and security of society. Thus, it's expected that our officials in the health sector treat these vital matters as a top priority in continuing their conscientious efforts.

I extend my congratulations on these two occasions (Lady Zeinab's birth anniversary and National Nurse's Day) to our dear nation, to the conscientious and determined women of our Islamic homeland, and especially to our sisters and brothers in the nursing profession.

In closing, I pray for God's mercy for the guiltless, self-sacrificing martyrs from the nursing community, particularly the nurses who were martyred during the Second and Third Imposed Wars, and also in the sedition of Dey 1404 (Jan. 2026). I am hopeful that with the prayers of our Master [Imam Mahdi], may God hasten his noble reappearance, Almighty God will grant the Iranian nation increasing honor and power, and He'll bestow upon them all that's befitting for those who follow Zeinab's (pbuh) school of thought.

Iran, 19 countries condemn Colombia's embassy opening in occupied Al-Quds

TEHRAN — Iran and 19 other countries have condemned Colombia's decision to open an embassy in occupied al-Quds, warning that the move violates international law, undermines the internationally recognized status of the Palestinian city and runs counter to efforts to establish an independent Palestinian state.

Iran's Foreign Ministry issued a strong condemnation on Thursday evening, describing the decision as contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and fundamental principles of international law. A joint statement by the foreign ministers of Turkey and 18 other countries followed on Friday, calling on Bogotá to reverse the move and uphold its international obligations.

The dispute has renewed attention to the international legal status of al-Quds, the consequences of relocating diplomatic missions to the occupied city, and the long-standing international consensus against unilateral measures intended to alter its status.

In its statement, Iran's Foreign Ministry stressed that al-Quds is an inseparable part of Palestinian territory and that states are obligated under international law to refrain from actions that could be interpreted as recognizing Israel's occupation.

The ministry said Colombia's decision contradicted the country's international obligations concerning the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and risked legitimizing the occupation of Palestinian land. It also argued that the move conflicted with the historical struggles for independence and justice in Colombia and across Latin America.

Iran called on the Colombian government to accept responsibility for the consequences of

its 'unlawful and unjustifiable' decision.

Joint condemnation by 19 countries

The joint statement, issued by Turkey's Foreign Ministry on Friday, was endorsed by the foreign ministers of Turkey, Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

The ministers expressed their unequivocal rejection of Colombia's embassy opening, saying the decision violated relevant UN Security Council resolutions and weakened international efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace based on a two-state solution.

They reaffirmed that measures intended to change the legal or historical status of occupied al-Quds, or to recognize the city as Israel's capital, are null and void and have no legal effect.

The statement cited UN Security Council Resolutions 476 and 478, both adopted in 1980. These resolutions rejected Israel's attempts to alter the character and status of the city and called on states with diplomatic missions there to withdraw them.

The ministers emphasized that al-Quds is part of the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967 and urged Colombia to reconsider and reverse its decision, respect international law and avoid actions that prejudice the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Iran's condemnation came alongside separate objections from Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Algeria. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) had also previously denounced the planned embassy opening, describing it as an unlawful step and a departure from Colombia's



longstanding support for Palestinian rights.

From the 1980s diplomatic withdrawals to the US embassy move

The controversy over diplomatic missions in al-Quds has deep roots in international diplomacy. Israel declared the city its capital after occupying East al-Quds in 1967 and later took steps to consolidate its control over the city. These measures have not gained broad international recognition.

In 1980, Israel adopted a law declaring a 'united Jerusalem' its capital. The UN Security Council rejected this move through Resolution 478, determining that measures seeking to alter the city's character and status had no legal validity and calling on states that had established diplomatic missions in Jerusalem to withdraw them.

Following the resolution, countries that had maintained embassies in Al-Quds moved their missions to Tel Aviv. For decades, the overwhelming international practice was to keep embassies outside the city, reflecting the position that its final status should be determined through negotiations rather than unilateral action.

A major departure from that

practice came under US President Donald Trump. On December 6, 2017, Trump announced that the United States recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The US Embassy was subsequently relocated from Tel Aviv to Quds on May 14, 2018, during his first presidential term.

The decision marked a significant shift in longstanding US policy and drew widespread criticism from Palestinians and many governments, which warned that recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital without a negotiated settlement prejudged one of the most sensitive issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The United States became the first country to move its embassy to Quds in the modern wave of diplomatic relocations following the 2017 announcement. Guatemala followed in May 2018, while Paraguay briefly moved its embassy to the city that year before reversing the decision later in 2018. Honduras moved its embassy in 2021. A small number of other countries have also taken steps to recognize Quds as Israel's capital or relocate their diplomatic missions there, although most governments have continued to keep their embassies elsewhere.

Pezeshkian: Iran will not bow to coercion

US must know Iran will powerfully continue its engagement with the world relying on its people and in coordination with neighbors



On the sidelines of the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) Summit in Yerevan, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian held talks with Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze (L) and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan (R).



From Page 1 ▶ “We are determined to expand ties in all areas. We must jointly bring issues to fruition in practice. Very good measures have been taken so far, and we hope they will be long-term with tangible results,” Pezeshkian said.

Emphasizing that Iran cannot be sanctioned into isolation, he added: “The US must know that

Iran, relying on its people and in coordination with neighbors, will powerfully continue its engagement with the world.”

“The US has created problems not only for us but for the whole world. If it wants to continue this path, things will get worse for the whole world. So it is better to act with the logic of dialogue instead of force,” he stated.

Pashinyan, for his part, referred to Iran’s cultural background and historical antiquity, saying Yerevan seeks stability and peace in the region and is expanding its ties with neighbors day by day in a direction of mutual development.

He described trade and economic ties between the two countries as remarkable, saying

energy cooperation holds very great potential which both sides seek to further expand.

It is worth noting that Pezeshkian, after attending and speaking at the summit of the seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity? left Yerevan for Tehran on Friday evening.

Iran reaffirms Strait of Hormuz closure, says passage must be coordinated

From Page 1 ▶ Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a ceremony honoring Army nurses, Sayyari argued that the impact of restrictions on maritime traffic was evident in international fuel markets.

“The Strait of Hormuz is closed. If it were open and oil were passing through it, gas-oil prices in the United States would not have risen,” he said.

Sayyari outlined the deployment of Iran’s armed forces around the waterway, saying the naval forces of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) maintained a firm presence to the west of the strait, while the Iranian Army operated to its east and extended its presence northward into the Sea of Oman.

He stressed that any passage through the waterway must be coordinated, warning that vessels attempting to transit without such coordination could face consequences.

Hatami links reopening to respect for Iran’s rights

Army Chief Commander Major General Amir Hatami has also made clear that, in Iran’s view, the future of the strait is directly linked to the treatment of the country and its rights.

Speaking at Imam Ali Officers’ University in Tehran on Thursday, Hatami said the Strait of Hormuz had been closed following the outbreak of the war and would remain closed until Iran’s rights were respected.

He attributed the conflict to a ‘fundamental miscalculation by Iran’s adversaries,’ who had underestimated the country’s military capabilities and assumed that it was in a weakened position.

According to Hatami, the Iranian Army and the IRGC responded from the earliest hours of the conflict with extensive strikes against hostile targets. He argued that the adversaries had failed to achieve their military and strategic objectives.

Rejecting US assertions that Iran’s military capabilities had been weakened, the Army chief pointed to continued missile and drone operations and the functioning of the coun-

try’s air-defense systems as evidence of its sustained operational capacity.

Hatami also said Iran had taken firm action against vessels that violated its regulations, leaving maritime traffic through the strait severely restricted.

He added that Iran’s armed forces had used the pause in hostilities to repair damage and strengthen their readiness. Iranian ground, naval, air-defense and missile units, he said, remained equipped and prepared to defend the country’s territorial integrity.

Hatami further warned that any attack on Iran’s infrastructure would prompt a response inflicting substantially greater damage on the infrastructure and interests of its adversaries, including Israel and those cooperating with it.

Army says US military presence fuels regional insecurity

In separate remarks on Friday, Army spokesman Brigadier General Mohammad Akraminia said Iran was developing new operational plans that would force hostile US naval vessels to withdraw even farther from the country’s coastline.

Akraminia said Iran’s air-defense capabilities had advanced beyond their prewar and wartime levels, adding that Iranian air-defense units had intercepted several US drones in the country’s airspace in recent weeks. He also said US military vessels had been pushed to distances exceeding 500 kilometers from the coasts of the Persian Gulf.

The spokesman described the US military presence as a central source of insecurity in the region and called on regional countries and the international community to recognize ‘Washington’s role in fueling instability.’

“If America leaves the region, the Strait of Hormuz will reopen, and collective security will be established with the participation of the region’s countries, and the global economy will improve. If it doesn’t leave, we’ll expel it,” Akraminia said.

He added that Iranian forces had rehearsed advanced, coordinated and innova-

tive military operations, while nationwide air-defense coverage had been significantly strengthened.

A strategic waterway with global economic consequences

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world’s most strategically important energy corridors, connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the wider Arabian Sea. A substantial share of global oil shipments and significant volumes of liquefied natural gas pass through the waterway, making disruptions a concern for energy-importing countries, shipping operators and financial markets.

Restrictions on traffic through the strait can raise shipping and insurance costs, disrupt energy supplies and add volatility to oil and fuel prices. The effects depend on the scale and duration of the disruption, the availability of alternative supplies and routes, and market expectations about the conflict.

Iran’s latest statements place the waterway at the center of its broader security position: Tehran says passage must be coordinated, its armed forces remain prepared, and any change in the current situation depends on respect for Iran’s rights and the future of foreign military deployments in the region.

The statements also underscore the competing approaches to security in the Persian Gulf. While Washington has emphasized maritime security and freedom of navigation, Iranian officials argue that lasting stability requires regional cooperation and an end to ‘destabilizing foreign military intervention.’

With energy markets and international shipping exposed to developments around the strait, any sustained change in maritime traffic is likely to have consequences well beyond West Asia. For Iran, however, the issue is not solely one of commercial passage: its military leadership has framed the waterway as a strategic lever tied to national security, sovereignty and the outcome of the wider confrontation.

