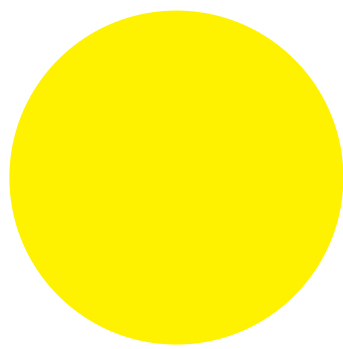


Pezeshkian urges universities to help tackle key national woes



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Hormuz will shape next phase of Iran-US confrontation

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Military exchanges between Iran and the United States have continued over the past several nights, while mediators, unlike in previous escalations, have yet to take meaningful steps to ease tensions. Iran and Oman have also failed to reach an agreement on managing the Strait of Hormuz. After reinstating oil sanctions, Washington has reimposed its naval blockade, while Tehran has declared the Strait closed. Together, these developments point to a return to the pre-Islamabad understanding and could be seen as a slide back toward full-scale war. However, Reza Ghoobeishavi, an international affairs analyst, told Iran Daily that the confrontation is unlikely, for now, to escalate beyond sporadic military strikes. He added, however, that the fate of the Strait of Hormuz will determine the future trajectory of tensions and conflict



Reza Ghoobeishavi

between Iran and the US.

IRAN DAILY: Do you see the current Iran-US confrontation as the beginning of a new phase of large-scale conflict, or does it still remain within the bounds of a controlled and temporary escalation?

GHOUBEISHAVI: Iran and the US have entered a new phase of confrontation. Similar dynamics existed before, but they have now intensified. Tehran and Washington have reached what is effectively a deadlock in negotiations, while they have also arrived at conflicting interpretations of Article 5 of the memorandum of understanding regarding the status of the Strait of Hormuz. The US is trying to step up military strikes to increase pressure on Tehran in hopes of extracting concessions at the negotiating table, particularly over the Strait of Hormuz, which is currently at the center of the dispute, as well as other issues, foremost among them the nuclear file. Iran, however, is unwilling to make concessions to Washington or accept its demands regarding the Strait of Hormuz. At the same time, it insists on implementing its own framework and decisions concerning both the Strait and its nuclear program.

Alongside negotiations, Washington is also trying to pressure Iran through military action. Will this strategy succeed? Most likely not. The prevailing assessment in Tehran is that the US neither has the capability nor the intention to return to full-scale war and will instead continue carrying out sporadic strikes. Although these attacks inflict human and material losses, they are unlikely to exert sufficient pressure on Iran to force it to abandon its positions or accept US demands on either the Strait of Hormuz or the nuclear issue.

Why have efforts by Iran and Oman to reach an understanding on security arrangements and shipping in the Strait of Hormuz failed?

Because what Iran and Oman seek is fundamentally at odds. Iran wants full sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz and insists on implementing its own framework for managing the waterway. Oman, however, is not fully aligned with Iran's position. Instead, it has sided with US and European plans to reopen the southern shipping lane through its territorial waters. That move triggered a forceful military response from Iran. Tehran attacked vessels using the Omani route and, for the

first time, targeted the southern coast of the Strait of Hormuz—Oman's Musandam Governorate—as well as one of Oman's ports, Duqm. It also officially claimed responsibility for those strikes for the first time.

The disagreements between Iran and Oman over the Strait stem from fundamentally different perspectives, relationships and geopolitical positions. Iran insists on collecting transit fees from vessels passing through the Strait, whereas Oman has committed itself to the opposite approach. Iran maintains that it alone should manage the Strait of Hormuz, while Oman favors keeping maritime traffic flowing freely as it did previously. Iran is in a state of military confrontation with the United States, whereas Washington is one of Oman's closest allies. Oman has sought to mediate and maintain a balance in its relations with both Iran and the US, as well as between Iran and the Arab states of the southern Persian Gulf. However, when it comes to the Strait of Hormuz, Oman is itself a direct stakeholder, and Muscat's position on the issue is neither aligned with nor particularly close to Tehran's.

Why have mediating countries failed to

play a more active and effective role in containing the crisis so far?

First, the two principal mediators—Qatar and Oman—have themselves come under Iranian attack. That has placed them in a contradictory position, both morally and politically, because it is difficult to act as a mediator while simultaneously being a target of military action. Second, the demands put forward by Iran and the United States are absolute. Neither side is willing to back down or compromise in order to reach an understanding. Instead, each expects the other to retreat from its position. Third, Iran is not prepared to surrender at the negotiating table what it did not surrender on the battlefield. That includes relinquishing control over the Strait of Hormuz or making the nuclear concessions sought by Washington.

Based on current trends, what scenarios do you see as the most likely in the coming weeks and months?

Several scenarios can be envisaged. The first is a new US war against Iran. While the likelihood remains low, it cannot be ruled out, especially if the objective is to establish full control over the Strait of Hormuz.

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Tehran warns regional states against any support for American aggression

'Iran will never allow US to interfere in Strait of Hormuz'



International Desk

Iran's military warned regional countries of any cooperation with the United States against the Islamic Republic, saying that they would bear responsibility for any expansion of the conflict across the region. "Regional leaders are warned that any co-

operation with the United States and logistical support for its military will be regarded as a war against Iran's sovereignty and national security. If the conflict expands across the region, the flames of war will engulf all countries in the region," said the spokesperson for Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters Ebrahim Zolfaghari

in a statement on Monday. Zolfaghari added that responsibility for any insecurity and any expansion of the conflict in the region rested with countries that are cooperating with the US "criminal military."

The warning came as tensions have been rising between Iran and the US in recent days following attacks by the US on southern Iranian cities and Tehran's retaliatory strikes on the US bases in regional countries.

American forces have deliberately targeted Iran's transportation infrastructure, fishing boats, cargo vessels, and meteorological facilities and buildings in recent days.

Deadly attacks on Iran

On Monday, the US military continued its attacks on Iran, targeting several southern cities including Abadan, Ahvaz, Behbahan, Dezful, Omidieh, Andimeshk, Mahshahr and areas around Shadegan. The attacks also hit the central city of Naeen. At least two people were killed and three others injured in the US attacks in Abadan. Nearly 20 people have been killed since the new round of US attacks against Iran on the pretext of attacks on ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz, which has been closed

by Iran's Armed Forces following the US-Israeli aggression against Iran in February. In response to new US attacks, Iran's Armed Forces targeted US military bases in regional countries on Monday.

The Iranian Army said in a statement that it targeted locations housing US forces in Kuwait following "repeated unlawful American acts of aggression" on southern Iran.

The statement said Army's drone attacks also hit air defense and missile systems, shelters and logistical support facilities used by the "terrorist" American army in Kuwait.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) also announced the successful targeting of fuel depots and ammunition storage facilities at Jordan's Prince Hassan Air Base, setting them ablaze in a precise retaliatory operation against US military infrastructure in the region.

The IRGC stated on Monday that its Aerospace Force struck key targets at the US base, which serves as a critical hub for American forces. The operation resulted in fires raging through fuel storage areas and ammunition facilities, dealing a significant blow to US logistical capabilities and operational readiness in West Asia.

Controlling Strait of Hormuz

Regarding the Strait of Hormuz, the spokesperson for Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters said that Iran will not allow the US to play any role in managing the waterway under any conditions. Zolfaghari said the US "repeated adventurism and mischief" to interfere in the Strait of Hormuz have "seriously endangered regional security, international trade, and the passage of oil tankers and commercial vessels." He criticized certain regional states for cooperating with the United States, warning that such collaboration "increased the danger of war spreading across the entire region."

Zolfaghari emphasized that Iran's Armed Forces would "firmly confront any disruption and insecurity" created by the "aggressor and pirate US military" for the passage of commercial ships and oil tankers outside the routes designated by Iran and without authorization from the Armed Forces.

His remarks came after US President Donald Trump claimed that Washington could take control of the strategic waterway.

"We're taking over the Strait. They have nothing. They've got nothing," Trump said in an interview with Fox News.

Yemen vows reprisal after Saudi strike on Sana'a airport

Airport attack spells 'end of truce, start of new war phase'

International Desk

Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement pledged to retaliate on Monday after Saudi Arabia launched heavy air strikes on the international airport in the capital Sana'a.

Yahya Saree, the movement's military spokesperson, lambasted the attack as "blatant aggression" and said the belligerent move had ended a period of de-escalation in the long-running conflict between the two neighbors. Saree said Saudi Arabia would bear the consequences and that the attack would not go unanswered.

The defense ministry of the Saudi-backed Yemeni government, which is based in the south of the country, confirmed on Monday the targeting of the runway at Sana'a International Airport to "prevent an Iranian plane from landing."



A huge plume of smoke rises after an airstrike hit the Sana'a International Airport, Yemen, on July 13, 2026.
● ALMASIRAH

The ministry claimed that Ansarullah had prevented Yemeni national aircraft from landing at the airport in the capital, while insisting on allowing an Iranian plane to what it called "violating Yemeni territory."

Yemen's Al-Masirah TV reported that, "Saudi aggression targeted the departure and landing runways at the Sana'a International Airport." Yemen's Foreign Ministry condemned in a statement Saudi Arabia's attack, saying that the strike marks the end of the truce and the be-

ginning of a new phase of war.

The ministry also "expressed the gratitude, appreciation, and recognition of the Republic of Yemen—leadership, government, army, and people—to the Islamic Republic of Iran for its great and courageous stance in breaking the siege imposed on Sana'a International Airport." The statement added, "This sincere humanitarian step is held in high esteem and appreciation, and will remain in the hearts of the Yemeni people."

The resistance movement had threatened at the time to hit Saudi airports and vital assets should Riyadh violate its airspace or attempt to attack it again.

The latest escalation raised the specter of renewed attacks after years of relative calm. After years of fighting between a Saudi-led coalition and the Ansarullah movement, that triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, a 2022 truce has largely held.

FM spox: Islamabad MoU 'gutted' by US breaches of obligations

International Desk

Iran said its recently signed Islamabad memorandum with the United States entered a state of crisis after Washington violated its commitments, while also saying talks on a mechanism for safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz have failed due to US pressure on Oman.

Speaking during a weekly press conference in Tehran, Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei also warned that any territory used to launch attacks against Iran will face a response.

"Iran has never been the first to breach its obligations," Baqaei said. "Iran has approached every negotiation seriously, with good faith and with its national interests in mind. The party that broke its commitments is the United States." He added that Washington "was so impatient" that it did not even allow the one-month period stipulated in Article Five regarding the Strait of Hormuz to expire before beginning to backtrack on its commitments.

"The Americans gutted the 14-point memorandum of understanding, stripping away its key provisions," he said.

On June 18, Iran and the United States signed the MoU, which calls for a permanent end to hostilities across all fronts and includes a commitment from both sides to hold further talks on a final agreement within 60 days. Article 5 places responsibility for reopening and managing the

Strait of Hormuz squarely in Iran's hands. Baqaei added that, as a coastal state, Iran has "the right to take the necessary measures to safeguard its national interests."

"We will not allow the United States and the Israeli regime to use the Strait of Hormuz to harm Iran," the foreign ministry's spokesman said.

"That is why we insisted that the management of the Strait should remain with Iran, in consultation with Oman, to ensure both Iran's interests and the safe passage of maritime traffic. Whatever has happened is the responsibility of the United States." The foreign ministers of the United Kingdom, France, and Germany also issued a joint statement calling for an immediate resumption of the ceasefire and talks between Iran and the United States.

The UK, France, and Germany, collectively known as the "European Troika" or E3, declared that respect for the sovereignty of territorial waters and freedom of navigation are fundamental principles of international law.

The statement, published early Monday morning, also supported the swift and full resumption of international maritime transit through the Strait of Hormuz and expressed solidarity with the Persian Gulf Arab states and other regional partners. The E3 concluded by demanding the reinstatement of the ceasefire and urging both Iran and the United States to return to the negotiating table.

Tehran strongly rebukes Turkish FM's 'astonishing' Iran-Israel analogy

Iran's Foreign Ministry rejected Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan's comparison of Tehran's regional policy with Israel's actions, calling the analogy "astonishing" and urging Ankara not to repeat narratives that could serve the Israeli regime's interests. Speaking at a weekly press conference, Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei responded to remarks by Fidan, who said: "Iran has claimed for a long time that it was a pre-emptive security policy by having proxies in these countries, just like the Israelis are occupying the rest of the region as part of security," Press TV reported. "It is astonishing that someone like Mr. Fidan would make such an in-



correct comparison," Baqaei said in Tehran Monday. "He himself knows that the Zionist regime is inherently expansionist and seeks to undermine the entire region, including Turkey. We wonder how he arrived at such a strange comparison." Rejecting Fidan's characterization of Iran's regional role, Baqaei added: "Iran has no proxies in the region. The

only proxy in the region is the Zionist regime."

He urged Turkish officials to ensure their assessments reflect realities on the ground.

"We ask our Turkish friends to align their analyses with the existing realities and refrain from repeating analyses that could be exploited by the Zionist regime in pursuit of its expansionist and criminal policies."

The exchange follows Fidan's comments, in which he acknowledged the criminality of the US-Israeli war against Iran and Israel's military actions across the region, while claiming that Iran's strikes against US and Israeli assets were also unacceptable.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Minister says key terms of Russian gas trade deal agreed, finalization planned

Roadmap reviewed for power cooperation

Economy Desk

Negotiations on a gas trade agreement between Iran and Russia have advanced, with the two sides reaching agreement "on the main provisions of the final contract," Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad said on Monday after meeting Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilev in Tehran.

The two sides, he said, "are working to finalize the deal as soon as possible," IRNA reported.

"The ministers also reviewed progress on agreements reached at the 19th Iran-Russia Joint Economic Cooperation Commission, held in February, and assessed implementation of 146 items agreed by the two countries," Paknejad added.

The National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) and Russia's energy giant Gazprom signed a 30-year-long deal last June to transfer Russian gas to Iran.

Under this "strategic" agreement, Iran will receive up to 55 billion cubic meters of gas per year from Russia through a new pipeline that Moscow plans to build in the Caspian Sea.

Iranian officials have said that the Russian supply will help address domestic gas shortages, sustainably bolster the country's gas export capacity and turn Iran into a regional gas hub.

Iran holds the world's second-largest natural gas reserves after Russia, which amount to



Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad (R) shakes hands with Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilev after a meeting in Tehran on July 13, 2026.
● MOJTABA MOHAMMADQOLI/SHANA

around 34 trillion cubic meters. Paknejad said expanding energy cooperation was one of the main topics of the talks.

The two sides discussed investment by Russian companies in Iran's oil and gas fields and developed solutions to address existing obstacles, with implementation of those measures now on the agenda.

On the sidelines of the meeting, NIGC chief Saeid Tavakkoli said the main terms and framework of the Iran-Russia gas trade contract had been finalized.

He said only two issues remained before the agreement could be signed by the two countries and expressed hope they would be resolved soon.

Tavakkoli said gas trade extended beyond the purchase and sale of gas to include swaps, transit, imports and exports, adding that all those options had been considered within the framework of cooperation between Iran and Russia.

For his part, Tsivilev said Tehran and Moscow had agreed to speed up efforts to remove obstacles facing cooperation between companies from the two countries.