AI has enhanced Iran’s intelligence and targeting capabilities: Taeb

TEHRAN— Hossein Taeb, head of Iran’s Basij Organization, says the use of artificial intelligence in defense and intelligence operations has improved the accuracy of target identification and precision strikes, highlighting the technology’s growing role in Iran’s military capabilities.

Speaking on Thursday at the first Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity Conference in the southeastern city of Kerman, Taeb said AI had strengthened intelligence gathering and target assessment, adding that its applications had extended to the naval and aerospace divisions of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guard

Corps (IRGC) and other branches of the armed forces.

Taeb also discussed ‘the objectives of the US-Israeli war against Iran,’ arguing that attacks on military commanders, scientists and air-defense systems were intended to weaken the country’s defenses and undermine the scientific foundations of its development.

Protecting Iran’s scientific capabilities

Referring to the 12-day war, Taeb said the simultaneous targeting of military commanders and scientists was part of a strategy to weaken Iran’s security infrastructure and damage

the scientific capabilities underpinning its technological progress.

He said the campaign against Iranian scientists had failed to eliminate the country’s nuclear expertise. According to Taeb, the scope of attacks expanded during the 40-day war, extending to other scientific fields and claiming the lives of researchers.

Taeb argued that the objective of such attacks went beyond military damage, encompassing efforts to undermine public security and weaken the country’s capacity for scientific and technological advancement.

“Targeting one scientist would



not halt the country’s progress, as more specialists would emerge to continue the work,” he said.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

‘Mother of all bombs’ will not rescue Trump from Iran war quagmire



TEHRAN — The possible use of America’s largest non-nuclear bomb against Iran may offer President Donald Trump a dramatic display of military power, but it is unlikely to resolve the strategic predicament facing Washington, analysts have warned, arguing that a spectacular explosion cannot substitute for a viable path out of a protracted war.

CNN reported on October 14 that the US military had developed strike plans that could include the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb, commonly known as the “mother of all bombs,” against Iranian energy infrastructure and nuclear sites if Trump orders a resumption of combat operations. The report cited multiple US officials familiar with the planning.

The prospect of deploying the weapon has raised questions about whether Washington is seeking a decisive military outcome or a dramatic action that could allow the president to declare victory without achieving his stated strategic objectives.

Even within US military planning circles, doubts have emerged over the weapon’s effectiveness in changing the course of the war, CNN reported. Reuters subsequently reported the story, noting that it had not independently verified CNN’s account.

A dramatic explosion, but what strategic result?

Dani Citrinowicz, a former Israeli military intelligence official, told the BBC that even using the “mother of all bombs” would not force Iran to surrender.

“Even the use of the [mother of all bombs] will not force Iran to surrender; although such an attack could have psychological effects and give Trump an opportunity to claim an imaginary victory,” he said, according to the quotation provided in the BBC-attributed report.

The assessment points to a fundamental distinction between the destructive power of a weapon and its ability to achieve political objectives. A strike can cause extensive damage without compelling an adversary to accept the attacker’s demands or bringing a conflict to a favourable conclusion.

Sina Azodi, director of the Middle East Studies Program at George Washington University, similarly questioned the strategic logic behind the reported option.

“Trump has a strange fascination with the symbolic use of American military power and wants to advertise it on his personal social media account through a grand spectacle and a massive explosion,” Azodi said, according to the quotation provided.

He also highlighted the weapon’s limitations against deeply buried targets, noting that it detonates in the air and has limited capacity to penetrate far underground.

The distinction matters because the MOAB was designed primarily to produce devastating blast effects over a broad surface area. It is not the same as a specialised penetrator designed to attack deeply buried, hardened facilities.

In an October 15 Al Jazeera explainer, military analyst Elijah Magnier said that using the MOAB would not guarantee the destruction of Iran’s deeply buried nuclear installations and could amount to little more than “political theatre.”

A weapon cannot resolve a strategic deadlock

The reported plans have emerged as the Trump administration faces pressure to demonstrate progress in a war that has failed to produce a clear political resolution.

In a CNN broadcast on October 15, senior national security reporter Zachary Cohen said Trump and his advisers had spent months discussing options that could be presented to the American public as a “definitive end” to the war.

Cohen said the military had been tasked with

developing fresh strike options amid the absence of a diplomatic resolution and growing unpopularity of the conflict.

He also reported that the administration’s stated strategic goals remained unfulfilled.

That assessment raises a central question: what would a MOAB strike actually accomplish that previous attacks and existing military pressure have not?

The bomb’s destructive capacity is not in dispute. The uncertainty concerns whether its use would change Iran’s calculations, compel Tehran to capitulate or create conditions for a durable settlement.

A dramatic strike might generate powerful images and headlines. But if it does not achieve its declared objectives, it could instead expose the gap between the administration’s military capabilities and its ability to translate them into a political outcome.

The limits of spectacle

The MOAB is the largest non-nuclear bomb in the US arsenal. Its deployment would represent a major escalation, but its size alone does not make it an appropriate weapon for every target.

CNN military analyst and retired Air Force Colonel Cedric Leighton explained in a broadcast on October 15 that the MOAB is designed to inflict damage over a large surface area, whereas Iran’s hardened and deeply buried nuclear facilities present a different targeting challenge.

He contrasted the MOAB with the Massive Ordnance Penetrator, a different weapon specifically designed to attack hardened underground targets.

Leighton also questioned the suitability of the aircraft required to deliver the MOAB for the Iranian operational environment.

The technical limitations reinforce the broader strategic problem. A weapon capable of producing an enormous explosion is not necessarily capable of destroying every intended target, still less of compelling a country to surrender.

A face-saving exit is not the same as victory

The most consequential possibility raised by the reporting is that the proposed strike could be intended partly to shape the political narrative of the war.

CNN’s reporting suggested that the administration was examining military options that could enable Trump to present the conflict as decisively concluded. Such a scenario would make the distinction between a battlefield achievement and a politically useful declaration of victory particularly important.

Citrinowicz’s assessment, as quoted by the BBC, captures that concern: the attack might provide an opportunity to claim victory without necessarily producing the underlying result.

This is the danger of treating military spectacle as a substitute for strategy. An attack can be visually overwhelming and still leave the fundamental dispute unresolved.

For Washington, the question is not simply whether the United States can deploy a powerful bomb. It is whether doing so would bring the war closer to an outcome that can be sustained politically and strategically.

The quagmire remains

The possibility of using the MOAB does not, by itself, demonstrate that Trump has authorised such an attack. The reports describe contingency planning, not a confirmed decision to deploy the weapon.

Reuters said it could not independently verify CNN’s initial report. CBS News separately reported on October 15 that the White House and Pentagon had prepared plans for possible use of the weapon if ordered by the president.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

‘CBI’s response to sanctions is to curb inflation acceleration, strengthen economic resilience’

TEHRAN- The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) said: Our policy response to sanctions is curbing inflation acceleration and strengthening economic resilience, and taking into account available foreign currency reserves.

According to IRNA from the Central Bank, Abdolnaser Hemmati, Governor of the Central Bank, at a gathering of central bank governors of Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia (MCI) countries in Bangkok, explained the Central Bank’s monetary policy under conditions of war, sanctions, and restrictions on transferring financial resources.

He added: Our policy response often consists of quantitative restrictions on banks’ balance sheet growth, measures to strengthen asset quality and the financial health of banks, and allocation of reserves through open market operations, credit lines, and financing supply chain instruments aimed at boosting production.

Hemmati noted: In the foreign currency sector, our priority is supplying the people’s basic and essential goods.

Economy minister attends IMF meeting in Bangkok

Seyed Ali Madanizadeh, Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of the Islamic Republic of Iran, attended the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in Bangkok, Thailand.



The meeting is being held from October 12 to 18, 2026, with the participation of economic and financial officials of member countries.

Examining solutions for developing economic and financial cooperation, following up on issues of interest to the Islamic Republic of Iran in interaction with international financial institutions, and exchanging views on solutions to strengthen sustainable economic growth and increase the resilience of the global economy are among the areas of focus during this trip.

During this trip, while participating in meetings related to the summit, our Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance has on his agenda plans for dialogue and consultations with officials of international financial institutions and economic officials of other countries.

Ensuring security of transport corridors benefits all regional countries: Iranian minister

TEHRAN- Iran’s Minister of Transport and Urban Development, emphasizing the necessity of protecting civilian infrastructure and guaranteeing the continuity of transport and transit flows in the region, presented proposals and called for the formulation of operational and time-bound plans to remove border obstacles, develop rail cooperation, and strengthen the resilience of regional corridors.

According to an IRNA report from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, at the 14th Meeting of Ministers of Transport of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states in Kazakhstan, expressed appreciation for that country’s hosting and stated: Due to its privileged geographical location, the ECO region has the capacity to become an integrated network of road, rail, and sea routes—a network that can strengthen connectivity among Central Asia, West Asia, the Caucasus, and open waters.

Referring to the approvals of the 13th ECO Meeting of Ministers of Transport in Tehran, she emphasized the necessity of assessing the extent of implementation of past agreements, identifying obstacles, and determining operational priorities, and said: This meeting must lead to specific, time-bound, and measurable decisions for developing regional cooperation.

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development, referring to the damage inflicted on Iran’s transport infrastructure during the attacks by the United States and the Israeli regime, said: Disruption in any part of the region’s transport network, regardless of where it occurs, can increase the time and cost of moving goods and also affect the security of supply chains of other countries.

Sadegh emphasized: Protecting civilian infrastructure, ensuring the security of communication routes, and continuing the flow of transport and transit are common interests for all ECO member states.

She asked the organization’s secretariat to examine the effects of security disruptions on regional corridors and present practical solutions for increasing the resilience of the transport network.

Sadegh further considered facilitating the movement of the road fleet and border crossings among the priorities of regional cooperation and emphasized reducing truck dwell time, simplifying customs procedures, harmonizing transport documents, and exchanging information among

border authorities.

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development, referring to the revival of the ECO train and its successful operation on the Turkey, Iran, and Turkmenistan route, considered this experience a basis for expanding rail cooperation among member states.

Noting that the damaged bridges on the aforementioned rail route were repaired by Iranian engineers within 72 hours and the route was reopened, she emphasized the importance of technical readiness and maintaining the continuity of regional rail connections.