"Despite the special circumstances and recent develop-



ments, the results of our joint cooperation in the energy sector have been satisfactory," Tsivilev said.

"We agreed that all issues and questions raised by Iranian and Russian companies will be followed up and resolved as quickly as possible," the Russia minister added.

He hoped that Paknejad would visit Moscow soon so that cooperation could continue at a faster pace.

Power cooperation

In a separate meeting on Monday, Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi and the Russian minister reviewed progress on

a roadmap for bilateral cooperation in the electricity sector, according to the Iranian Energy Ministry's news service.

The ministers discussed expanding cooperation on power grid interconnection, technology transfer, exports and imports of electricity equipment, construction of the Sirik power plant and the establishment of joint working groups to accelerate strategic projects.

They also reviewed the economic and political conditions for a proposed electricity grid connection linking Iran and Russia via Azerbaijan, based on economic studies conducted in 2019, and discussed forming a

trilateral working group involving the energy ministers of the three countries.

If conditions permit, the project could enable the transfer of limited amounts of electricity from southern Russia to Iran, particularly during the summer, the report said.

The ministers also discussed cooperation on gas turbine technology transfer, localization of parts manufacturing, construction of 765-kilovolt transmission lines, power grid modernization, high-voltage equipment supply, joint hydropower projects and the establishment of a carbon market to help address climate change.

Tehran opens beauty & clean expo with 160 firms in attendance

Economy Desk

The 33rd International Beauty & Clean exhibition opened in Tehran on Monday as industry officials said detergent supplies remained stable despite recent challenges facing manufacturers.

The four-day international fair on detergents, cosmetics, hygiene, cellulose products and related industries has brought together more than 160 Iranian and foreign companies to display the latest products, technologies and services, IRNA reported.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Alireza Kiani, head of the Iranian Detergent, Hygienic and Cosmetic Industries Association, said there was currently no shortage of detergent products in the country and that the market had stabilized.

Kiani said part of the industry's raw materials was supplied by Iran's petrochemical sector.

"What is fundamentally important for the detergent industry is continued access to raw materials, stability in foreign currency allocation and easier procurement processes so producers can plan their operations more effectively," he said.

"Despite the challenges and restrictions in recent months, particularly in foreign currency allocation and the supply of some raw materials, conditions have been managed over the past three months in a way that allowed producers to maintain production without any significant shortages. As a result, there is currently no shortage of detergent products in the country," Kiani added.

Iran's petrochemical sector was damaged during the 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February. Air strikes over several days hit facilities in Mahshahr, in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, and in Assaluyeh, in the southern province of Bushehr, damaging installations at multiple companies in April. The Tabriz and Marvdasht petrochemical plants were also hit.

Kiani said the detergent industry, like many other manufacturing sectors in Iran, continued to face challenges, but said cooperation among manufacturers, the Industry Ministry, the Central Bank and other government bodies could help manage those issues with minimal cost. "The most important priority for companies in this industry is maintaining uninterrupted production, preventing shortages in the market and ensuring a stable supply for consumers," he said. "We hope this trend will continue strongly in the coming months."

Hormuz will shape ...

However, Washington appears to believe that maintaining a naval blockade while simultaneously carrying out military strikes against Iran would produce better results than launching another full-scale war. In that case, there would be no immediate need for a new military campaign. However, it remains to be seen in practice whether Trump's claim that the Strait of Hormuz remains open proves accurate.

If the Strait is indeed open and commercial vessels are able to move freely, that would represent a major achievement for Trump, and he would likely carry out further military operations to protect that outcome.

If not, Trump is likely to pursue different attacks and new military operations to achieve that objective, potentially extending even to attempts to carry out a limited occupation of Iranian islands.

Another possibility is that Iran and the United States continue with their current dual-track approach—keeping negotiations and military strikes running in parallel. However, this scenario is unlikely to last. Trump is not known for his patience, and if he fails to achieve results, he is likely to shift to another option. Experience has also shown that Iran does not yield under this type of military pressure or offer concessions.

Ultimately, the fate of the Strait of Hormuz will determine the future course of tensions and conflict between Iran and the US. Washington is likely to continue pursuing the parallel tracks of military action and negotiations initially. If that strategy fails to deliver the desired results, it may then turn to a third Israeli war against Iran alongside expanded US military operations targeting southern Iran and the Strait of Hormuz.

Aliabadi raps Khuzestan water attack as humanitarian violation



● FARS

Economy Desk

Iran condemned a US attack on a water pumping station in the southwestern province of Khuzestan early on Monday, with Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi calling the targeting of critical water and electricity infrastructure a violation of international humanitarian law. Aliabadi condemned the US strike on the RMD drainage pumping station in Hendijan, saying attacks on water and electricity facilities directly threatened public health, safety and people's lives. "Attacking water and electricity infra-

structure is a direct attack on people's health, security and lives," he said, as stated by the Energy Ministry's news service.

He said the facilities were vital civilian infrastructure that provided essential public services and urged the international community to respond firmly and responsibly to such actions.

Offering condolences over the death of an employee of the Khuzestan Water and Power Authority who was killed in the attack, Aliabadi said the incident showed that targeting critical infrastructure also endangered the lives of

public service workers and constituted "a clear violation of international humanitarian law."

He also referred to attacks on Iran's water and electricity infrastructure during the 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February, saying water facilities, desalination plants in southern Iran, power plants and parts of the electricity grid were targeted. Despite the attacks, employees in the water and electricity sectors had maintained uninterrupted services, he said.

"The Energy Ministry and employees of the water and electricity sectors will continue providing services with full capacity and will not allow these actions to disrupt the stable supply of water and electricity to the public," Aliabadi said.

Separately, Iran's water industry spokesman Issa Bozorgzadeh said the attack on the RMD drainage pumping station in Hendijan had been intended to disrupt the operation of the vital facility.

Bozorgzadeh said employees of the water sector began working immediately after the incident to manage the situation, reduce the impact of the damage and ensure continued services.

Iran's dairy exports seen topping \$1.15b last calendar year

Economy Desk

Iran's dairy exports reached about \$960.3 million in the first 10 months of the last Iranian year (starting March 21, 2025), with full-year exports estimated to exceed \$1.15 billion if the pace remained unchanged in the final two months, the secretary of the Iranian Dairy Industries As-

sociation said on Monday. Reza Bakari said industrial milk powder accounted for the largest share of dairy exports while infant formula recorded the lowest export volume.

According to the latest data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), dairy exports totaled 597,892 metric

tons worth \$960,305,860 during the first 10 months of the year, IRNA reported. Assuming exports continued at the same pace during the final two months of the year, total dairy exports are estimated at about 717,470 metric tons valued at more than \$1.152 billion, Bakari said. He said Iran's dairy industry received about 10.875 mil-

lion metric tons of raw milk from dairy farms during the year.

According to Bakari, about 2.927 million metric tons, or 27% of the raw milk received, was allocated to the production of dairy products destined for export, while the remaining 73% was used to produce dairy products for domestic consumption.



Mythic moment of Iran

West fails to respect nation in mourning



By Hamid Dabashi

Professor of Iranian Studies at
Columbia University

OPINION

The Israeli plot to assassinate Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei — which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu tricked US President Donald Trump into joining, despite overwhelming American opposition to waging war on Iran — was just the latest move in a long and blood-soaked tradition, as chronicled in journalist Ronen Bergman's boastful treatise *Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations* (2018).

Ayatollah Khamenei was a head of a state, and the spiritual leader of millions of Shia Muslims. But amid their vicious occupation of Palestine, the Israelis appear willing to target any head of state; any figure they deem hostile to their settler colony. What's stopping them from going after future leaders of France, Germany, the UK or even the US?

Where is the outrage? The New York Times covered the murder of Ayatollah Khamenei as if reporting the weather. In fact, when there is inclement weather in the US — too hot or too cold — the country's media uses larger and scarier fonts than those used to report on Ayatollah Khamenei's assassination.

There was no outrage, no opposing-side equivalent to Bret Stephens or Thomas Friedman, going on a tirade about the murderous Israelis. Why?

Ayatollah Khamenei was the patriarch of a people. He was the supreme leader of a system of governance modelled on an ancient monarchy that predates Islam and Shiism.

Martyrdom of a patriarch

He was the leader that a political culture, a nation, a country, a homeland had placed at the head of a state that emerged from a massive social revolution.

To this day, there are millions of people who loved and cherished him like a saint. It has nothing to do with the rulers of Israel — a murderous gang of psychopathic Zionists still engaged in a genocide in occupied Palestine, alongside barefaced land theft in Lebanon and Syria.

All political leaders have their supporters and their detractors. Neither Trump, nor any head of state anywhere in the world, is unanimously loved or hated. Does that authorise Israeli war criminals to assassinate them?

Ayatollah Khamenei was definitive to an ancient political culture. He should have died the dignified martyrdom of a patriarch on the fertile soil of his homeland.

Yet after Israel crossed the border to kill Ayatollah Khamenei and his family members, including his 14-month-old granddaughter, the New York Times displayed more concern about a controversial World Cup match between Belgium and the US.

As Ayatollah Khamenei's funeral preparations were underway in Iran and Iraq, another Zionist stooge, commentator Laura Loomer, called for Israel to attack the mourners, who turned out in their millions. Those who continue to blindly back Israel have lost the plot. Their hubris prevents them from seeing how the whole world, and Americans in particular, detest them. Americans were burning Israeli flags during Fourth of July celebrations this year, demanding their country's independence from the European settler colony. Even some corrupt American politicians appear to have finally gotten the message, and have started running away from Aipac money to save any shred of decency that might still be left in them.

Creative counting

This brings us to the utterly inane reporting of the New York Times from Tehran,



Iranian men mourn the martyrdom of their Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, who was assassinated by US-Israeli missiles earlier in February, at the Grand Mosalla in Tehran on July 4, 2026.
● [khamenei.ir](#)

The New York Times, along with other western media outlets that have produced similar atrocious coverage, appears set on denigrating and diminishing those who are coming out to mourn Ayatollah Khamenei.

Mythic moment

What the New York Times and its ilk failed to see unfolding in front of their eyes at the funeral ceremonies for Ayatollah Khamenei was the mythic moment of a nation and a culture dissolving their shared destiny into a collective



This collage of social media posts shows some Americans "celebrating" July 4, 2026, as the United States' Independence Day from Israel by setting the Israeli flag on fire.
● [SOCIAL MEDIA](#)

consciousness.

This is a classic case of the Persian passion play, known as Ta'zieh, whose origins go

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Ayatollah Khamenei was a head of a state, and the spiritual leader of millions of Shia Muslims. But amid their vicious occupation of Palestine, the Israelis appear willing to target any head of state; any figure they deem hostile to their settler colony. What's stopping them from going after future leaders of France, Germany, the UK or even the US? Where is the outrage?

back to the rituals of mourning for Siavash in the *Shahnameh*. It was performed on a massive transnational stage, not just in Iran and Iraq, but for millions of Shia watching around the globe. The importance of the event has been lost on those who limit their knowledge to the wretched propaganda pages of the New York Times. More than 25 years ago, my late colleague, the eminent Polish scholar Peter Chelkowski, and I published a book titled *Staging a Revolution*, documenting the unfolding of the Shia drama during the Iranian revolution in the late 1970s. What the world has witnessed this month during Ayatollah Khamenei's funeral is on a vast scale of similar proportions.

How NYT paved way for apocalyptic war

Consider the magnitude of the event: a six-day funeral procession that was set to move through Tehran and Qom in Iran, before travelling to Najaf and Karbala in Iraq, and then returning to Iran for burial in Mashhad, with millions of mourners paying their respects.

The New York Times leads American and European media in dividing Iranians into "religious" (regime supporters) and "secular" (opponents), in an apparent attempt to justify Israel's murderous attack. But this binary does not work, and has never worked, in Iran.

Evidence of this can be found in a filmed conversation with a learned Shia religious leader, who reminisces about an encounter with the late scholar Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, one of the most learned Shia philosophers of the 20th century and the author of the monumental Quranic commentary *al-Mizan*.

Here we learn how Tabatabai, while listening to a poem by Iraj Mirza about Imam Hussein (PBUH) and his martyrdom in Karbala, was sobbing inconsolably, and then confessed to his friends — to their utter astonishment — that he would happily give his entire Quranic commentary to Mirza in exchange for just this one poem. His friends were baffled, as Mirza is notorious for his obscene satirical poetry. Tabatabai gently responded: "Yes, I know; I have his collected works right here in my library, but still."

The rich, powerful, living and unfolding Iranian and Islamic cultures — from poetry to philosophy, from ancient Iran to the vast tapestry of Islamic intellectual history — are terra incognita for much of the western media, who do not read these works, let alone attempt to explain them to their audiences.

The full article first appeared on Middle East Eye.



Iranian women mourn the martyrdom of their Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, who was assassinated by US-Israeli missiles earlier in February, at the Grand Mosalla in Tehran on July 4, 2026.
● [JACK HILL/THE SUNDAY TIMES](#)

Subtleties of solidarity at Ayatollah Khamenei’s funeral in Iraq

By Harith Hasan
Academic director at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies

OPINION

Last June, Haider al-Kilabi, a member of the Iraqi parliament closely associated with the country’s Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), visited the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad, together with several other parliamentarians, to thank Iran’s ambassador for conveying their request that some of the planned funeral ceremonies for Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei be held in Iraq (the multiday procession between July 3 and July 9 included several cities across Iran and Iraq). As has since become evident, Iranian authorities devoted extraordinary attention to the symbolism and spectacle of the funeral to send a message that the Islamic Republic continues to enjoy broad popular legitimacy — not only within Iran but across the wider Shia and Islamic worlds, particularly in countries where factions belonging to the transnational “Axis of Resistance” are active. Political performance is integral to the expression of power everywhere. Participation in these rituals, and the performance of the roles assigned within them, serves to reaffirm and normalize existing relations of power. It is evident that many Iranians, regardless of their views of the regime itself, regard Ayatollah Khamenei’s death in an American-Israeli act of aggression as a sacrifice worthy of mourning, and perhaps even of pride. Here was a leader who gave his life in the course of defending his country during wartime. These sentiments are readily apparent in conversations among Iranians both inside and outside the country and across social media platforms. They suggest that many participants in the mourning are motivated by genuine emotion rather than theatrical performance. This does not diminish the fact that the regime sees this sympathy — which transcends ideological divisions and is not driven by fear or political conformity — as an opportunity to renew and expand its legitimacy. Whether it succeeds will depend largely on the choices it makes once the immediate emotional response begins to fade. But what of the Iraqis awaiting the supreme leader’s coffin? Millions of Iraqis participated in the ceremonies. There was an abundant expressions of reverence, grief and devotion, which allowed the Islamic Republic to demonstrate that its influence extends well beyond its borders and that millions of non-Iranian Shias, alongside Iranians, regard Ayatollah Khamenei as one of their own symbolic figures. To this end, the PMF established a high-level committee to organize the funeral ceremonies in the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. Officials announced that more than 25,000 PMF personnel would be deployed to secure the funeral procession, while around 351 “mawakib” (religious service processions) would provide logistical support in Najaf alone, according to a Telegram channel affiliated with the Axis of Resistance. Reporters from Shafaq News observed that major streets — particularly the Najaf-Kufa road — had been draped in Iraqi and Iranian flags, while portraits of the late Iranian supreme leader covered public squares, intersections and advertising screens across Najaf in what local residents described as an unprecedented spectacle. Meanwhile, different actors began performing their respective roles. Provincial councils across central and southern Iraq declared the funeral day a public holiday. Local administrations announced that preparations had been completed. Fifty-five members of parliament signed a petition calling for the two days of mourning to be declared public holidays, allowing Iraqis the opportunity to participate