Sadegh also considered the Almaty–Tehran–Istanbul rail connection an opportunity for developing regional trade and proposed that tariff, customs, technical, and operational obstacles on rail routes be examined and a clear mechanism be created for coordinating train movements and developing regular and competitive services.

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development listed access of landlocked countries to open waters as one of the priorities of cooperation in ECO and said: Achieving this goal requires the integrated linking of ports, rail lines, roads, and logistics services.

Referring to the capacity of Chabahar Port and other southern ports of Iran, she considered the connection of Chabahar to the country’s rail network an effective factor in strengthening the link between land and sea transport, diversifying trade routes, and reducing transport costs.

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development, further emphasizing the necessity of determining the responsibilities of countries and the secretariat in following up on approvals and presenting a progress report at the next meeting, noted: Developing transport and transit in the ECO region, in addition to increasing trade and economic growth, helps strengthen regional ties and enhance the economic resilience of member states.

Sadegh proposed that the ECO secretariat, in cooperation with member states, prepare a comprehensive report on the extent of implementation of previous approvals and remaining obstacles, formulate a time-bound plan for facilitating road transport, border and customs coordination, and developing rail and multimodal services, and place on its agenda solutions for protecting civilian infrastructure and increasing the resilience of corridors.

Co-op memorandum signed: Iran, Eurasia take new step for free trade, integration

TEHRAN- The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade stressed, at the signing of a co-operation memorandum with the member states of Eurasia, the full implementation of the free trade agreement, the removal of trade barriers, and the expansion of transit cooperation.

According to IRNA from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, Seyyed Mohammad Atabak, on Wednesday evening, at the signing of the memorandum with the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union during the second meeting of the Joint Committee for the Implementation of the Free Trade Agreement between Iran and this union, called for operational follow-up of the agreements, the removal of trade barriers, and maximum use of the capacities of this agreement to develop economic exchanges.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade described transparency in import regulations, timely exchange of statistical information, and the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers as requirements for fully benefiting from free trade.

He emphasized the necessity of following up on issues related to vehicle recycling fees, access of Iranian cement products to the markets of the union’s member states, and requirements for importing food products, and declared Iran’s readiness to cooperate in examining and removing these barriers.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade further called for turning agreements into specific executive plans with a clear timetable and determining the responsibilities of each party.

He proposed that the secretariats of both sides, by creating a mechanism for continuous monitoring of the implementation of the approvals, present a progress report on measures at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

The Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade stated: The negotiations held will be constructive and result-oriented, and the summary of the negotiations and approvals in specialized committees should be the basis for regular follow-up of commitments.

He expressed hope that the implementation of the agreements, while facilitating the activity of traders and increasing trade exchanges, would lead to strengthening economic cooperation between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union and enhancing the position of the parties in regional and international relations.

The second meeting of the Joint Committee for the Implementation of the Free Trade Agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union was held, hosted by the Ministry of Industry,



Mining and Trade, with the presentation of solutions for trade facilitation, the development of economic cooperation, and the removal of existing barriers.

In this committee, the minister responsible for trade of the Eurasian Economic Union, officials of the Economic Commission, ambassadors, deputy ministers of the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, representatives of the Iran Trade Promotion Organization, the Customs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, the Ministries Transport and Urban Development and Agriculture, and the National Standards Organization of Iran and the Iran Veterinary Organization were present.

Accelerating the establishment of the electronic system for verification of origin, developing transit cooperation within the framework of the International North–South Corridor, and strengthening technical and health cooperation related to trade were among the most important axes of this meeting.

Also, the signing of the co-operation memorandum of understanding between the Business Council of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture was assessed as a step toward strengthening communication among private sector actors and expanding trade cooperation between the two sides.

Awarding highest honorary badge of Eurasian Economic Union to industry, mining and trade minister

The highest honorary badge of the Eurasian Economic Union was awarded to Seyyed Mohammad Atabak, Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in appreciation of his effective efforts in developing and deepening Iran’s economic relations with this union, by Andrey Slepnev, Minister of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission.

According to an IRNA from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, this honorary badge was awarded in appreciation of the measures and efforts of the Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade to expand economic coop-

eration, strengthen trade interactions, and develop the relations of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union; cooperation that is pursued with the aim of utilizing mutual capacities, facilitating trade, and expanding economic ties between the parties.

Andrey Slepnev, Minister of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Union, arrived in Tehran on Wednesday to participate in the second meeting of the Joint Committee for the Implementation of the Free Trade Agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union, and in a meeting attended by Seyyed Mohammad Atabak, Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, and other ambassadors of member states, they addressed the presentation of solutions for trade facilitation, the development of economic cooperation, and the removal of existing barriers.

On October 1, the Head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), in a meeting with the Trade Minister of the Eurasian Economic Union, referring to the upward trend of trade between Iran and the member states of the union, emphasized the Islamic Republic of Iran’s determination to expand and deepen trade relations and strengthen ties between the private sectors of the two sides.

According to a report by the Public Relations of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, in a meeting with Slepnev, referring to the course of trade between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union, said: “Despite all challenges and problems, trade statistics between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union have taken an upward trend, and this promises bright prospects for the development of trade relations in the future.”

The Deputy Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, emphasizing the will and determination of the Islamic Republic of Iran to expand trade relations with the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union, added: “Iran has regular cooperation and trade relations with Russia and other member states of the union, and

we are striving to make these ties deeper than before.”

Dehghan Dehnavi also expressed hope that the second meeting of the joint committee of Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union will be held in Tehran soon, and continued: “Holding this meeting in Tehran can be a suitable opportunity to strengthen communication between the private sectors of Iran and the member states of the union and to form new economic and trade cooperation.”

The Head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization also stressed the continuation of consultations and the use of existing capacities to develop economic and trade cooperation between Iran and the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union.

It is worth noting that Dehghan Dehnavi traveled to Minsk to participate in the 19th meeting of the Joint Economic Cooperation Commission of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Belarus.

Also, in mid-September, Iran’s Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, offering a positive assessment of the results of his Tuesday meetings with officials of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), announced the proposal of initiatives such as setting a base currency to accelerate transactions and appointing special representatives to resolve obstacles facing bilateral trade.

According to IRNA, Seyyed Ali Madanizadeh, speaking to reporters after separate meetings and talks with the Chairman of the Executive Board and the Minister of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission at the union’s headquarters in Moscow, added: “We held very good sessions.”

He stated: “On Iran’s behalf, we expressed our interest and readiness to expand relations and fully implement the free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, and that we are prepared to cooperate with this union in various fields; the union’s officials, in turn, expressed their willingness and interest in expanding ties with our country.”

The Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, referring to the efforts of the enemies of the Iranian nation to fuel economic warfare and block trade and financial channels, said: “What is evident is that, thanks to God, these countries support Iran and our economy, and that Iran has managed to maintain production and trade relations with countries under the toughest conditions.” He added: “The member states of the Eurasian Economic Union are equally committed and eager to develop these relations.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iranian, Iraqi central bank governors discuss expansion of banking cooperation

TEHRAN- On the sidelines of the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Abdolnaser Hemmati, Governor of the Central Bank of Iran, met and held talks with Nizar Nasser Hussein, Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq.

According to an IRNA report from the Central Bank, this meeting, held in a constructive atmosphere, saw the two sides exchange views on ways to develop and consolidate bilateral relations.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran, in this meeting, referring to the deep historical, economic, and political commonalities between Iran and Iraq, emphasized the necessity of strengthening joint monetary and banking cooperation between the two countries.

He also announced the readiness of

the banking system of the Islamic Republic of Iran to transfer experiences in banking areas.

As stated by the head of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, there is capacity for Iran-Iraq trade to reach \$20 billion, and by resolving some domestic and foreign obstacles, this goal can be achieved.

Stating that the goal of increasing Iran-Iraq trade to \$20 billion is not just a slogan, Yahya Al-e Es’haq said: “This figure is proposed based on experience and understanding gained from years of activity and examination of the economic relations between the two countries, and I believe that if we resolve some domestic issues and foreign obstacles, it is possible to achieve \$20 billion in trade between Iran and Iraq.”

شرکت معدنی و صنعتی گل‌گهر
Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co.



Notice of tender for export sale No. Z/1405/18

Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70,000 metric tons of Pellet (%Fe:65.50) on basis of F.O.B at Barco Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: www.geg.ir. All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 12:00 A.M. on 24. Oct.2026 to Gol Gohar Tehran office at: 4th Floor, No.48, West 16 th, North Allameh St, Saadat Abad.

Bidders are invited to the transactions commission department of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 12:00 A.M. on 24. Oct.2026 at the office of the Seller.

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.

Israeli firm weaponized online ads to hack targets, spy on hundreds of millions

By staff writer

TEHRAN — An Israeli advertising company turned the banner ad into a hacking tool, and for at least two years the companies running the world's ad platforms failed to stop it.

Two investigations published October 15, by Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto and the New York security firm Confiant, describe how Discover-Tech, founded in 2020, let surveillance vendors identify internet users and infect chosen ones without a single click.

The company's platform, Controlium, profiled users in bulk and stripped away their anonymity. Citizen Lab calls the technique AdFection. A person opens a website or app, and dozens of firms bid in milliseconds for the ad slot. If Discover-Tech wins, it learns who is looking. If that person is on a client's list, spyware can follow within seconds.

The ads sold phones, earbuds, games and telecom plans. Nothing about them looked wrong. They only had to load.