in the funeral ceremonies. The organizing committee announced that 3,000 journalists would cover the event, and arranged buses and trains to transport thousands of mourners. Iran-aligned factions simultaneously renewed their pledges of loyalty to the late leader and to his son Ayatollah Seyed Mojtaba Khamenei, the new supreme leader. All of this formed part of a broader repertoire of political performance. For the Axis of Resistance, the funeral offered an opportunity to monopolize public space (if only for a few days), reaffirm its political narrative and demonstrate that it remains a powerful force. Yet the message the axis seeks to project inevitably simplifies a much more complex reality. Not every participant is motivated by political objectives. Many will simply be fulfilling what they regard as a religious or social obligation toward a distinguished Shia jurist, a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, who was treacherously killed by an enemy — Israel — against whose belligerence and expansionism there exists broad public consensus. This perspective was reflected in the call issued by one of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani’s representatives, urging participation in Ayatollah Khamenei’s funeral while emphasizing that attendance was intended to express respect for a prominent religious authority and bore no connection to political positions. Months earlier, only days after Ayatollah Khamenei’s assassination, a condolence gathering had already been held in Najaf, where two of Sistani’s sons received mourners. These gestures did

Millions of Iraqis attend the extended funeral procession of Iran’s martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in Najaf, Iraq, on July 8, 2026.
● [khamenei.ir](#)

not signify complete political alignment. Rather, they reflected a sense of obligation toward a leading Shia jurist and an Islamic political leader who had been killed in a military attack on his country. Mohammad Reza, Sistani’s influential son, stated that, under ordinary circumstances, it would have been his father’s religious duty, as the preeminent Shia authority, to lead the funeral prayer over Ayatollah Khamenei’s body, but that his advanced age and health prevented him from doing so. The relationship between the senior clerics in Najaf and the Islamic Republic has long been complex and delicate. Sistani has sought to maintain a degree of distance from Tehran’s regional and foreign policy. At the same time, neither Sistani nor those around him could simply remain absent from an event of this magnitude. They therefore sought to express sympathy and solidarity, while avoiding the overt ideological framing that characterizes the discourse of the Axis of Resistance and its affiliated factions. Nor should we overlook the timing of the funeral. It takes place during Muharram, when millions of pilgrims converge on

Iranians fill Tehran’s Grand Mosalla to participate in the funeral prayers for their martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei on July 5, 2026.
● [khamenei.ir](#)



Karbala and Najaf to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBUH). The convergence of these two martyrdoms cannot easily be ignored. Ayatollah Khamenei’s — as a descendant of Hussein — becomes incorporated into the continuous chain of sacrifices that has animated Shia religious mythology for centuries. Ultimately, the funeral brought together active organizers, such as the PMF; more passive participants, such as the Sadrists, whose leader welcomed the body of the “martyr leader”; and a wide range of others whose motivations and forms of participation defy straightforward interpretation. The carefully orchestrated spectacle constructed by the institutions of the Axis of Resistance thus becomes intertwined with spontaneous emotion, religious ritual and forms of nonpolitical sympathy, making it difficult either to accept the official narrative uncritically or to dismiss it altogether. The axis benefits from precisely these subtleties of solidarity and the diverse motivations that produce them — subtleties that arise repeatedly within the complex intersections of identity and collective ritual. The actors comprising the axis possess hybrid identities. They frequently invest considerable effort in reconciling these different affiliations — or, where reconciliation proves difficult, in inventing linguistic formulations that appear to bridge them. One example is the adoption by Iraqi resistance factions of the term “West Asia” when describing the geography of regional conflict. Borrowed directly from the political vocabulary of the Islamic Republic, this discursive construct serves several purposes. It seeks to create an alternative mental geography to concepts such as the Arab Mashriq, “the Gulf” or the Middle East, while symbolically linking the various components of the axis across Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen and Palestine. West Asia thus emerges as a geopolitical space centered upon the Islamic Republic, offering a way of reimagining both the location of the center and its relationship to its peripheries. Most Iraqi Shias, however, have not traditionally used this terminology. To many it sounds unfamiliar, yet repeated exposure through extensive axis media networks may gradually normalize it. The same process applies to other symbolic repertoires promoted by the axis through its discourse, slogans, aesthetics and embodied practices: the slanted rifle emblem that has become the signature symbol of many Shia armed factions; the distinctive beards adopted by their leaders; and the anthems circulated by pro-axis social media accounts and television channels affiliated with the Union of Islamic Radio and Television Networks, a Tehran-based coalition established by Iran’s Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Contrary to what some observers assume, the axis does not sustain its transnational influence solely through a coherent and uncompromising doctrinal project, nor through an all-out campaign against an allegedly “jahili” (“ignorant”) society, as Sunni Salafist-jihadist organizations once sought to do. Rather, it relies on adaptation to diverse social and cultural environments, discursive improvisation, institutional penetration, influence over state officials, alongside a committed core of believers willing to sacrifice their lives for its fundamental principles. Ayatollah Khamenei’s funeral in Iraq will embody all of these dynamics simultaneously. It will reflect the subtleties of solidarity that sustain the Axis of Resistance, and that alone may be sufficient to inject new momentum into a movement currently facing intense pressure and an existential struggle.

The full article first appeared on New Lines Magazine.

Former Iran coach Ataie warns against 'excessive scrutiny' of national volleyball team

Sports Desk

Former Iran men's volleyball head coach Behrouz Ataie has praised the national team's progress under Italian Roberto Piazza, warning that excessive scrutiny from the media and pundits could undermine the players' performances by creating unnecessary pressure.

Iran will resume its Volleyball Nations League (VNL) campaign against Ukraine in Belgrade on Wednesday before taking on Germany, Slovenia and Turkey in the third and final week of the preliminary phase.

The young Iranian side has managed just two wins from its first eight matches, sitting 14th in the 18-team standings, but Ataie believes its long-term objectives extend beyond immediate results in the annual competition.

"Iranian volleyball is going through a very challenging year and an extremely complex process," Ataie said.

"Our goal is not limited to achieving results in the Volleyball Nations League. Maintaining our readiness for the Asian Championship and improving our position in the FIVB world rankings are our main priorities."

Ataie last guided Iran to the VNL



● FIVB

Finals in 2022, a year after leading the country to its most recent Asian title.

As if Iran needed extra motivation to pursue a fifth Asian crown in eight editions when the championship begins on September 4 in Fukuoka, Japan, the winner will secure direct qualification for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games—a prize Ataie described as "strategically im-

portant for both the Ministry of Sport and the National Olympic Committee."

Assessing Iran's performances in the opening weeks of the VNL, Ataie acknowledged that the results had not always matched expectations but insisted the team's overall trajectory has been encouraging.

"The team's preparation was good, the conditions were ac-

ceptable, and every effort was made to provide the tools for success," he said.

"Although the results may not have matched what the coaching staff and fans hoped for, the team has shown positive progress since the opening week."

"In the second week, despite facing stronger and better-prepared opponents, the team produced improved performances, which

shows that it is moving in the right direction."

Iran suffered five-set defeats to Olympic champion France and unbeaten Japan, either side of a straight-sets loss to second-placed United States in Orléans, France, but bounced back with a four-set victory over Cuba.

Ataie also pointed to the lack of adequate warm-up matches before the VNL as one of the structural challenges facing the national side.

"Because we do not have enough warm-up matches before the tournament, we usually do not produce our best performances in the opening week of the Nations League," he said.

"As the players gain more match experience, the team's performances naturally improve."

The former coach criticized what he described as excessive attention surrounding the national team, arguing that constant public debate over technical matters has become counterproductive.

"Our national team is under far too much scrutiny, and too many people are commenting on every detail," Ataie said.

"Coaches, analysts and the media are discussing issues that should remain within the team. This level of interference only creates anxiety and concern for both the

players and the coaching staff."

He added that the psychological burden is affecting the team's performances.

"Our players are constantly worried about results, and that stress only increases the pressure," Ataie said.

"A team that is always thinking about the outcome cannot perform as freely as it would in a calm environment. The national team needs genuine peace of mind so the players can play with patience and confidence."

Ataie expressed confidence in Piazza and the current squad, saying any existing shortcomings can be addressed.

"I have complete faith in these players and their abilities," he said.

"With the wisdom of the coaching staff, the road ahead will improve our overall quality. Everything is in place for success, and any weaknesses can be corrected," added the Foolad Sirjan head coach.

"Our strategy for the Asian Championship is extremely important because qualifying for the Olympics will make our future path much smoother," Ataie said.

"I hope the team can deliver outstanding performances and bring joy to the people of Iran and the country's volleyball family."

Taipei Asian Open 2026: Iranian judokas bag silver, bronze in men's event



Iran's Elyas Parhizgar (white, pictured at May's Algiers African Open, won the men's -81kg silver medal at Taipei Asian Open 2026 event.

● AJU

Sports Desk

Iranian judokas won one silver and one bronze medal at the 2026 Taipei Asian Open in Chinese Taipei.

Elyas Parhizgar claimed silver in the men's -81kg class on Sunday, while Abolfazl Mahmoudi secured a shared bronze in the -66kg event.

Parhizgar, who has collected three gold medals on this year's African Open circuit, opened his campaign with a victory over South Korea's Kang Ryongku before defeating Lithuania's Algirdas Zulys to reach the semifinals.

The former Asian junior silver medalist then beat South Korea's Ko Jae Kyo-

ung to book his place in the final, where he fell to another South Korean, Park Heewon, in the gold-medal contest.

Mahmoudi, meanwhile, bounced back from a semifinal defeat to South Korea's Ryu Seunghwan by beating Jeon Seungbeom to earn a shared bronze alongside Kazakhstan's Nursultan Zaizagaliyev.

Elsewhere, another Iran-South Korea clash saw Amirabbas Choopan lose to Lim Seong in the round of 16 of the men's -90kg event.

In the women's competition, Iran's Maryam Barbat narrowly missed out on a medal in the -78kg category after los-

ing to South Korea's Lee Jeongyun.

The two-day tournament formed part of Iran's preparations for September's Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, although the country has yet to confirm its men's and women's squads for the continental multi-sport event.

Iranian Judo Federation president Arash Miresmaeili said in June that the country had been allocated six quota places for the Asian Games. However, Azerbaijani head coach Rashad Mammadov will have the final say on the selection of Iran's representatives, with medal prospects taking precedence over filling all available quota spots.

Asian Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship: Iran beats India to maintain perfect start

Sports Desk

Iran continued its perfect start to the AVC Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship in Haikou, China, with a 3-1 victory (29-27, 22-25, 25-17, 25-22) over India on Monday.

The most successful team in the tournament's history, Iran opened its bid for a record-extending eighth title with a comfortable straight-sets win (25-17, 25-20, 25-13) over the Philippines a day earlier.

Monday's victory kept Iran atop the Pool B standings ahead of its final preliminary-round match against Bahrain on Tuesday. Bahrain has suffered back-to-back 3-1 defeats to India and the Philippines.

Iran head coach Abdolreza Alizadeh said his side outperformed India "in every aspect of the game" despite

being pushed hard in the second set.

"We had a very tough match today. We didn't expect India to perform at that level. They served very well and executed their first-ball attacks effectively in the second set, but as the match went on, we gradually took control and eventually won," Alizadeh said.



"Overall, we were better in blocking, serving and reception."

Iran is chasing its first Asian U18 title in 12 years after finishing runner-up to Japan and China in the 2022 and 2024 editions, respectively.

Elsewhere, 2024 bronze medalist Pakistan eased past Kazakhstan in straight sets (25-14, 25-12, 25-9) to re-

main top of Pool C, while Thailand swept Kyrgyzstan 3-0 (25-11, 25-16, 25-16).

In Pool D, South Korea maintained its perfect record with a 3-0 (25-21, 25-18, 25-13) victory over Saudi Arabia, while Chinese Taipei defeated Indonesia in straight sets (26-24, 25-16, 32-30) in Pool A.

The top two teams from each of the four pools will advance to the quarterfinals.

The four semifinalists will qualify for the 2027 FIVB Boys' U19 World Championship.



Iranian players celebrate a point during a 3-1 victory over India in the AVC Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship in Haikou, China, on July 13, 2026.

● RASOUL SHIRDEL/VOLLEYBALL.IR

WT World Cup Team Championships:

Iran to face Thailand in men's opener

Sports Desk

Iran's men's team will kick off the defense of its World Taekwondo World Cup Team Championships title against Thailand in Chuncheon, South Korea, today.

The draw for the men's event was held on Monday, with the eight participating teams learning their path to the title in the 14th edition of the

competition, which features 84 male and female athletes from nine countries.

A victory over Thailand would see six-time champion Iran face either China or India in the semifinals.

On the other side of the bracket, Morocco and Kazakhstan will square off for a place in the last four, while top seed South Korea will meet the winner

of the clash between Russia and Indonesia in the other quarterfinal.

Iran has named a strong squad for the three-day showpiece, which will be followed by the Korea Open G1 tournament in the South Korean city.

Reigning world and Asian champion Abolfazl Zandi headlines the star-studded roster, which also includes Olympic silver medalist Mehran Bark-

hordari, Asian champions Mahdi Hajimousaei and Amirina Bakhtiari, Asian bronze medalist Amirreza Sadeqian, and Mohammad Hossein Yazdani.

Payam Khanlarkhani will make his debut as Iran's head coach after replacing interim boss Amir Tajik, who guided the team to a runner-up finish behind South Korea at the Asian Championships in Ulaanbaatar in May.

Estarkhi village blends waterfalls, history, living traditions

Iranica Desk

Nestled in the mountains of North Khorasan Province, Estarkhi Village offers visitors a blend of pristine nature, rich history, and unique local traditions. Located 28 kilometers south of Shirvan, the picturesque village is surrounded by the villages of Golian, Hesar-e Pahlavanlu, Amiranlu, Barzali, and Bolqan, and is part of the Golian Rural District.

Home to around 223 households and a population of 1,099, Estarkhi is inhabited mainly by Turkish-speaking residents. The village lies in a relatively deep valley stretching from south to northeast, with a river flowing through its center, creating one of the province's most scenic mountain landscapes, according to ISNA.

The river originates from several large and small springs near the village, with a flow measuring approximately 20 inches, before cascading over a cliff more than 20 meters high to form Estarkhi Waterfall, the tallest waterfall in the Shirvan region.

Known locally as Sharshar Waterfall, the cascade plunges through towering poplar, willow, and walnut trees. As the water strikes the rocks below, it creates a cloud of white mist,



IRNA

producing a spectacular natural scene.