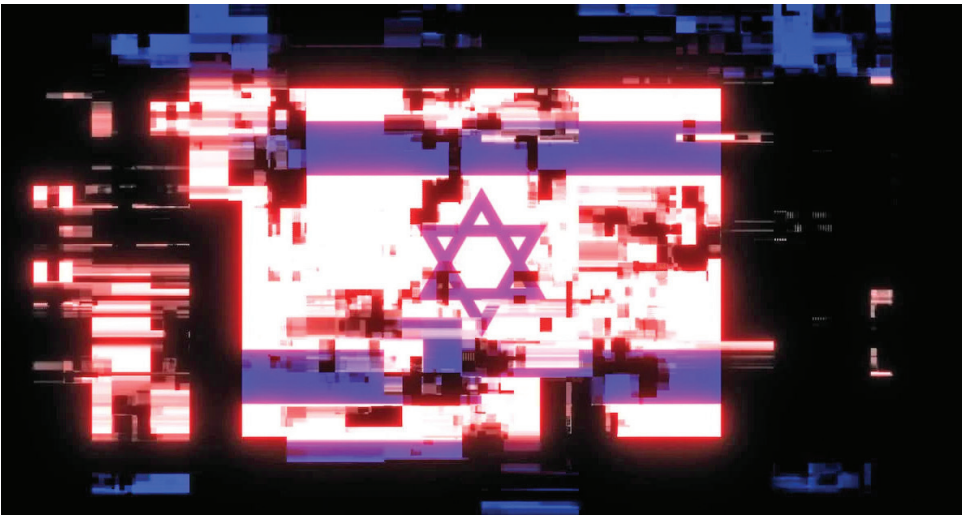
Citizen Lab examined roughly four billion ad records and found Discover-Tech material on more than 120,000 websites and 75,000 apps.

Confiant counted at least 10 million ads a day. Through cookie matching, its cofounder Jerome Dangu said, the firm could track people beyond its own ads. "Very likely hundreds of millions of people would have been touched by Discover-Tech," he said.

Al Jazeera in the crosshairs

The best-documented victims worked for Al Jazeera. Between 2024 and 2025, 45 Windows computers at the Qatari broadcaster were infected with spyware from Candiru, the Israeli vendor the U.S. Commerce Department blacklisted in 2021 over its use against officials, journalists, activists and academics.

Al Jazeera's own technicians had spotted



strange activity and brought in Citizen Lab, which confirmed the attack from the network's logs.

The implant can read files, emails and messages, log keystrokes, take screenshots and switch on microphones and cameras. It is understood to have cost several million dollars.

Al Jazeera called it an assault on press freedom and demanded accountability. It has been here before. In 2020, Citizen Lab found that 36 phones belonging to the network's journalists and executives had been hacked with Pegasus, made by another Israeli firm, NSO Group.

A whole population under watch

Dangu said the Palestinian territories were especially saturated. Almost any site there carried a Discover-Tech ad, he said, giving the firm "a very complete visibility on the digital activities of an entire country."

Israel already controls movement, borders and much of daily life in the occupied territories. This added a layer inside the browser.

The same ads appeared in networks tied to the Pentagon, the International Atomic

Energy Agency, the United Nations, NATO, the European Commission and more than a dozen national governments, along with chipmakers such as Nvidia, Broadcom and Micron.

They also reached the International Criminal Court, which issued arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant in 2024.

Platforms act late

Google says it removed Discover-Tech "for systematically violating our policies." Europe's Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) suspended the firm last week after an audit, and Comcast's Beeswax dropped it.

Yandex did not comment. Discover-Tech and Candiru's owners did not answer Reuters. Confiant noted that ads it tied to Candiru were a tiny fraction of the volume.

Citizen Lab's Wolfie Christl called it disastrous that major vendors missed the operation for years, and urged U.S. and European regulators to investigate.

Candiru has been on a U.S. blacklist for five years. The pipeline that carried its code ran through American-owned platforms until outside researchers forced the issue.

Beijing's mediating power in international crises

By Mahdi Zolfaghari

TEHRAN — In the new international order, the concept of "power" is no longer defined solely by the number of nuclear warheads, overseas military bases, or classical security alliances; rather, the new geometry of global power is shaped by the capacity of supply chains, currency exchanges, infrastructure investments, and economic interdependence. Within this novel framework, China has managed to elevate its position from a mere trading power in the late twentieth century to a "structural actor in international crisis management"—an actor whose primary tools for intervening in crises are not missiles and sanctions, but economic integration and financial leverage.

The defining distinction of China's approach to international crises is rooted in the theory of "developmental peace" as opposed to Western "liberal peace." Beijing believes that the primary root of many geopolitical conflicts and security instabilities in the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia lies not in a vacuum of Western democracy, but in poverty, a deficit of in-

frastructural development, and a lack of connection to global markets. Therefore, Beijing utilizes initiatives such as the Belt and Road and strategic energy partnerships as efficient tools to contain security shocks. When countries share tangible, mutual economic interests in the continuity of joint projects, the cost of escalating tensions and war increases dramatically for them.

A concrete and successful example of this strategy can be seen in Beijing's historic mediation between Tehran and Riyadh. Leveraging its immense weight as the largest buyer of Persian Gulf energy and the primary trading partner of both countries, China provided an economic-strategic platform for a political agreement without the need for ideological alignments. This model demonstrated that Beijing's crisis management levers are built on a commitment to mutual interests and non-interference in internal affairs—a factor that has made Beijing's model attractive and acceptable among the countries of the Global South.

Furthermore, in complex cri-



ses such as the war in Ukraine or tensions surrounding maritime security, China has managed—by relying on its position as a core commodity buyer—to prevent devastating fractures in the global energy and food markets. China's policy is to maintain a balance between trade with Russia while simultaneously safeguarding Western markets; a strategy that prevents the deepening of acute international deadlocks and the uncontrolled spread of crises into the global economy.

Ultimately, Beijing has demonstrated that economic power is not merely a source of

wealth, but a decisive lever for containing shocks and moderating geopolitical behavior. Although China's cautious policy and avoidance of direct security guarantees may appear to limit its role in certain acute crises, an undeniable reality remains: in the current post-hegemonic world, no major international crisis can be managed, sustainably resolved, or contained without considering Beijing's capacities, considerations, and economic levers.

Mahdi Zolfaghari is an Associate Professor at the Department of Asian Studies in Allameh Tabataba'i University

Two years after Sinwar's martyrdom, Palestinian factions vow to continue his path

From page 1 ► The Palestinian Resistance Committees remembered a man who "lived for his people and his cause" and whose life, they said, was "an expression of a firm national will that rejects submission and humiliation."

He died on October 16, 2024, in Rafah's Tal al-Sultan area, in combat gear, throwing his last grenades at Israeli soldiers and then a stick at a drone. Many observers have noted that such an end earned him a lasting place in Palestinian memory.

Born in 1962 in the Khan Younis refugee camp to a family expelled from al-Majdal in 1948, Sinwar belonged to Hamas's founding generation and spent more than 20 years in Israeli prisons before the 2011 Wafa al-Ah-rar exchange.

He headed Hamas in Gaza from 2017 and,



after Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in July 2024, led the movement inside and outside Palestine.

Israel assassinated Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in 2004 and his successor Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi weeks later, and Hamas went on to win the 2006 elections.

Two years after Sinwar's death, Hamas

reiterated that the sacrifices borne by the Palestinian people are part of a historical struggle against foreign occupation, maintaining that true liberation requires facing the full weight of Israeli aggression with unyielding resistance.

Decades of targeted assassinations have failed to break the national will, even as Israeli aggression escalates into unprecedented devastation on the ground.

Gaza Health Ministry counts over 74,300 killed and over 175,000 wounded since October 2023, including at least 1,481 killed since the October 2025 truce.

The UN human rights office verified 1,076 deaths between the ceasefire and July, 268 of them children, and warned of possible war crimes. Israel holds roughly 60 percent of the Strip.

Caught in an imbroglio, Trump resorts to more blatant lies and misleading claims

By staff writer

TEHRAN — Donald Trump appears to be losing his grip on reality as the November 3 congressional midterm elections approach.

Aware that high fuel prices resulting from his war on Iran have put his Republican Party's control of Congress in jeopardy, Trump seems increasingly desperate to shift the blame. One day, he blames Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for high diesel prices; the next, he seeks to mislead Americans by claiming that "Massive Oil, Gas, and Mineral Exploration is getting ready to begin in our new and beautiful Greenland."

Meanwhile, his administration has reportedly leaked information that the United States is considering using the "mother of all bombs" against Iran's energy infrastructure and other facilities, apparently under the illusion that such threats could force Tehran to surrender to Washington's maximalist demands.

The relatively easy abduction of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro appeared to have emboldened Trump to launch a war against Iran, with Israel taking part. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had long urged Washington to attack Iran, including during Trump's first presidential term, which began in January 2017. This was despite Trump's populist rhetoric and his repeated criticism of America's involvement in "endless wars."

Trump apparently labored under the illusion that projecting military power through aircraft carriers and advanced fighter jets would force Iran to capitulate to his unlawful demands. Now, 232 days into the war, Trump and his inner circle appear to have fully realized that Iran is a formidable adversary that cannot be brought to its knees.

"The war in Iran has significantly tarnished the global aura of U.S. airpower. It is unlikely that the Trump administration would have launched Operation Epic Fury if it had known that seven months later it would still be facing an inconclusive slugging match—one that has wasted a huge part of Washington's complex munitions stockpile and come at exorbitant economic and geopolitical cost," Justin Bronk, a senior research fellow for airpower and technology at the Royal United Services Institute, wrote in Foreign Affairs on October 13.

Iran's resilience and retaliation against the unprovoked and illegal war have

damaged the United States' international standing. Iran's performance has also forced Washington's European and Asian allies to reassess their perceptions of American military power.

Bronk also wrote: "For months, Iran's resilience in its war with two of the world's most capable militaries has perplexed many politicians and confounded public expectations... Yet the Islamic Republic has not only survived but continued to maintain significant offensive capabilities."

Against this backdrop, Trump's attempt to blame Ukraine, which has targeted Russian oil refineries, for rising gasoline prices amounts to a distortion of the broader facts. The disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, following the U.S.-Israeli aggression and Iran's response, has become a major factor driving uncertainty in global energy markets. The strategic waterway normally carries roughly one-fifth of the world's oil supply, making any disruption to maritime traffic there a serious threat to global energy security.

Although fuel prices are influenced by several factors, including supply and demand, sanctions, and geopolitical tensions, the impact of the war on Iran cannot simply be ignored. Russia's oil and gas sector has also faced extensive Western sanctions since Moscow launched war on Ukraine in February 2022. Blaming Kyiv for rising fuel prices while overlooking the consequences of the war on Iran is therefore a misleading way to explain the pressures facing American consumers.

Greenland has also contradicted Trump's claim that massive oil and gas exploration is about to begin there.