Beyond Sharshar, Estarkhi is home to numerous other waterfalls scattered throughout the valley. Above the main waterfall stand the remains of an old watermill, while the eastern and western slopes of the valley are covered with dense woodland. The area surrounding the waterfall serves as a popular summer retreat thanks to its cool climate. About 40 meters east of the waterfall lies a small cave containing stalactites and stalagmites. Because the area's geology is predominantly limestone, specialists consider the cave worthy of further scientific study.



IRNA



mrbilit.com

The village is believed to have been settled by Turks from

Transoxiana, who were relocated to the region during the

reign of Nader Shah. The presence of an old cemetery is regarded as evidence supporting this historical account.

The surrounding mountains are rich in wild and medicinal plants. Local agricultural products include walnuts, raisins, potatoes, wheat, rain-fed barley, and various orchard fruits.

Between the river's source and Sharshar Waterfall stands a remarkable ancient mountain cypress with a trunk circumference of about five meters. Estimated to be around 600 years old, the tree is considered one of the village's natural landmarks.

At the heart of Estarkhi is a shrine that local residents be-

lieve belongs to Shahzadeh Abdolrahman (AS), a son of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (PBUH), the fourth Imam of Shia Muslims. The shrine, which contains a wooden shrine enclosure, remains an important place of devotion and has recently been restored with public donations under the supervision of Shirvan's Endowment Department.

Traditional village life is still visible in Estarkhi. Elderly women continue to wear colorful headscarves, traditional dresses, black trousers, and traditional jewelry attached to their vests, while many older men traditionally wear beards. One of the village's most distinctive attractions is Reconciliation Alley, believed to be the narrowest alley in North Khorasan Province. Measuring only 80 centimeters wide, it was traditionally used for a unique reconciliation ritual.

According to local tradition, two people wishing to settle their differences would first perform ritual washing in a nearby bathhouse. They would then enter the alley from opposite ends, walk toward each other through the narrow passage, and reconcile when they met in the middle. Today, the narrow alley remains one of Estarkhi's most distinctive cultural attractions.

Reading Room

A book revisited through martyred Leader's annotations

The book "Religio-Political Currents and Organizations in Iran" by Rasul Jafarian, a faculty member of the Department of History at the University of Tehran, was first published by Elm Publications.

The martyred Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, wrote a series of marginal notes on this book. Rather than offering a general critique, these annotations constitute a set of historical corrections, supplementary information, and analytical remarks on certain political and religious figures and movements. With close attention to detail, he corrected or completed parts of the text in the margins and, in some cases, commented on the assessment of individuals and groups.

In these notes, he emphasizes the importance of accuracy in reporting historical events, avoiding rushed judgments, and considering the political and temporal context of each period. The late Leader also added information on the activities of certain clerics, religious assemblies, and Islamic organizations, clarifying their role in the struggle against the Pahlavi regime. In addition, he provided explanations regarding some religious figures, offering a more precise picture of their status and activities.

Another part of the annotations is devoted to correcting historical errors and completing names, dates, and relationships among religious movements. These corrections reflect his familiarity with the historical sources and political atmosphere of the 1941-1979 period, as someone who witnessed and participated in those developments.

The author of the book, Rasul Jafarian, has stated that he incorporated many of these notes into later editions, integrating a significant portion of Ayatollah Khamenei's corrections and comments into the main text or footnotes. As such, these annotations have played an important role not only historically but also in improving the scholarly accuracy of the book.

The book examines the formation, growth, and activities of religious movements in modern Iran, particularly from the fall of Reza Shah Pahlavi's government to the victory of the Islamic Revolution. The author shows that after the political opening following August of 1941, religious groups and associations were able to resume their activities and play a more influential role in cultural, social, and political spheres. Despite differences in goals and methods, these movements contributed significantly to preserving the religious identity of society and countering secular and anti-religious currents.

In the early phase of this period, leading religious authorities and the Shiite clerical establishment played a central role. Ayatollah Seyyed Abolhassan Isfahani and other senior clerics not only provided religious guidance but also supported the formation and backing of religious associations. These groups sought to expand Islamic teachings through public funding, religious ceremonies, publications, and educational gatherings, while resisting the spread of non-religious ideas.

The author then discusses the expansion of religious associations across Iranian cities. Many were established in Tehran and provincial centers, each pursuing activities

shaped by local conditions. Some focused on cultural, charitable, and educational work, while others — given the political climate — engaged in social and political activities. These associations also helped build cooperation between clerics, merchants, students, and other religious segments of society.

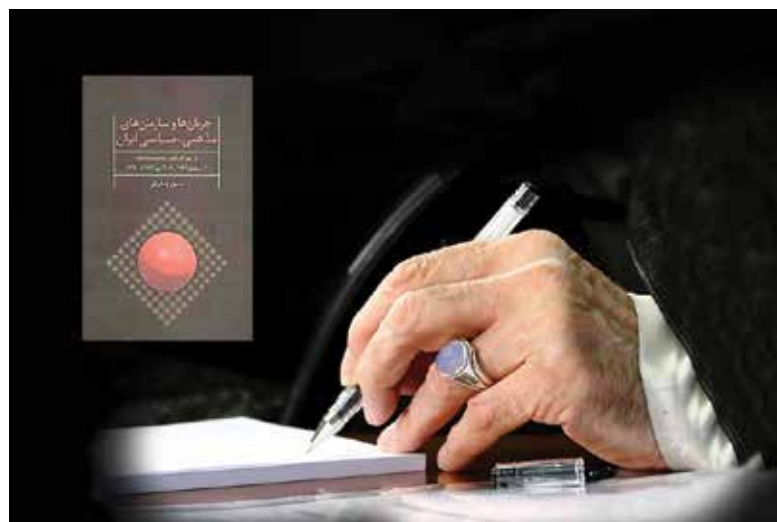
religious organizations and associations. While differing in structure and approach, they shared the common goal of defending Islamic values, strengthening religious belief, and fostering unity among religious forces. Some prioritized cultural and educational work, while others became more politically active. Many

sought to reconcile Islamic teachings with modern social needs. Through writing, public speaking, and university engagement, they presented Islam as a dynamic and rational faith capable of addressing contemporary issues. This group played a key role in attracting educated and university-educated audiences to religious thought.

In the final section, the book discusses the growing political role of religious movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Policies of Pahlavi government, restrictions on religious activities, and rising public dissatisfaction pushed many associations and groups beyond cultural work into political opposition. During this period, mosques, religious assemblies, and Husseiniyas became key centers for public mobilization and awareness.

The author concludes that between 1941 and 1979, religious movements played a decisive role in preserving Iran's religious identity, resisting non-Islamic ideologies, training committed forces, and mobilizing the public. By utilizing the capacities of the clergy, religious associations, cultural centers, and educational institutions, they established a broad social base. This foundation ultimately contributed to the formation of the Islamic movement and the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. According to Rasul Jafarian, understanding these organizations and movements is essential for comprehending modern Iranian political and social developments, as many key transformations of this era were rooted in their sustained and organized activities.

The text was first published on IBNA.



A key theme of the book is the role of religious movements in confronting Marxist, communist, and Western-oriented ideologies. According to the author, the spread of such ideas in universities and cultural centers during the 1950s and 1960s pushed religious forces and clerics to intensify their activities. Through lectures, publications, responses to ideological doubts, and youth education, they sought to preserve religion's place in society and prevent the younger generation from gravitating toward competing ideologies. The book further introduces major

later served as training grounds for revolutionary cadres.

Another section is devoted to seminaries and religious scholars, highlighting their role in both education and socio-political developments. Seminaries not only trained clerics and expanded Islamic scholarship but also contributed to public awareness and social leadership during critical periods. The close relationship between clergy and the public enabled them to assume a guiding role in times of crisis.

The author also examines the activities of religious intellectuals who

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Pezeshkian urges universities to help tackle key national woes

Social Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday called on Iranian universities to take a direct role in tackling the country's most pressing challenges, telling management professors in Tehran that the government aims to place scientific expertise at the heart of policymaking and public administration. Speaking at his second specialized meeting with university faculty members, Pezeshkian said the administration's university-centered strategy is a cornerstone of improving governance and raising the efficiency of state institutions, president.ir reported. "Universities should directly assume responsibility for solving the country's real-world problems," he said. The president outlined a broad role for academic institutions in helping improve productivity, modernize management systems, streamline financial administration, boost human capital, reform

regulations, and strengthen strategic planning across government agencies and organizations. He said the results should be measured through clear performance indicators and the value they create. Pezeshkian also stressed that universities should become training grounds for future decision-makers by integrating education with practical experience. "Students should learn while working in the field," he said, adding that such an approach would produce capable managers with firsthand experience in addressing national issues. Merit-based appointments, rather than political considerations or personal connections, should guide public-sector recruitment and promotions, the president said, describing meritocracy as an essential principle of modern management and effective governance. He identified energy consumption management as another priority where universities could make a tangible con-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (3rd L) speaks at a meeting with university faculty members in Tehran on July 13, 2026.
● president.ir

tribution. Decisions on energy development and consumption, he said, must be grounded in scientific research while taking economic, social, human, and environmental considerations into account. "If a manager cannot properly control resource and energy consumption within the organization they oversee, their effectiveness should be questioned," Pezeshkian said, adding that public managers should be evaluated on productivity, efficient resource management, service quality, and public satisfaction. The president also called for performance-based pay reforms and greater investment in professional skills development, saying universities could play a pivotal role in redesigning compensation systems and strengthening workforce



capabilities. He added that expanding teamwork and applying modern management practic-

es would help accelerate administrative reform and support the country's long-term development.

Alamut awaits global recognition after 25 years of conservation

Arts & Culture Desk

A quarter-century of archaeological excavation, conservation and restoration has brought Iran's Alamut fortress complex to the brink of UNESCO World Heritage inscription, the site's heritage chief said. The World Heritage Committee is scheduled to review the nomination during its 48th session in Busan, South Korea, from July 19 to 29, ISNA wrote. If approved, "Alamut Castle and its Defensive Fortifications" would become Iran's 30th UNESCO World Heritage property. Archaeologist and Alamut Cultural Heritage Base director Hamideh Choubak said the nomination reflects 25 years of continuous archaeological research, preservation, restoration and interdisciplinary studies carried out across the historic Alamut region.

"After a quarter-century of sustained national heritage projects, the Alamut fortress and its defensive network have reached the stage of UNESCO consideration," Choubak said. She credited the achievement to years of cooperation among government agencies, technical teams and heritage specialists. International evaluators visited the site last year and completed detailed technical assessments that will form part of the committee's deliberations. Choubak said the outcome cannot be predicted, as committee members will base their decision on ICOMOS evaluations and other expert reports. She said authorities have already implemented key measures required under the site's management plan, including documentation, conservation work, road improvements, upgrades in the village of Gazor Khan, and visitor facilities such as water supply,

parking and public services. A two-year action plan and longer-term programs extending over the next decade will guide future conservation, infrastructure and tourism management. Archaeological excavations at Alamut are expected to resume in late September after the peak tourist season. Choubak said excavation must always be matched by conservation efforts. "Excavation alone is not enough," she said. "Every archaeological project must proceed alongside preservation and restoration." The serial nomination comprises seven medieval fortresses, including Alamut Castle, the former center of the Nizari Ismaili state, and Lambarsar Castle, the largest fortress in the network, together with five other strongholds that formed the integrated defensive landscape of the Alamut region.

Iran proposes OIC women's relief network, shared trade label at Islamabad summit



Social Desk

Iran proposed a pan-Islamic women's emergency relief network and a shared certification label for products made by Muslim women at the Ninth OIC Ministerial Conference on Women in Islamabad on Monday, with Iran presenting initiatives to strengthen humanitarian cooperation and women's economic participation across member states. Addressing ministers from OIC countries, Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Zahra Behrouz-Azar said the proposals were designed to bridge two common challenges facing the Islamic world: Improving support for women and children during humanitarian crises and widening market access for women-led businesses, IRNA reported. "Our first proposal is the establishment of a Network of Women Relief Workers of the Islamic World," she said. The initiative would connect female doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, relief personnel and volunteers across OIC member states, organize joint training, develop common emergency

response protocols for women and children, and prepare rapid-deployment teams for humanitarian crises. Behrouz-Azar also proposed introducing a common label for products made by Muslim women, saying it would help women entrepreneurs reach regional and international markets while assuring consumers of defined standards for quality, authenticity and social responsibility. "The empowerment chain remains incomplete when women cannot access broader markets," she said. The certification could cover women's cooperatives, family businesses, local producers and small and medium-sized enterprises managed by women, alongside a shared digital marketplace, trade exhibitions, Islamic financial services and export-oriented branding and packaging programs. Noting Iran's experience in expanding women's participation, Behrouz-Azar said women account for more than 56% of university admissions, nearly 46% of doctoral graduates, 68% of specialists in the basic sciences, about one-quarter of senior executives at knowledge-based companies, and 35% of university faculty members. She said the initiatives build on shared Islamic values of "human dignity, justice, compassion, family, knowledge, cooperation and social responsibility." "The future of the Islamic world will pass through the bridges we build together today," Behrouz-Azar told delegates, urging member states to strengthen practical cooperation rather than wait for ideal conditions.

Hormozgan heritage NGO wins UNESCO advisory status

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Hormozgan Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department announced on Monday that the Hormozgan Cultural Heritage Custodians Association won UNESCO consultative status for 2026, becoming only the fourth Iranian non-governmental organization to join the global advisory network after organizations from Tehran, Yazd and Isfahan. The recognition marks a rare international milestone for the southern province and gives the association a formal role in international discussions on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage while expanding opportunities to showcase Hormozgan's traditions, rituals and handicrafts on the global stage. "The achievement is a strategic step in Hormozgan's cultural diplomacy," Director General Adel Shahrzad said, adding that the new standing would "introduce the province's civilizational heritage, living traditions and hand-

icrafts to a broader international audience." According to UNESCO figures cited by the official, only 317 non-governmental organizations worldwide currently hold consultative status. Shahrzad described the selection process as "highly rigorous," saying experts spent months preparing documentation that met international standards before UNESCO members voted on June 17 and 18. The organization published the final results this week. The new status recognizes the association's institutional qualifications to contribute to policymaking on protecting intangible cultural heritage and enables it to participate in international heritage consultations. Located along the Persian Gulf, Hormozgan is home to more than 300 historical and cultural sites, strengthening its profile as one of Iran's leading heritage destinations while providing a broad platform for promoting the province's cultural legacy through UNESCO's international network.

Second Announcement

**ESCO**
Esfahan Steel Company

Brief Notice of International
Tender No. 732404-6

It is hereby notified that Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) intends to purchase **Centrifugal Compressor (Nitrogen)** as per the required conditions and technical specifications through two-stage international public tender. Accordingly, all the prospective bidders are kindly requested to visit ESCO's website www.esfahansteel.ir so as to obtain the tender document and upload their techno-commercial offer to ESCO's website (through Sourcing Field) no later than **25.07.2026**. The opening date of the submitted offers shall be **26.07.2026**. It is evident that this is only for notification purpose.

Yours Respectfully,
M.Shateri,
Goods & Equipment Purchasing Management,
Esfahan Steel Company