"There are many smaller explorations underway but these could take years to become operational," Greenland's deputy mining minister, Jørgen Hammeken-Holm, told CNN.

His remarks highlight the gap between Trump's ambitious claims and the practical realities of resource exploration. Even when oil, gas, and mineral deposits are present, turning them into commercially viable projects can take years and requires substantial investment and infrastructure. Presenting such developments as imminent achievements risks creating expectations that the available evidence does not support.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

The end of Saudi Arabia's Yemen 'containment strategy'

From page 1 ► "This is the collapse of Saudi Arabia's containment strategy," Rob Geist Pinfold, an international security expert at King's College London, told Middle East Eye.

"The way Saudi Arabia approached the Houthis (Ansarallah) in the last few years was not dissimilar to how Israel treated Hamas in Gaza before 7 October [2023]. The Saudis felt they had the Houthis where they needed them. They weren't at the stage to reach a political solution, but they felt they had disincentivized them from escalating again."

The conflict erupted again after Saudi Arabia bombed Sanaa airport in July to prevent a plane carrying Ansarallah officials from landing.

The Ansarallah declared a blockade against Saudi shipping as a result, and launched a lightning offensive down the Red Sea coast last month, which the kingdom and its Yemeni allies have struggled to counter.

Unlike the last time a full-scale war raged in Yemen, Saudi Arabia now has more to lose from a widening of the conflict, and the Ansarallah have become more sophisticated adversaries, experts say.

Saudi Arabia faced Ansarallah missile and drone attacks during the last round of fighting, but they were nowhere near as precise as this time.

In the last week alone, the Ansarallah struck Riyadh's international airport three days in a row. A strike on Oct. 10 killed

at least 13 people and injured 300. The group's targeting capabilities were underscored again on Oct. 13 when they hit the headquarters of Saudi Arabia's state oil giant, Aramco, in the eastern city of Dhahran.

The strikes have caused some to question the capabilities of Saudi Arabia's military.

The kingdom is a major buyer of American weaponry, including Patriot and THAAD air defense systems. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the kingdom spends 6.5 percent of its GDP on military gear, one of the highest ratios in the world.

"It's quite striking, literally, that the Houthis can hit, at will, these incredibly important facilities in Saudi Arabia and the Saudis can't defend them," Gregory Gause, an expert on the Persian Gulf at the Middle East Institute, told MEE.

"They clearly have much better missiles and targeting technology than they did before," he said.

A Western defense official in Riyadh told MEE that Saudi Arabia is absorbing the vast majority of missiles and drones fired at it, saying the number is likely in the low 90 percent range. But the Ansarallah are more skilled at penetrating the kingdom's air defenses.

"The Houthis are a lot more effective than Iran was back in February. They learned from earlier this year," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It is a combination of innovation, rapid speed and the latest intelligence," the official said.

Jafari, Beiranvand nominated for AFC Awards Bangkok 2026

TEHRAN – Marzieh Jafari and Alireza Beiranvand from Iran have been nominated for the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Awards Bangkok 2026.

A glittering list of nominees was revealed by the AFC for the ceremony, which is slated to take place on Nov. 19.

The 30th edition of the star-studded ceremony will be staged in Thailand for a second time since its capital city first played host in 2017, with the intricate Aksra Theatre King Power to serve as the venue once again.

Jafari and Park Youn-jeong each vie for a second win in the AFC Coach of the Year (Women) prize with Ma Xiaoxu. Jafari helped Bam Khatoon qualify for the Group Stage of the AFC Women's Champions League 2026/27.

She also had impressive performance with Iran's women's national football team.

Beiranvand, Feras Al Brikan and Salem Al Dawsari are in contention for the AFC Player of the Year trophy.

A stellar showing at the FIFA World Cup 2026 underlined Alireza Beiranvand's world-class abilities as Iran narrowly missed out on the Round of 32 on goal difference. His nation's most-capped custodian, he also enjoyed a solid club campaign by helping Tractor FC to the AFC Champions League Elite 2025/26 Round of 16. This is the 34-year-old's second nomination, after his first in 2019.

Also, Hossein Tayebi (Gohar Zamin [IRN] and IRN) and Saeid Ahmad Abbasi (Giti Pasand [IRN] and IRN) vie for the AFC Futsal Player of the Year with Muhammad Osaman-musa (Jimbee Cartagena [ESP] and THA).

Men's wheelchair basketball start on high in Nagoya 2026

TEHRAN – Iran's men's wheelchair basketball team defeated Iraq 81-23 in their opening match of the 2026 Asian Para Games.

Iran will meet South Korea in Group B on Saturday.

Team Melli are scheduled to face the Philippines on Monday.

Iran have an impressive record at previous editions of the Asian Para Games, having won one silver medal and secured two third-place finishes across the last four editions. The team now hope to build on that record in Nagoya, overcome the challenges of their long journey and launch their campaign with a victory over Iraq.

Iran blind football lose to Thailand at 2026 Asian Para Games

TEHRAN – Iran's men's blind football team opened their campaign with a 1-0 loss to Thailand at the Asian Para Games on Friday.

In the match held at the Tsuruma Park Multipurpose Ground, Nagoya, Kittikorn Baodee scored the solitary goal of the match.

Team Melli will play South Korea on Saturday.

Blind football is a sport played in teams of five by athletes with vision impairments. Of those athletes, four are outfielders and one is a goalie. The rules are similar to the official FIFA rules with a few adjustments. Each team competes to score a goal on their opponent's side of the field.

Iran win U23 World Greco-Roman team title

TEHRAN – Iran U23 Greco-Roman team managed to win the team title of the U23 World Championships in Las Vegas, United States.

Iran finished with 119 points, five more than Kazakhstan which finished a surprising second with 114 points. Russia was third with 105 points.

Asian silver medalist Erfan Jarkani held on to a 1-1 criteria lead against Manato Nakamura (JPN) to win the 63kg gold. Nakamura challenged at the end of the bout but there was no foul or fleeing from Jarkani, who won with a final score of 2-1.

At 87kg, Yasin Yazdi, also a Asian Championships silver medalist, won his career first-ever gold medal with a 4-0 victory over Temirlan Turdakyn from Kazakhstan in the final. He got the par terre position in the first period but did not score any points.

However, he began the second period with a takedown and that eliminated any chances of him being put in par terre. Yazdi was awarded the second passivity as well which extended his lead to 4-0.

“I'd been waiting for this gold for about two or three years,” Yazdi said. “I was able to win it here, and I hope I can keep winning gold medals in the future.”

Yazdi said that before the final, he was aware of the Turdakyn's shortcoming and prepared more for exchanges in standing than par terre.

“Before the final, I knew I could win the match because I felt my opponent wasn't as well-prepared as I was,” he said. “My opponent was tall and I may have trouble taking him down and controlling him on the mat. So, I focused most of my effort on the standing exchanges. I could tell that my opponent was starting to get tired in the last 30 seconds of the first period, so in the second period I put even more pressure on him.”

Women's wheelchair basketball fall to Japan in Nagoya

TEHRAN – Iran's women's wheelchair basketball team opened their campaign at the 2026 Asian Para Games in Nagoya with a 65-20 defeat against hosts Japan.

The Iranian team struggled to contain Japan's experienced players in the opening quarter, as the hosts launched a series of effective attacks and converted their scoring opportunities to establish an early advantage. Iran lost the first quarter 22-4, leaving the team facing a significant deficit from the outset.

Japan maintained its momentum throughout the game, while Iran found it difficult to close the gap against the home side. The match marked the beginning of the women's team's campaign at the continental competition.

Iran will next face South Korea in their second match, aiming to respond to the opening loss and deliver a stronger performance in the upcoming contest.

Earlier in the day, Iran's men's wheelchair basketball team enjoyed a successful start to its campaign, defeating Iraq 81-23. The convincing victory provided a positive result for the Iranian delegation in the wheelchair basketball competition.

With their next match approaching, Iran's women will look to regroup and build on their experience against Japan as they continue their journey at the Asian Para Games.

The 2026 Asian Para Games bring together athletes from across Asia to compete in a wide range of para sports, showcasing their skill, determination and competitive spirit.

Iran issues post-war tourism recovery and competitiveness strategy

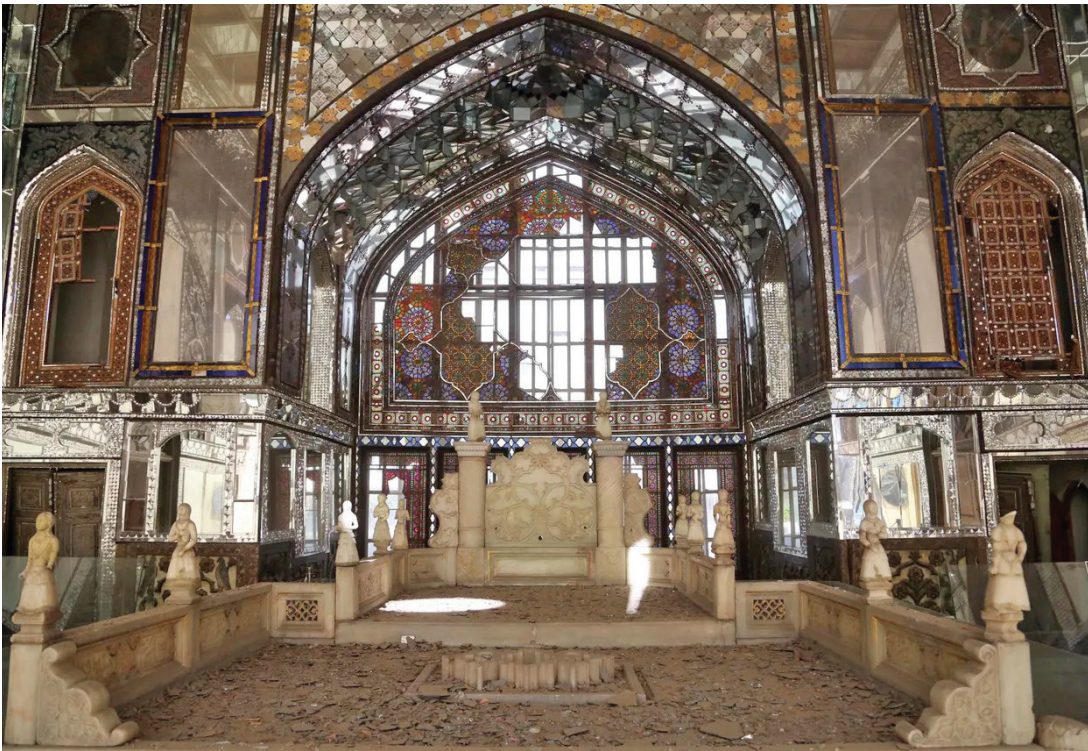
TEHRAN – Iran's tourism ministry has issued a strategic and operational plan to revive the country's tourism industry during the transition and post-war periods, with a focus on rebuilding its international tourism brand, improving competitiveness and coordinating recovery measures nationwide.

Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpey, deputy tourism minister, said the document had been approved by the minister of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts and sent to provincial departments for implementation, according to a report published by the ministry and carried by IRNA.

The plan aims to establish a common framework for decision-making, prioritize practical measures and coordinate tourism recovery efforts at national and provincial levels. It also seeks to move beyond simply restoring conditions that existed before the crisis by redefining Iran's competitive advantages and aligning its tourism offerings with emerging global trends.

The document identifies three priority tourism product groups: nature-based tourism, ecotourism and community-based tourism; health tourism, including medical services, wellness and mental and psychological recovery; and cultural and historical tourism.

According to the deputy minister, these sectors could help



Parts of the UNESCO-listed Golestan Palace, which is located in downtown Tehran, were damaged in Israeli and US strikes in early March 2026.

strengthen Iran's position in international tourism markets by drawing on the country's geographical diversity, cultural heritage and specialized services.

He said the strategy was designed not only to set priorities and outline a long-term vision but also to establish mechanisms for implementing, monitoring and evaluating recovery measures.

Mohseni-Bandpey said regular monitoring would help identify implementation obstacles,

enable timely adjustments and provide a clearer assessment of progress toward the strategy's objectives.

He stressed that successful tourism recovery would depend on linking strategic policymaking with practical implementation, institutional coordination and continuous evaluation. Consistent implementation, he said, could help strengthen the country's competitive position, rebuild its tourism brand and support a more sustainable in-

dustry aligned with global developments.

The strategy comes as Iran's tourism industry faces severe disruption following the outbreak of war on Feb. 28, when the United States and Israel launched strikes against Iran. The conflict prompted widespread airspace closures and flight suspensions across the region, disrupting international travel and undermining visitor confidence.

Minai'i pottery: The exquisite Iranian art lost after the Mongol invasion

TEHRAN – Combining intricate craftsmanship with scenes from Persian epic literature, minai'i ceramics transformed ordinary vessels into richly illustrated works of art during Iran's Seljuk period. The tradition flourished in the late 12th and early 13th centuries before disappearing amid the upheavals of the Mongol period.

A bowl preserved at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art captures a scene from the story of Bahram Gur and Azadeh, depicting the legendary Sasanian king hunting alongside Azadeh, a harp-playing woman. Made in Iran in the late 12th or early 13th century, the bowl features multicolored painting and gilding, demonstrating the technical skill and artistic imagination of medieval Iranian potters.

When pottery became a storytelling medium

Minai'i potters transformed bowls, plates and other vessels into miniature pictorial worlds featuring horsemen, hunters, musicians and characters from Persian literature. Rather than merely decorating functional objects, they used their curved surfaces to narrate stories through carefully arranged figures and scenes.

Episodes associated with the Shahnameh, the Persian epic composed by Ferdowsi around the turn of the 11th century, feature prominently among the subjects. Other motifs include royal hunts, courtly gatherings, musical performances and encounters between legendary characters.

These ceramics provide valuable evidence of how Persian literary narratives were translated into visual art before the Mongol period. In some cases, their imagery predates the earliest surviving illustrated Shahnameh manuscripts by nearly a century, according to the Metropolitan Museum.

The bowl depicting Bahram Gur and Azadeh is particularly revealing. The story combines a royal hunting expedition with a confrontation over the treatment of animals, ending in tragedy. By bringing together elements of the narrative, the artist compressed a complex literary episode into a single composition.

The Metropolitan Museum holds a notable collection of Iranian minai'i ceramics, including bowls decorated with human figures, horsemen and abstract motifs, as well as an ewer bearing a procession of riders and Kufic inscriptions.

Another important example is a large ewer preserved at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), attributed to Kashan in central Iran and dated to the late 12th or early 13th century. It illustrates the scale and com-



Bowl, minai'i ("enameled") ware, Iran, late 12th-early 13th century.

plexity of the craft.

A demanding process behind the beauty

The sophistication of minai'i pottery lay as much in its production technique as in its imagery. The term derives from the Persian word mina, meaning enamel, and is used for ceramics decorated with multiple colors applied both beneath and over a glaze. The technique is also known as enameled ware.

The vessels were generally made from stonepaste, also called fritware, a ceramic material composed principally of crushed quartz, glass frit and a smaller proportion of clay. This mixture produced a relatively light-colored body suitable for fine vessels covered with an opaque glaze.

Decoration required multiple firings. Some pigments were applied beneath the glaze before the initial firing. Additional colors were painted over the fired glaze and fixed in a second firing, usually at a lower temperature. Gold could also be incorporated into the decoration.

The process demanded exceptional precision. The temperature had to be sufficient to fix the additional pigments without damaging the existing glaze or earlier decoration. An error during firing could ruin an extensively decorated vessel.

These labor-intensive, technically demanding procedures made minai'i ceramics costly luxury objects. Their production required expertise in materials, kiln temperatures and painting, resulting in vessels distinguished by their rich colors, intricate figures, elaborate costumes, decorative borders and gilded details.

Kashan and the rise of luxury ceramics

Kashan, in central Iran, is closely associated with minai'i production and was an important

center of luxury ceramics during the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Museum catalogues and art-historical studies attribute many surviving examples to the city.

The LACMA ewer, for instance, is attributed to Kashan and identified as fritware decorated with both inglaze and overglaze painting. However, the available evidence does not establish Kashan as the origin of every surviving minai'i vessel. The precise origins of individual objects and the extent of production at particular workshops remain subjects of scholarly investigation.

The tradition emerged during a period of experimentation in Iranian ceramic art, as potters sought to expand their color palettes and create increasingly elaborate designs. The appearance of literary characters on these vessels also demonstrates how Persian stories circulated beyond written texts into other artistic forms.

Minai'i ceramics thus offer insights into the relationship between literature, courtly culture and visual representation in medieval Iran. Their carefully composed scenes preserve evidence of how artists interpreted familiar narratives and adapted them to the limited surfaces of bowls and other vessels.

An art interrupted

Minai'i production ceased as a recognizable luxury-ware tradition during the upheavals of the 13th century, coinciding with the Mongol invasions of Iran. The precise circumstances of its disappearance remain uncertain, however, and the available evidence does not establish the invasions as its sole cause.

Other forms of Iranian ceramic production continued and evolved under subsequent rulers. The disappearance of minai'i therefore marked the end of a particular combination of materials, techniques and figurative decoration, rather than the end of sophisticated pottery-making in Iran.

The surviving examples have a relatively narrow chronology, with many dating from the late 12th to the early 13th century. Today, collections in New York and Los Angeles preserve tangible evidence of this short-lived but highly accomplished tradition.

A minai'i vessel was more than a household object: it was a work of art that combined literary storytelling, technical experimentation and ornamental design. Centuries after the workshops that produced them fell silent, these ceramics continue to reveal how Iranian artisans transformed clay, glass, pigments and gold into some of the most sophisticated vessels of the medieval Islamic world.

Pezeshkian urges ‘peace diplomacy’ to protect biodiversity, condemns ecocide

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for “peace diplomacy” to protect biodiversity, condemning the devastating environmental impact of wars of aggression as ecocide and urging the international community to establish effective, transparent and enforceable mechanisms to safeguard natural heritage during wartime.

Speaking on Friday, October 16, at the summit of heads of state and government held as part of the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) in Yerevan, Pezeshkian said war is not only a threat to people and infrastructure but also a direct driver of environmental destruction.

“War burns forests, destroys wetlands, contaminates soil and water, and displaces wildlife,” he said.

Pezeshkian described environmental cooperation as a bridge between nations, stressing that biodiversity conservation could serve as an important pillar of “peace diplomacy.”

“In a region facing security crises stemming from the illegal and expansionist presence of powers, as well as climate change, water scarcity and ecosystem degradation, environmental cooperation can build bridges between nations,” he said.

Such cooperation, he added, can pave the way for peace and security for all, peace with nature, and a future in which human life is aligned and in harmony with the natural world.

“Today, we stand at a pivotal moment in history when biodiversity is no longer merely a scientific or environmental concern. It is also an issue of peace and security, human health, food and water security, and intergenerational justice for all the inhabitants of our planet,” Pezeshkian stressed.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran was among the first countries to recognize the legal and international significance of this issue and become a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). However, Iran’s relationship with biodiversity goes far beyond its membership in an international convention.

With an ancient tradition of living in harmony with nature and an extraordinary diversity of ecosystems, species and genetic resources, Iran is the custodian of an invaluable and irreplaceable natural wealth. This heritage is the result of millions of years of evolution, natural dynamism and adaptation, and is reflected in the culture, customs, livelihoods, indigenous knowledge and historical identity of the people of this land.

Owing to its exceptional geographical location, Iran lies at the intersection of several biogeographical regions. From the Hyrcanian and Arasbaran forests to the Zagros Mountains, and from arid and desert landscapes to the coasts of the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman and the Caspian Sea, Iran is home to thousands of plant and animal species, as well as valuable genetic resources. These natural assets underpin the country’s ecological stability and sustainability, provide a vital foundation for water and food security and human health, strengthen resilience to natural hazards, and serve as a cornerstone of sustainable development.

In Iran, biodiversity, together with climatic and geographical diversity, is deeply intertwined with human history and civilization. Friendship with, respect for and protection of nature are integral to the cultural, religious and



ritual identity of Iranians. Nature has long been regarded as an inseparable part of human life and a trust to be preserved for future generations. Many traditional ways of life, agricultural and livestock-raising practices, the use of medicinal plants, and the indigenous knowledge of Iranian communities have evolved over time through an understanding of and adaptation to nature, reflecting thousands of years of interaction between humans and the natural world.

For Iran, therefore, biodiversity conservation means far more than protecting species and their habitats. It means safeguarding a natural, cultural and civilizational heritage.

In my country, drawing on a long-standing culture of respect for nature and in line with national and international goals and commitments, the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan has been developed and approved. The Department of Environment has been designated as the national coordinating authority, while a mechanism for non-governmental participation, with priority given to local communities, has also received government approval.”

He highlighted that protecting threatened species and restoring vulnerable populations are among the key priorities. These efforts include expanding protected areas and monitoring flagship wildlife species.

“War does not target only human lives and economic infrastructure. It also damages nature: burning forests, destroying wetlands, contaminating soil, threatening water resources, destroying habitats, displacing wildlife, and introducing chemicals and heavy metals into natural cycles. The environmental consequences of war can persist for years after hostilities have ended.

The international community now recognizes that environmental destruction during armed conflicts is not a minor or incidental consequence of war. Such damage is directly linked to the security and well-being of future generations.

In our region, including Iran, the environmental consequences of military conflicts must receive greater attention from the international community. The war of aggression launched by the United States and the Israeli regime in our region has threatened natural ecosystems and damaged environmental protection infrastructure built over years of efforts to conserve biodiversity. Attacks on industrial and energy facilities, fires, pollutant emissions, and soil and water contamination have all contributed to these threats.

This is not merely a domestic issue or one confined within a country’s political borders. Nature recognizes no political

boundaries, and the spread of water, soil, and air pollution does not stop at national frontiers. The environmental damage caused by war is therefore global in nature and requires international solutions.”

The effects of war on ecosystems can persist for years or even generations, affecting areas hundreds or thousands of kilometers away. One stark example is the scale of destruction in Gaza, where, according to experts, parts of the territory’s soil may remain incapable of supporting natural life, vegetation, and ecological cycles for hundreds of years. The destruction caused by wars of aggression in our region amounts to what is known as “ecocide,” or environmental genocide, and must be condemned, Pezeshkian underlined.

“The international community is expected to establish effective, transparent, and enforceable mechanisms to protect natural heritage and biodiversity. No country should be allowed to treat nature as a silent and defenseless victim of war.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and advancing global goals for nature conservation. In Iran, we pursue the protection of natural areas, wetlands, forests, rangelands, wildlife habitats, and genetic resources alongside sustainable development.

However, we must be realistic and fair. A country facing the mounting pressures of climate change, drought, water scarcity, desertification, and dwindling natural resources, while also grappling with the effects of economic sanctions and restricted access to technology and financial resources, needs genuine international cooperation to implement its environmental programs and repair the damage it has sustained. This is particularly true when the country has been targeted in two consecutive years by what it describes as criminal wars involving the extensive use of destructive and prohibited weapons, with attacks in many cases allegedly intended to cause environmental damage, including strikes on fuel storage facilities in the capital.”

He emphasized that biodiversity conservation will remain confined to negotiations, resolutions, and the setting of targets unless it is backed by adequate financial resources, equitable access to knowledge and technology, and capacity-building.

“If developing countries are expected to protect their forests, wetlands, species, and genetic resources, they must also be provided with the means to fulfill that responsibility. This is the true meaning of environmental justice.

We therefore call on United Nations agencies, international

financial institutions, and relevant organizations and bodies working in environmental protection and sustainable development to strengthen mechanisms for mobilizing financial resources, assessing environmental damage, restoring damaged ecosystems, and supporting affected countries in addressing the environmental consequences of armed conflicts.”

In conclusion, Pezeshkian said that the Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to cooperate constructively with the international community in this joint effort by sharing its scientific and academic capacities and experience with other countries.

“We believe that biodiversity conservation can serve as an important pillar of “peace diplomacy.”

In a region grappling with security crises stemming from the unlawful and expansionist presence of powers, climate change, water scarcity, and ecosystem degradation, environmental cooperation can build bridges between nations. These bridges can pave the way toward peace and security for all, peace with nature, and a future in which human life is aligned with and harmonious with the natural world.

It is a future free from war, bloodshed, and destruction, in which biodiversity serves as a shared foundation for the well-being and prosperity of present and future generations.”

Biodiversity - The Web of Life

Biological diversity - or biodiversity - is the term given to the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. The biodiversity we see today is the fruit of billions of years of evolution, shaped by natural processes and, increasingly, by the influence of humans. It forms the web of life of which we are an integral part and upon which we so fully depend.

This diversity is often understood in terms of the wide variety of plants, animals and microorganisms. So far, about 1.75 million species have been identified, mostly small creatures such as insects. Scientists reckon that there are actually about 13 million species, though estimates range from three to 100 million.

Signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity is dedicated to promoting sustainable development. Conceived as a practical tool for translating the principles of Agenda 21 into reality, the Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and microorganisms and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live.

Tehran hosts 8th national conference on soil conservation and watershed management

TEHRAN – Tehran played host to the 8th national conference on soil conservation and watershed management on October 13 and 14, under the theme ‘successful experiences, national and international lessons learned’.

The conference was hosted by the International Center for Integrated Management of Watershed and Bio-Resources in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions (ICIMWB), as one of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) category 2 centers in the field of water and natural sciences, the Agricultural Research, Education, and Extension Organization, and Iran’s National Commission for UNESCO.

Bringing together researchers, experts, executive managers, and representatives from national and international institutions, the 8th conference served as a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience, and the enhancement of collaborations for the conservation of fundamental resources and the sustainable management of watersheds.

Addressing the event, Secretary-General of Iran’s National Commission for UNESCO Hassan Fartousi, highlighted the protection of water and soil as the fundamental requirement for food security and sustainable development.

Referring to challenges such as water scarcity, soil erosion, drought, and land degradation, the official emphasized the importance of integrated watershed management and the use of scientific and interdisciplinary approaches.

The conservation of natural resources needs to be integrated into the country’s development plan. The realization of the goal requires connecting research, policymaking, and practical implementation, as well as promoting the participation of responsible agencies and local communities, he noted.

For his part, Levan Bouadze, the newly ap-



pointed Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Iran, said soil erosion and land degradation are among the major environmental challenges whose consequences extend beyond the natural environment, affecting the economic and social well-being of human societies.

Highlighting that soil health and food security are interconnected, the official said that the loss of soil resources not only threatens food security, but also impacts the livelihood of local communities and the sustainability of ecosystems.

The official called for enhancing management capacities and utilizing scientific knowledge to identify natural hazards and mitigate the vulnerability of ecosystems.

Referring to the UNDP’s cooperation with Iranian institutions, the official said the implementation of joint projects aimed at protecting natural resources and combating land degradation provides a great opportunity for the exchange of expertise and the development of practical solutions.

The official went on to say that researchers and scientists can facilitate precise decision-making by generating knowledge and providing scientific solutions, while the government can translate these findings into actionable plans and measures.

Disaster Risk Reduction Week: building resilience starts at home

TEHRAN – Iran is marking Disaster Risk Reduction Week from October 13 to 19, focusing on the importance of improving the health of individuals, families, and the safety of homes, raising public awareness, and strengthening family economic resilience before the disaster strikes.

The beginning of the week coincided with the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day, IRNA reported.

The days of the week highlight the following topics:

Tuesday, October 13, ‘healthy individual, the cornerstone of societal resilience’

Wednesday, October 14, ‘family mental health, the first step towards resilience’

Thursday, October 15, ‘a safe and resilient home for everyone’

Friday, October 16, ‘raising social children, a resilient generation’

Saturday, October 17, ‘a resilient home, simple steps to take from now on’

Sunday, October 18, ‘resilience culture, training everyone’

Monday, October 19, ‘family economy, a resilient family’

The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction was started in 1989, after a call by the United Nations General Assembly for a day to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction. Held every 13 October, the day celebrates how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.

Themed ‘Resilience Starts at Home’, this year the day highlights that everyone deserves a home that is safe, affordable and able to withstand the hazards around it. There’s no place like home. It is where we seek comfort, safety and shelter. But when floods rise, extreme heat takes hold or other hazards strike, the place meant to protect us can become the frontline of disaster.

Making that possible takes more than individual preparedness. Governments need safer planning and building standards; busi-

nesses must put long-term safety before short-term gains; and communities need information, resources, and a voice in decisions about where and how they live.

Around the world, solutions are already taking shape — from families moving to safer homes in the Philippines to centuries-old earthen building techniques keeping homes cooler across West Africa.

Because resilience is not only about rebuilding after disaster. It starts before disaster strikes, and it starts at home.

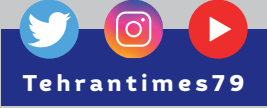
UNESCO chair inaugurated

In September, Minister of Science, Research, and Technology Hossein Simaei-Saraf, and the Secretary-General of Iran’s National Commission for UNESCO, Hassan Fartousi, inaugurated the UNESCO Chair in Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Engineering at Kharazmi University.

The chair is established on a synergistic approach aligned with the Sendai Global Framework for Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals, and UNESCO’s approaches to expanding education, science, technology, knowledge exchange, climate considerations, and the development of sustainable communities, msrt.ir reported.

According to Kharazmi University, the establishment of the chair represents a scientific and strategic imperative, given the current national and regional conditions in the country, such as climate change, the growing complexity of hazards, the expansion of human settlements, technological and human-induced risks, and the cascading effects of disasters.

This UNESCO Chair develops effective methods to assess and mitigate risks from natural hazards to existing and new school infrastructure, contributing to improved equitable access to safe learning environments for children in vulnerable communities, ensuring continuity of education services, and reducing life losses. The Chair has created a community for resilience engineering exceeding 3,000 members from more than 100 countries, instrumental in sharing knowledge to support disaster risk reduction initiatives.



OCTOBER 17, 2026

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He is the wisest and the most knowing man who advises people not to lose hope and faith in the Mercy of Allah and not to be too sure and over-confident of immunity from His Wrath and Punishment.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:50 Evening: 17:45 Dawn: 4:50 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:13 (tomorrow)

“Land of Angels” selected for Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival

TEHRAN- Iranian filmmaker Babak Khajepasha's “Land of Angels” will be screened at the 63rd International Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival in Türkiye, continuing its presence at international film events.

Produced by Manouchehr Mohammadi, the film has been selected for “Roots, Light, and Cameral,” a special section of the festival's international program dedicated to filmmakers who continue to create under difficult circumstances, particularly amid war and occupation, according to the festival's official announcement.

The section brings together films from Iran, Lebanon, Ukraine and Palestine, highlighting cinema as a means of expression and a way to document human experiences in times of conflict. “Land of Angels” will have its Turkish premiere at the festival, which is scheduled to run from October 24 to 31 in the Mediterranean city of Antalya.

The film tells a story set against the backdrop of the war in Gaza, focusing on the lives and dreams of children amid conflict and humanitarian suffering. Syrian actress Sulaf Fawakherji stars in the production, alongside child actors from Iranian

and Arab backgrounds.

“Land of Angels” previously received five Crystal Simorgh awards at the 44th Fajr Film Festival in Iran, including honors for best film, directing, leading actress, production design and visual effects. It has also participated in international film events, including the Kazan International Muslim Film Festival in Russia.

In early October, the film was selected to represent Iran in the international feature film category at the 99th Academy Awards, scheduled for 2027. The selection makes it Iran's official submission for consideration, although it does not guarantee a place on the Oscar shortlist or among the final nominees.

The Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival, first held in 1964, is Türkiye's longest-running film festival and one of its major cinematic events. Its annual program features Turkish and international productions, bringing filmmakers and industry professionals together to showcase diverse approaches to cinema.

International distribution of “Land of Angels” is handled by the Soureh International Department.

Majidi denounces US war on Iran as his film wins top prize at 31st Busan International Film Festival

TEHRAN – Majid Majidi received the Best Film Award at the 31st Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) on Thursday for his latest film “Midday Meal”.

Winning the award, the renowned director secured a direct entry for his film, which had its world premiere at the festival, for consideration at the upcoming Academy Awards, Honaron-line reported.

Starting this year, the grand prize winner under the Busan Award competition section automatically gains qualification to submit for the Best International Feature Film category at the Academy Awards. The Best Film Award also comes with a cash prize of 50 million won (\$37,180).

Iran has already chosen Babak Khajepasha's “Land of Angels,” a drama about children enduring the war in Gaza, as its official submission for the 99th Academy Awards. But “Midday Meal” now has an open, alternate route to the race.

At the closing ceremony of the festival, jury president Zhang Yimou, Chinese filmmaking legend, praised “Midday Meal” as the ideal film and noted that all seven jury members agreed unanimously on the selection. Buzz around Majidi's movie had been building on the ground in Busan all week, with many predicting — correctly — that it would take home the top prize.

Receiving the award, Majidi expressed his gratitude to the festival. He said it was an honor to receive such a huge prize on his first visit to Busan, adding that the energy came from the love of his late mother.

He dedicated the award to the “brave people of Iran” who are “still resisting against oppression” and “never give up”.

Referring to economic sanctions imposed on Iran, the Iranian filmmaker said, “For 48 years, our people have been subjected to the harshest economic sanctions, to the extent that even access to medical assistance for treating children with cancer has



been denied. Despite this, they have not surrendered.”

Majidi also referred to military attacks on Iran, saying, “You have all witnessed how, when they realized that the Iranian people would not surrender, they repeatedly subjected our country and cities to the most intense and brutal bombardments.”

He went on to describe the killing of children on the first day of the attacks, saying, “On the first day of the attack, 168 innocent children were torn apart, and the bodies of some of them were never found.”

Referring to attacks on homes, universities and residential areas, as well as the deaths of thousands of people, Majidi questioned why the Iranian people should have to pay such a price.

“What do you think our people's crime is? They simply want to be independent, and we will stand firm to the very end,” he said. “I wish for a future with no more war, full of peace, love, and friendship,” he concluded.

Earlier in the festival, Majidi spoke at length at a press conference about how he had nearly declined the invitation to travel to South Korea because he felt depressed and exhausted by the dire situation at home. He

ultimately decided that the trip would allow him and his film to convey “some kind of small message from my people to the people of other nations and other places.”

“Midday Meal” dazzled critics in Busan with its powerful, parable-like storytelling and assured visual style. The film follows Davoud Soulan (Mohammad Rahimi), a contract teacher in a remote village in southeastern Iran whose hopes of securing a permanent government job are jeopardized when a wealthy benefactor dies and the free lunches that keep his impoverished pupils coming to school disappear. Determined to save both his school and his future, Soulan resorts to increasingly desperate measures, including dangerous cross-border fuel smuggling, as his natural decency comes into conflict with his modest ambitions.

The film continues Majidi's longstanding thematic preoccupation with the moral pressures faced by people on society's margins, as seen in earlier festival-winning works like “The Color of Paradise” (1999) and “Baran” (2001).

For “Midday Meal,” he assembled an entirely nonprofessional cast through street casting in the

region, setting their performances against the stark, otherworldly landscape of Iran's so-called Martian Mountains.

Majidi and cinematographer Houman Behmanesh capture much of the drama with a gliding camera, often placing their protagonist against the region's rugged, otherworldly landscape. The film gradually takes on the quality of an enigmatic existentialist parable.

The film marks the first time Majidi has been invited to Busan, having previously played Cannes, Berlin and Venice over the past 35 years. He is Iran's most submitted filmmaker to the international category of the Academy Awards, landing a nomination in 1999 with “Children of Heaven” and making the shortlist in 2021 with “Sun Children”.

With its humanist approach to social realism and its particular focus on child welfare, “Midday Meal” is of a piece with Majidi's oeuvre, which includes such films as “The Color of Paradise” and the 2020 Venice competition entry “Sun Children”; he remains best known internationally for his 1998 film “Children of Heaven,” the first Iranian production ever to be nominated in the category today named Best International Feature.

Cartoon of Day



Bloom Again

Cartoonist: José Alberto Rodríguez Avila from Cuba

“The Whisperer” comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN- A Persian translation of Italian writer Donato Carrisi's debut novel “The Whisperer” has recently been published by Vazn-e Donya Publications in Tehran.

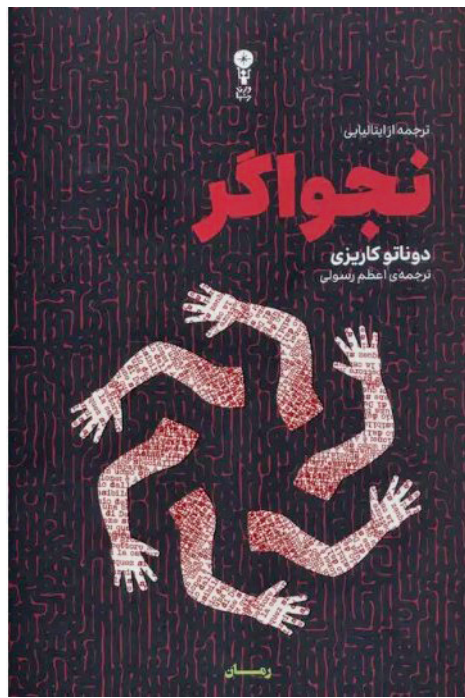
The book has been translated into Persian by Azam Rasouli.

“The Whisperer” is a psychological crime thriller that combines a disturbing series of disappearances with an increasingly complex investigation into the nature of evil. Originally published in Italian as “Il suggeritore” in 2009, the book became an international bestseller and was translated into numerous languages.

The book begins with the discovery of six severed arms buried in a forest clearing, setting off a chilling investigation. Arranged in a mysterious circle, five of the arms are believed to belong to young girls who have disappeared. The sixth victim remains unidentified, and investigators have no bodies to establish whether the missing children are alive or dead.

The case brings together Mila Vasquez, a police investigator with a particular talent for locating missing children, and Dr. Goran Gavila, a distinguished criminologist who leads the investigative team. Although their personalities and approaches differ, they must work together to uncover the truth behind the gruesome discovery.

The investigators initially believe they have identified the perpetrator, whom they associate with the name “Albert.” However, the apparent solution quickly begins to unravel. Evidence connects the suspect to the first disappearance but fails to establish his involvement in the subsequent cases. Clues surrounding another missing girl point in a different direction, raising the possibility that the team has misunderstood the crimes or that someone is deliberately manipulating



the investigation.

As the case develops, the detectives confront a succession of disturbing discoveries and apparent contradictions. The possibility of a copycat killer further complicates their efforts, while the investigation exposes weaknesses within the team and places increasing pressure on its members. Vasquez and Gavila must reconsider their assumptions repeatedly as they attempt to understand the logic behind the crimes.

The search becomes more than a conventional hunt for a serial killer. It turns into a psychological contest in which the investigators must determine who is controlling the flow of evidence and why the truth remains so difficult to grasp. Their professional partnership is tested as the danger intensifies, and their personal vulnerabilities become in-

creasingly relevant to the case.

The novel builds toward a series of revelations that challenge the investigators' understanding of the crimes. Carrisi uses misdirection and shifting perspectives to keep readers uncertain about the identity, motives and methods of the person behind the disappearances.

The book received significant recognition in Italy, winning the 2009 Premio Bancarella. It also earned international recognition and was translated into multiple languages, establishing Carrisi as a prominent writer of crime fiction.

“The Whisperer” is the first novel featuring Mila Vasquez, a character who returns in later books, including “The Lost Girls of Rome” and “The Game of the Whisperer.” Its success helped establish a series that explores disappearances, criminal psychology and the darker aspects of human behavior.

Critics have praised the novel's intricate plotting, unsettling atmosphere and repeated reversals of expectation, although some have found its elaborate twists excessive. Rather than relying solely on the mystery of identifying a killer, Carrisi builds suspense around the possibility that the investigation itself is being manipulated. The result is a dark, layered thriller that examines the difficulty of distinguishing evidence from deception and understanding the motives behind apparently incomprehensible crimes.

Born in Martina Franca, southern Italy, in 1973, Donato Carrisi studied law before specializing in criminology and behavioral sciences. He worked as a television screenwriter before making his literary debut with “The Whisperer.” His academic background informs the novel's detailed treatment of criminal investigation and psychological behavior.